

Dr. Ivana Trapani is Assistant Investigator at the Telethon Institute of Genetics and Medicine (TIGEM) in Pozzuoli (Naples, Italy) and Research Associate at the Department of Advanced Biomedicine of the "Federico II" University in Naples. She has worked for more than 10 years in the field of gene therapy at the Telethon Institute of Genetics and Medicine (TIGEM), where she first got her PhD in Molecular Medicine in 2014, and then continued her work.

During her doctoral and post-doctoral studies, her main research interest has been the identification of approaches to overcome the small cargo capacity of adeno-associated viruses (AAV). This is one of the major limitations of this otherwise preferred vehicle for retinal gene therapy. Her studies led to the identification of various approaches, which efficiently reconstitute large proteins through different mechanisms, that she has used to correct the retinal phenotype of a mouse model of Stargardt disease, the most common form of inherited macular degeneration (*Trapani et al, EMBO Mol Med. 2014; Trapani et al, Hum Mol Genet. 2015; Tornabene*, Trapani* et al, Sci Transl Med. 2019*).

Recently Dr. Trapani has started her independent career working on both gene-dependent and gene-independent approaches for gene therapy of diseases due to mutations in large genes. She has received prestigious funding from various agencies including the American Foundation Fighting Blindness, the French AFM Telethon, the Italian Ministry of University and Research and the European Commission.