

# The rocky road to grants success

*Anna Dimberg  
Uppsala University*





# Setting up your own lab





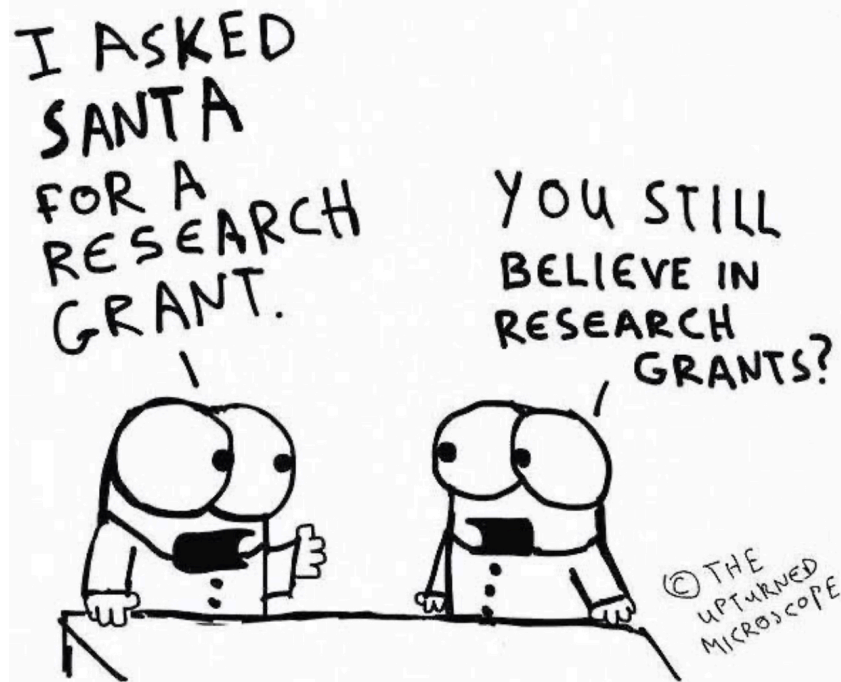
# Getting the first grants

PhD 2002: Signaling in myeloid differentiation.  
Supervisor: Fredrik Öberg, UU

Post-doc 2003-2007: Vascular biology.  
Supervisor: Lena Claesson-Welsh, UU

PI 2008: Tumor vascular biology and Immunotherapy

- **Travel grants**
  - Barncancerfonden, Cancerfonden, etc
- **Postdoc scholarships and positions**
  - Cancerfonden, AICR, SSMF
- **Grants for young researchers**
  - Vleugels foundation, Linnestiftelsen för medicinsk forskning, Svenska läkaresällskapet, Magnus Bergvalls stiftelse, SSMF, MedFarm support for young researchers, Astrid Karlssons stiftelse, Åke Wibergs stiftelse, Clas Groshinskys minnesfond





toddletalk

<https://youtu.be/cNeumJzeSY8>



# Financing the group... And yourself...

- **Research grants**
  - *Swedish Cancer Society, Swedish Childhood Cancer Society, Swedish Research Council, Emil och Wera Cornell's stiftelse*
- **Young researcher positions**
  - *Forskningsassistent Swedish Research Council*
  - *Young Investigator Award, Swedish Cancer Society*
- **Senior researcher positions**
  - *Senior Investigator Award, Swedish Cancer Society*
- **Major research grants**
  - *Knut och Alice Wallenbergs stiftelse*
  - *Sjöbergstiftelsen (co-applicant)*
  - *Extended support Swedish Cancer Society*

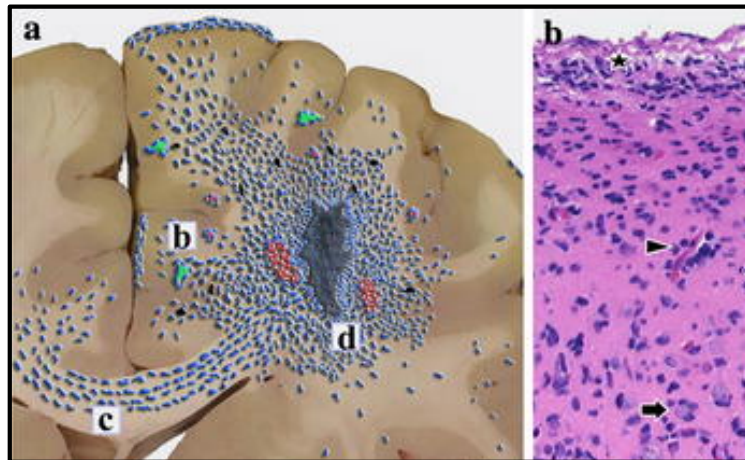


Butler et al, Nature 2008



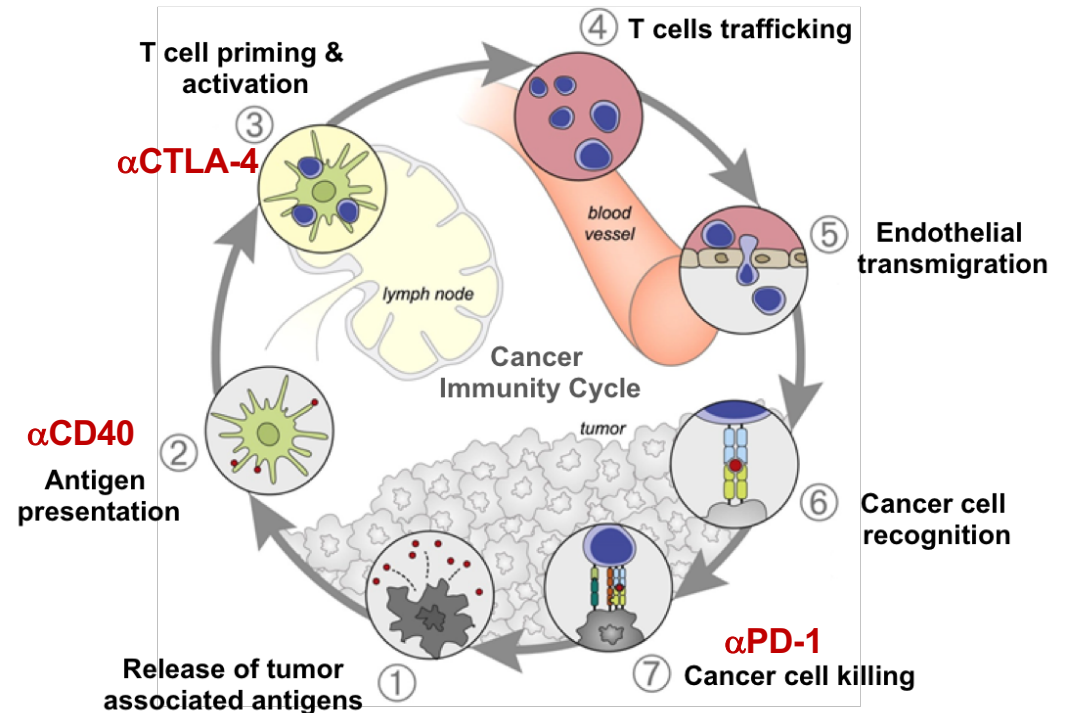
# Have a great idea!

**Glioblastomas** are invasive brain tumors with no cure



*Claes et al, Acta Neuropathologica 2007*

**The immune system can irradiate tumor cells**



Adapted from Chen & Mellman, Immunity, 2003

***Current immunotherapy relies on the presence of tumor reactive T-cells!***

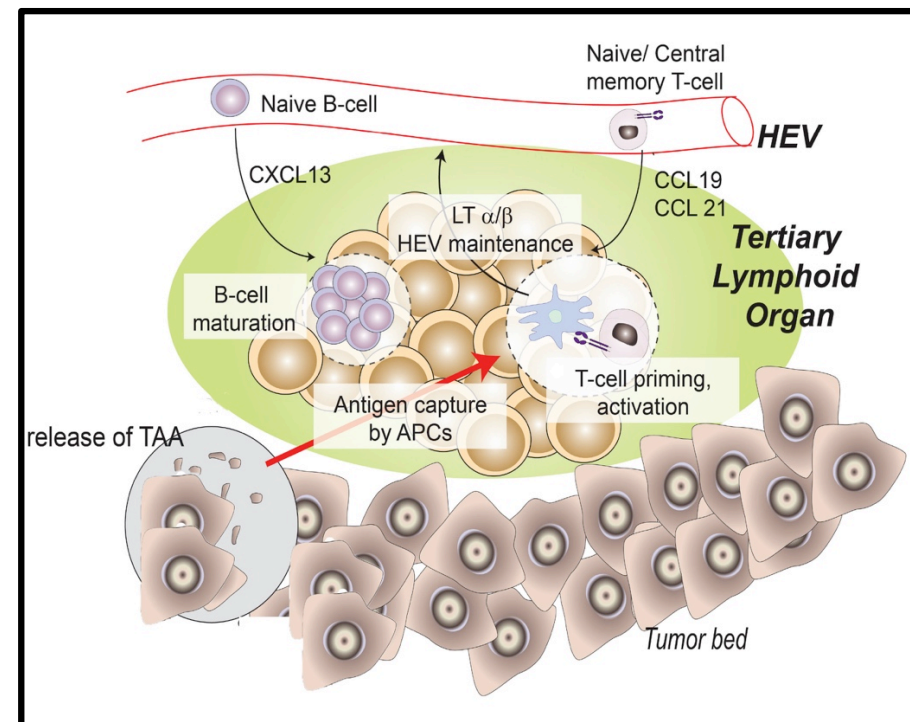
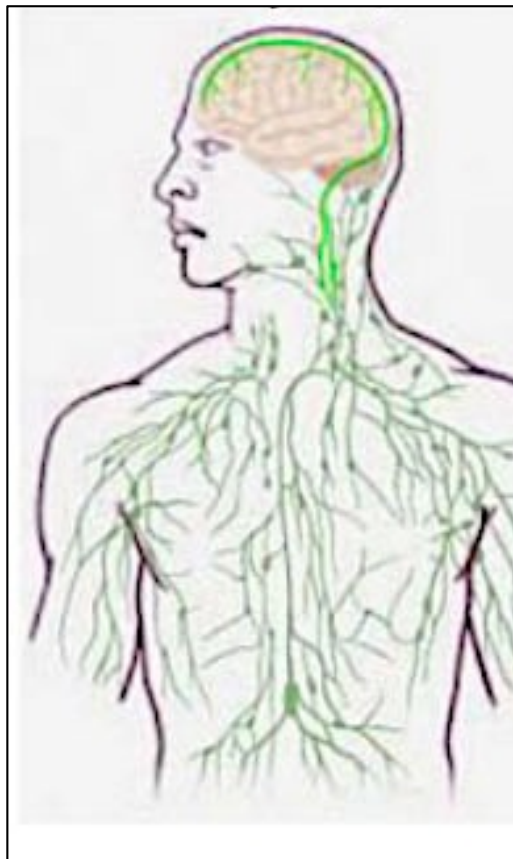


# Have a great idea!

## **Few tumor-reactive T-cells**

- Scarce antigen presenting cells
- Poor transport of tumor-associated antigens to cervical lymph nodes

**Solution:** induce lymph-node like structures in the brain

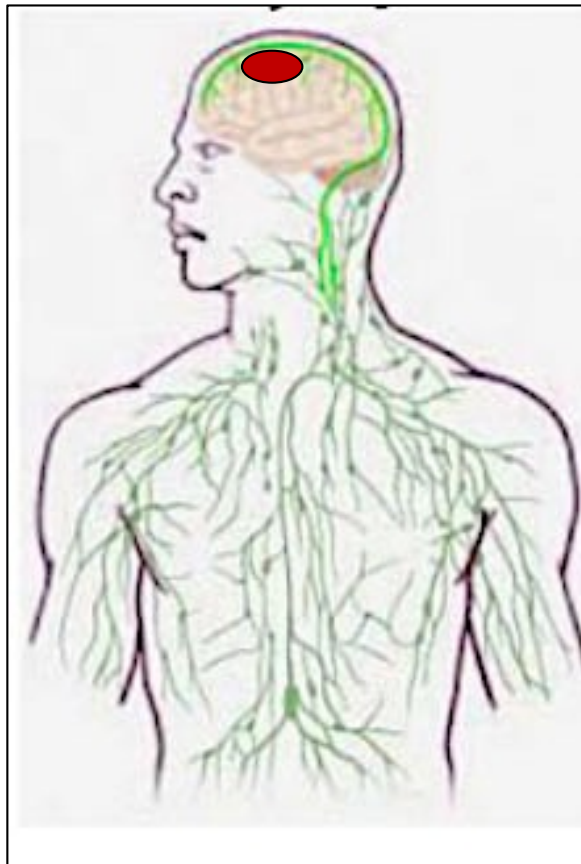




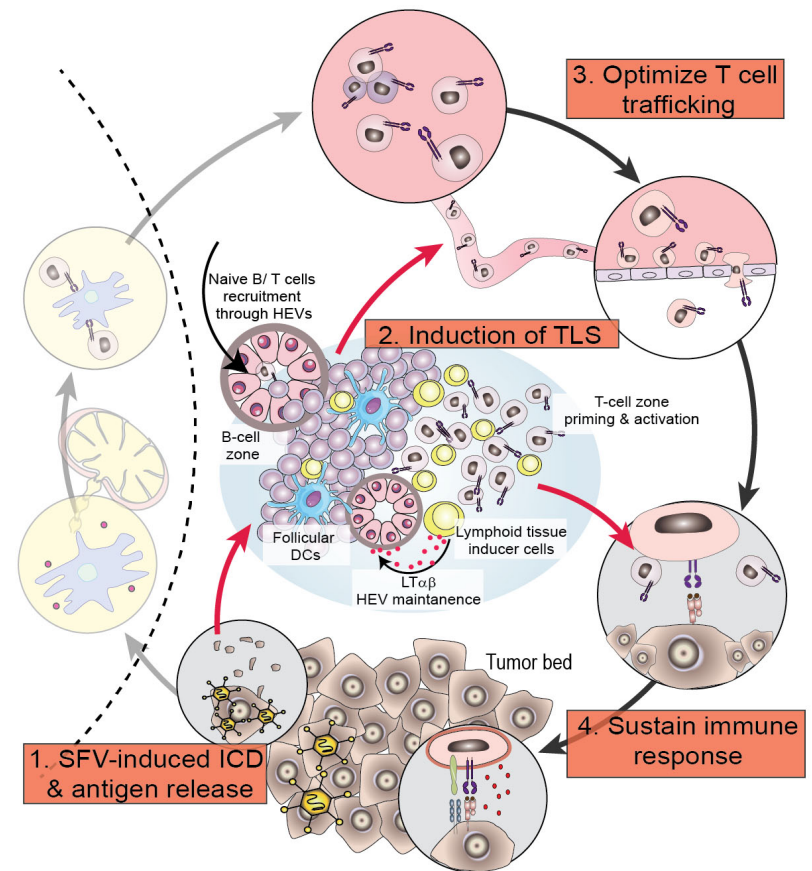
# Have a great idea!

## Few tumor-reactive T-cells

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**Solution:** induce lymph-node like structures in the brain







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# Take the leap – propose a project



*Dimberg, private photo*



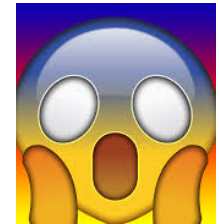
# Looking for funding



European Research Council  
Established by the European Commission

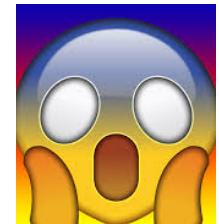
- ERC Consolidator Grant **BENEFIT** 2017

➔ **Grade A, but no funding**



- ERC Synergy Grant **IMMUNE AWAKE** 2018

➔ **Passed first selection stage, but no funding**

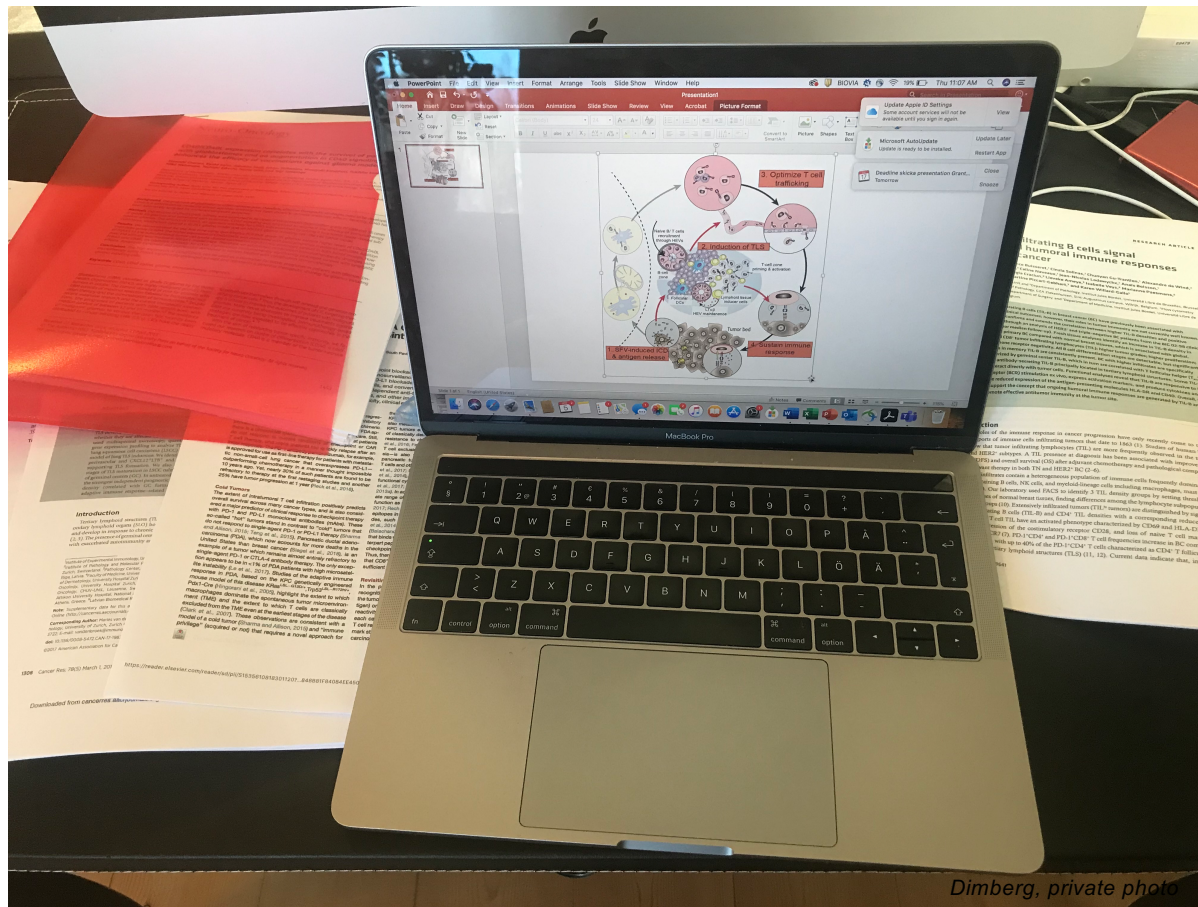


***These applications paved the way to getting a major grant!***



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# Re-writing the proposal, filling the gaps



Dimberg, private photo



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# Try again! Make some adjustments...



*Dimberg, private photo*



# Never give up!

*Knut and Alice  
Wallenberg  
Foundation*

*The Foundation supports long-term, free  
basic research beneficial to Sweden,  
mainly in medicine, technology, and the  
natural sciences.*

- **Submitted proposal 2017**
  - Did not pass the UU selection
- **Submitted proposal 2018**
  - Did not pass the UU selection
- **Submitted proposal 2019**
  - Did pass the UU selection



**SUCCESS!!!!!!**



# HOW TO BE SUCCESSFUL

- **LISTEN TO FEEDBACK**



- **INVOLVE OTHER EXPERTS**



MAGNUS ESSAND



BENGT WESTERMARK

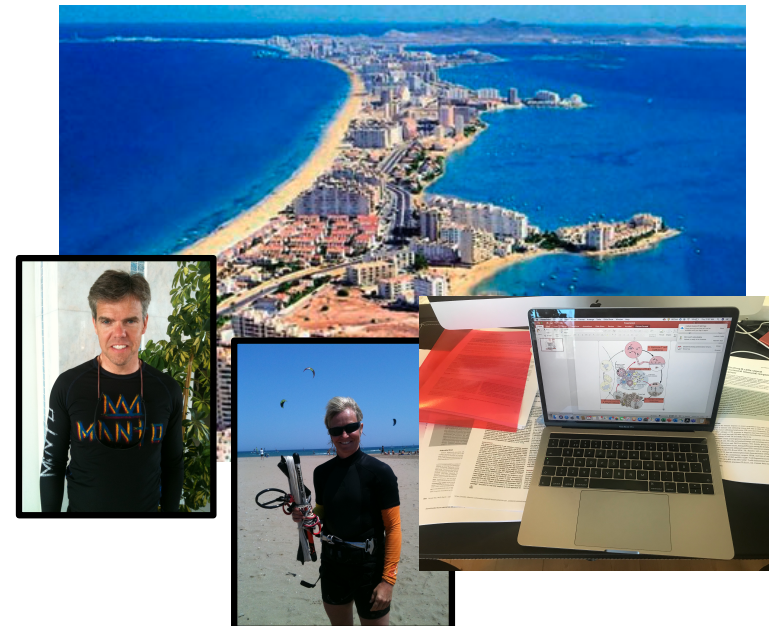


ELISABETTA DEJANA

- **INVOLVE THE GROUP**



- **GIVE IT YOUR BEST SHOT**





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# Good luck!!!

