



## Your CEPAMS Newsletter - February 2026

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### Introduction

Welcome to the CEPAMS newsletter, a unique agreement between CEMPS, IGDB, JIC and TSL.

In this issue we celebrate the successful collaborations linking our four institutes, and encourage you to discover your next collaborator at the CEPAMS Symposium. We look forward to welcoming you in Norwich in June 2-4 2026!  
Enjoy the newsletter!



**Prof. Wenbo Ma FRS**  
**TSL representative to CEPAMS**

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### Upcoming Grants & Awards



Grant: **PIFI**  
Status: **Open**

LEVERHULME  
TRUST \_\_\_\_\_

Grant: **Visiting Professorships**  
Status: **Closes 01 May 2026**



Biotechnology and  
Biological Sciences  
Research Council

THE ROYAL SOCIETY

Grant: **International Travel Award**  
Status: **Open**

Grant: **International Exchanges**  
Status: **Closes 18 March 2026**

## CEPAMS Symposium 2026, registration open



**2-4 June 2026**

**John Innes Conference Centre, Norwich, United Kingdom**

All staff and students at [CEMPS](#), [IGDB](#), [JIC](#) and [TSL](#) are welcome at the annual CEPAMS Symposium. There will be science talks, flash talks, group discussion sessions, posters and many networking opportunities!

**Collaboration** is the key theme of the conference.

Researchers from CEMPS, please contact Lin Nan to register.

Researchers from IGDB, please contact Qi Lei to register.

Researchers from JIC and TSL, please [register here](#).

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## Focus on CEPAMS Collaborations



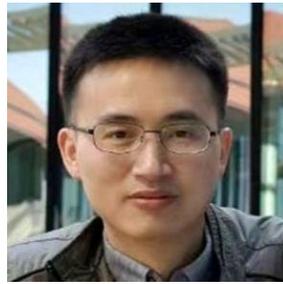
The collaboration between Cristobal Uauy (JIC) and Jun Xiao (IGDB), as illustrated across two recent publications, integrates spatial molecular mapping with mechanistic regulatory network reconstruction to resolve wheat inflorescence development across scales. The Plant Cell study (Long et al. 2026) establishes a cellular-resolution spatial transcriptomic atlas of the developing spike, defining gene expression domains and gradients that underpin spikelet patterning.

The complementary preprint (Liu et al. 2026) extends this by integrating single-cell transcriptomics and chromatin data to infer the transcriptional regulatory networks controlling cell-state transitions during inflorescence development. Together, the work moves from describing where genes are expressed to predicting how regulatory circuits control developmental outcomes. The collaboration combines translational wheat genetics and trait relevance with high-resolution functional genomics and systems-level regulatory modelling.

Collectively, these studies provide both foundational developmental biology insight and a framework for identifying gene targets for crop improvement.

[Liu et al. 2026](#). Decoding cellular transcriptional regulatory networks governing wheat inflorescence development.

[Long et al. 2026](#). Spatial transcriptomics reveals expression gradients in developing wheat inflorescences at cellular resolution.



Zhiyong Liu (IGDB), Sophien Kamoun (TSL), Chao Wang (CEMPS) and Jonathan Jones (TSL) are collaborating on a project that investigates an activated wheat CC<sub>G10</sub>-NLR immune receptor.

Their research identified a gain-of-function (GOF) mutant of *Wheat Autoimmunity 3 (WAI3)*, designated WAI3<sup>GOF</sup>, which encodes a constitutively activated CC<sub>G10</sub>-NLR protein due to an amino acid substitution. Their findings uncover a previously uncharacterized octameric resistosome structure, showed this also adopted by the Arabidopsis RPS2 resistosome and provide insights into plant immune receptor structural diversity.

Their paper is currently in [pre-print](#).

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## Congratulations!



Congratulations to the Jeremy Murray group (CEMPS) and the Yu Zhang group (CEMPS), both pictured above, on their breakthrough research on how legume plants and rhizobia achieve signal-specific recognition through flavonoids and NodD.

[Ruan et al. 2025](#). The molecular basis of the binding and specific activation of rhizobial NodD by flavonoids.

Congratulations to the Weibing Yang group (CEMPS) on their recent publication in *Science* after a successful interaction with the Yiliang Ding group (JIC). The research revealed a novel mechanism that controls plant stem cell dynamics through precise spatial patterning of cell wall modification.

[Zhu et al. 2025](#). Cell wall patterning regulates plant stem cell dynamics.

In [PAG 33](#) in January, the three plenary speakers on plants all came from CEPAMS institutes. Cristóbal Uauy (JIC), Wenbo Ma (TSL) and Xiangdong Fu (IGDB) did an amazing job at showcasing the diverse and outstanding level of our research. This is a remarkable testimony to the success of CEPAMS.

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## Share Your Success

We'd love to celebrate your successful interactions in the CEPAMS newsletter. Please [email us](#) with news of your CEPAMS collaborations.

