



Seminari di Dipartimento BIOMORF – Ciclo 2024/ I

Questa iniziativa è nata nel 2020 per promuovere la conoscenza delle linee di ricerca e stimolare le collaborazioni tra i molti settori scientifico-disciplinari del Dipartimento. In questo ciclo di seminari abbiamo dato spazio alle macro-aree di ricerca 1 (Scienze Fisiche, Informatiche e Matematiche applicate alla Biologia e Medicina), a seguire vedremo coinvolte altre macro-aree. Speriamo di fornire ancora una volta un'occasione di interazione scientifica aperta a tutti i ricercatori dell'Ateneo e auspichiamo un'ampia partecipazione anche di dottorandi e specializzandi.

Giovedì 22 febbraio 2024, ore 17

**Aula “De Simone”, I piano, Torre Biologica (Pad. G), A.O.U. “G. Martino”
Diretta Teams™**

PRESENTAZIONE DELL'EVENTO

Prof. Sergio Baldari

Direttore Dipartimento BIOMORF, Università degli Studi di Messina

INTRODUZIONE

Prof. Giuseppe Pellicane

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RELATORE

Prof. Enrique Lomba

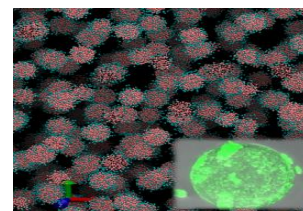
Institute of Physical Chemistry Blas Cabrera, National Spanish Research Council, Madrid Spain

Membraneless organelles: liquid-liquid phase separation vs giant cluster aggregation

Membraneless organelles play a central role and are ubiquitous in cell biology (e.g. centrosomes, Cajal bodies, or the nucleolus), but so do other biomolecular condensates, such as those involved in RNA metabolism, ribosome biogenesis, or signal transduction, or those directly engaged in the misregulation of biological processes and disease. From a physico-chemical perspective, in the realm of biophysics these condensates are usually interpreted in terms of a so-called liquid-liquid phase separation (LLPS). This interpretation from a the standpoint of equilibrium thermodynamics poses certain problems, as the presence of droplets in a phase transition typically corresponds to transient metastable states.

Not long ago an alternative interpretation emerged in which these presence of stable condensates results from the aggregation of particles with strong short range attractions and a long range repulsion (SALR), usually resulting from screened Coulomb interaction (as a consequence of the presence surface charges) Interestingly, Pantoja-Uceda et al using confocal microscopy identified a phase segregation transition in protein condensates, in which the minority phase lies mostly on the surface of the condensate.

In this communication we will illustrate how SALR interactions can give rise to the build-up of a stable cluster phase, in which the clusters even if polydisperse have a well defined size, and that exhibit an internal phase segregation as that found by Pantoja-Uceda and coworkers in protein condensates.



Stable clusters exhibiting surface de-mixing. The inset shows the phase segregation of a TDP-34 domain in a protein condensate from Pantoja-Uceda et al.