In Memoriam,

It is with deep sadness that we report the untimely passing of our friend and colleague Prof. Dr. Nico Van Nuland, group leader in Biomolecular NMR at the Vrije Universiteit Brussels and Flanders Institute for Biotechnology (VIB), Belgium.

Nico Van Nuland (born in 1961) obtained his Master degree in Molecular Sciences from the University of Wageningen, the Netherlands in 1990. After completing his doctoral studies at the Department of Biochemistry at the University of Groningen in 1994, Nico continued his research career in biological Nuclear Magnetic Resonance (NMR) spectroscopy as postdoctoral research assistant in the laboratories of Prof. Chris M. Dobson (University of Oxford, UK), Dr. Ruud M. Scheek (University of Groningen, The Netherlands), and Prof. Pedro L. Mateo (University of Granada, Spain). In 2000 Nico van Nuland became manager of the European Large-Scale NMR facility at the University of Utrecht and obtained the position of lecturer in 2003, before moving to the University of Granada as “Ramon y Cajal” research fellow in 2004.

In 2009 Nico moved to Brussels, Belgium to become a group leader at the VIB-VUB Center of Structural Biology and build out the Jean-Jeener NMR facility, the first Belgian high resolution NMR center for protein structural studies, from scratch. Scientifically, he is best known for his work on the isotopic labelling of proteins and development of triple-resonance NMR experiments for the assignment and structural analysis of proteins, methods that have become routine and nowadays constitute the backbone of modern biomolecular NMR spectroscopy. His most recent work focused on the structure and dynamics of SH2 domains.

In the prime of his scientific career, Nico was diagnosed with Amyothrophic Lateral Sclerosis - ALS, a progressive neurodegenerative disease that affects voluntary muscle function. Despite his illness, Nico kept working until this became physically impossible. On the evening of November 4th, 2017, he lost his long fight with ALS and passed away in the proximity of his children Mara and Nico and his closest family.

We will remember Nico as an excellent scientist but above all as a warm and reconciliation colleague and friend.