

The scientific symposium on the theme of the JTC 2009: **"Development and advancement in methods and technologies towards the understanding of brain diseases"** will be held on **8-9 January 2013, Le Meridian hotel, Dead Sea, Israel**

The pre-announcement of the new JTC 2013 on mental disorders was published and can be found at www.neuron-eranet.org/en/414.php. The call will be published on January 10th, 2013

FROM THE DESK OF THE COORDINATOR

ERA-NET NEURON activity highlights – past and ahead

Since the last NEURON meeting in Lovenjo di Menaggio at Lake Como (Italy) in May 2012 a variety of activities made up indeed busy times for our ERA-NET.

The July highlight was the Excellent Paper in Neuroscience Award (EPNA) in Barcelona (Spain). This recent award on the science market honors the first authorship of a researcher under 35 years of age in a high impact journal within the first five years after dissertation. The winner(s) are invited as special ERA-NET NEURON Young Investigator lecturers in an international conference. A special cooperation with the NENS Committee (Network of European Neuroscience Schools within the Federation of European Neuroscience Societies, FENS), gave the awardees the opportunity to present their work at the renowned FENS Forum. The beaming awardees presented their work to a highly interested audience (cf. page 4 for detailed report). Over 200 attendees witnessed the award ceremony.

Another true highlight was the evaluation of more than 180 proposals that were received in the Joint Transnational Call (JTC) 2012 "Novel Methods and Approaches towards the Understanding of Brain Diseases". The call is jointly managed and financed by the funding organisations in NEURON. It is a true pleasure to see how well the NEURON JTCs are perceived in the science community. Such application rates further support the notion of ERA-NETs as



From left to right: Dr. Jean-Pierre Hornung (NENS), Dr. Marlies Dörflöcher, awardees Dr. Fernando Kasanetz and Dr. Fanie Barnabé-Heider, Dr. Erkki Raulo.

funding opportunities for international research collaborations, and particularly of NEURON in the neuroscience area. Results and selected projects of the JTC 2012 will be introduced in detail in the next newsletter.

The high quality of the funded projects has in the past already been evidenced by i), a high number of publications, and ii), of these a considerable number of very high impact publications like e.g. in SCIENCE or NATURE. We intend to summarize such data on a broad and perhaps more detailed level in the future.

The September highlight in 2012 was the NEURON meeting in Malaga (Spain) hosted by our Spanish MINECO partner. Within walking distance from the Mediterranean. The location and well organised service produced an inspiring and relaxed atmosphere for the proposal evaluation and steering committee meetings.

A smaller, but in terms of visibility not less important task was the publication of an article about the ERA-NET and its visions and missions in October "NEURON - advanced Origami of Joint Transnational Calls" (<http://www.neuron-eranet.eu/en/403.php>). The planning and execution of joint transnational calls for proposals is like high level origami. Every single bit and piece has to fold into its perfect position, getting more complex the more partner countries or funding bodies participate. The ERA-NET NEURON created a strategically operating group of research funding organisations in Europe and beyond to implement research funding programmes in the area of brain diseases.

For the "ahead" highlights we can comfortably note that the preparation of the new JTC 2013 about mental disorders is in full progress and the publication can be expected for January 2013. And we look very much forward to the scientific symposium of "Development and advancement in methods and technologies towards the understanding of brain diseases" according to the topic of the JTC 2009. The symposium is organised by our Israeli partner CSO-MOH and will take place at the Dead Sea (Israel) enabling fruitful discussions and new impulses for NEURON. A full report of the symposium will be issued in the next newsletter.

At the symposium, the annual EPNA ceremony will also constitute a highlight. The winners of the call in 2012 are Drs. Anat London, Elena Itskovich and Inbal Benhar (Weizmann Institute of Science, Israel) with their 2011 publication in the Journal of Experimental Medicine. The presentation of their work



From left to right: Dr. Julio Barbas (MINECO), Dr. Benny Leshem (CSO-MOH), Dr. Rafael de Andres Medina (ISCII), Dr. Marlies Dorlöchter and Dr. Natalia Martin (ANR).

"Neuroprotection and progenitor cell renewal in the injured adult murine retina requires healing monocyte-derived macrophages" will certainly raise high interest and open the discussion among the attendees.

A more distant but also quite important highlight: May 2013 has been announced as Month of the Brain by the European Commission. NEURON participates in the programme committee and also in certain activities (cf. page 5 this issue).

Far from being routine, the ERA-NET NEURON moves on for known and new challenges with great enthusiasm. And it is about time to thank our partners indeed for a successful and high-spirit working year. You are cordially invited to our webpage (<http://www.neuron-eranet.eu/index.php>) to browse among the tangible highlights and informations and subscribe to our newsletter. I wish you all a peaceful time and a HAPPY NEW YEAR.

Yours sincerely



The 2012 Excellent Paper in Neuroscience Award

ERA-Net NEURON announced the winner of the “Excellent Paper in Neuroscience Award”(EPNA) for young scientists for the year 2012. The award ceremony was organized as a specific session in the 8th FENS FORUM of Neuroscience in Barcelona, July 18th 2012.

This time the award was split between two winners both representing outstanding European neuroscience research.

Dr Fanie Barnabé-Heider from Karolinska Institutet, Sweden and **Dr Fernando Kasanetz** from the University of Bordeaux, France were awarded with 3000 eur personal prize each. With the support from ERA-NET NEURON the winners were invited by FENS in the forum as special lecturers to present their results.

The winner papers:

Barnabé-Heider et al.

Origin of New Glial Cells in Intact and Injured Adult Spinal Cord. *Cell Stem Cell* 7, 470–482

Kasanetz et al.

Transition to Addiction Is Associated with a Persistent Impairment in Synaptic Plasticity. *SCIENCE* vol. 328 25



1. Dr. Fanie Barnabé-Heider,
Karolinska Institutet, Sweden

2. Dr. Fernando
Kasanetz, Université
de Bordeaux, France

The Award Ceremony was conducted not only as a scientific session. Dr Marlies Dorloechter, the coordinator of ERA-NET NEURON presented an overview of the network activities and opportunities for young researchers to apply for research funding within the annual joint transnational calls to an audience exceeding 200 participants. Dr Erkki Raulo, responsible for the management of the award in ERA-NET NEURON presented the Excellent Paper in Neuroscience Award as a continuous highlight to underline outstanding research achievements by younger generation scientists. Dr Jean-Pierre Hornung, Chair of the NENS Committee of Federation of European Neuroscience Societies (FENS) acted as a co-chair of the ceremony introducing the special lecturers on behalf of the forum organizers.

Month of the Brain | May 2013

The EU Commission has declared May 2013 as the "European Month of Brain".

Several events will be held across Europe during this month to highlight the health-related impact of brain conditions and its consequences and the need for more resources to be made available for research into these conditions.

The European Commission will organize two key events as a part of the "European Month of the Brain 2013", both involving ERA NET NEURON II:

"European Brain Research: Successes and Next Challenges" May 14th, 2013, Brussels

The goals of the conference are to showcase and raise awareness on the benefits, added value and impact of brain research and healthcare in this critical period of financial austerity. The participants will outline and discuss the future and emerging scientific needs in brain research and healthcare. This event will provide an opportunity to learn more about successful EU-supported projects and constitute a platform to contribute to Horizon 2020, the new EU program for supporting research and innovation. Marlies Dorlöchter will give a presentation entitled "Benefits of collaboration among European funders: the example of the ERA-NET NEURON II" at the session "Think big! Building large-scale international collaborations at European and global."

"Brain research and healthcare" 27-28 May 2013, Dublin

The conference is organized by Health Research Board Ireland and the Directorate-General for Research and Innovation of the European Commission during the Irish EU Presidency. The objective of this conference is to encourage the development of future national strategic agendas for brain research and healthcare. The event will address policy makers & stakeholders: researchers, industry, regulatory, healthcare systems and economics, patients, capital venture, funding agencies.

Marlies Dorlöchter is a member of the Scientific Committee which will prepare the program of this Conference.

For more information on the

"European Month of the Brain 2013":

<http://ec.europa.eu/research/brainmonth2013>