



*Editorial*

**Giuseppe Di Giovanni\***

*Department of Physiology and Biochemistry, University of Malta, Msida, Malta*

Dear readers of Xjenza Online, what an incredible start to the year for Xjenza!

A Special Issue of Xjenza Online was published in June as the Proceedings of the 6<sup>th</sup> Mediterranean Neuroscience Society Meeting (MNS2017) held in Malta from 13 to 15 of June at the Radisson Blue Hotel in Saint Julian's. More than 500 hundred copies were printed, one for each attendee at the conference which turned out to be a truly fantastic international event. Just think that one copy of our journal has arrived home in 41 countries from Armenia to the USA! I am really satisfied, as the editor of a journal that is proudly local - even though we have started to and persisted in publishing articles from international scholars - that we have achieved such an unthinkable international distribution.

Xjenza Online was a major supporter of MNS2017, apart from publishing a SI on the Proceedings of the Conference (Xjenza Online Vol (SI), 2017), we also gave a prize for the best Maltese posters presented. Our prize, "Best Poster Prize Xjenza/RIDT" was among those given by Elsevier/Journal Neuroscience Methods-Neuropharmacology and Springer Nature/The Receptors. What an honour to appear with Elsevier and Springer/Nature. Moreover, we organized a Workshop on how to publish with Elsevier, one of the major publishing houses. Presentations were given by Shamus O'Reilly (Senior Publisher Elsevier), Natalie Farra, (Senior Acquisitions Editor, Neuroscience) Ryan Scicluna (University of Malta Library), Vincenzo Crunelli (Editor Journal of Neuroscience Methods), Bruno Frenguelli (Editor Neuropharmacology), Giuseppe Di Giovanni and David Magri (Editors of Xjenza Online) on various aspects of publishing a research paper.

This issue also recalls the MNS2017 meeting, in that you can find the speech given by HE Marie Louise Coleiro Preca, President of Malta who opened the Conference. There are also commentaries by Raphael

Mechoulam, from Israel, who in the 60s, discovered and isolated the THC molecule, the main active principle of cannabis, and by Ilana Gozes from Israel too on autism, schizophrenia and Alzheimer's disease and the common thread between neuropeptides and brain regulating genes.

This issue starts with a review on serotonin and epilepsy authored by international scholars Giuseppe Di Giovanni, Vincenzo Crunelli and Magor Lorincz from Malta, UK and Hungary, respectively, reporting the latest fascinating findings of an MCST founded project called EPILEFREE aiming at stopping seizures in animal models of absence epilepsy which has clear translational applications.

Raymond Mangion talks us through "*Legislation as a means of Legal Entrenchment and Enforcement of Medical and Surgical Practice in Malta from 1801–1901*". This is an interesting study full of fascinating details about the first 100 years of British rule during which the foundations of the present-day medical and surgical system were prepared and laid. Nicola Ballarini and Ian Thornton with their research article "*Biological Motion across Viewpoints*" report that the recognition of human bodies depicted as biological motion stimuli is viewpoint-dependent, as with many other types of object.

Beppe Aquilina and Ruben Cauchi's research on Gilles de la Tourette syndrome using the fruit fly shows that histamine deficiency is not associated with an increase in spontaneous repetitive grooming behaviour but rather a decrease in *Drosophila melanogaster*. Therefore, the grooming behaviour seen in *Drosophila hdc* knockouts is not a translationally relevant TS phenotype.

In the following research article Stephen Mifsud reports a preliminary survey and taxonomy of wild roses (*Rosa* spp.) occurring on the Maltese islands. *Rosa* spp. are neglected and understudied as Maltese flora as

\*Correspondence to: Giuseppe Di Giovanni (giuseppe.digiovanni@um.edu.mt)

only three species have been reported yet. Mifsud in his research described 27 populations of wild or naturally occurring roses, of which twelve species, hybrids or cultivars have been recorded, eight of which are new for the Maltese flora.

The last research article by Cutajar and colleagues presents a case study concerning the development of a BioMEMS device for a deep brain stimulation (DBS) system integrated with a drug delivery system (DDS) for application in humans. The qualitative feedback received from the identified stakeholders, together with the quality of the case study employed, namely, an integrated DBS and DDS solution, indicate sufficient evidence to suggest that the model provides a sound basis in this direction.

The last Commentary, written by Samantha Austen, takes a brief look at the evolving field of native language transfer research in second language acquisition and the possible implications for language teaching.

We conclude as usual with two news items, the first on the workshop: How to Publish, by David Magri, organized by Xjenza Online at the MNS2017 and the last one by Colleen Bower on *Science in the Citadel* that was held in Gozo's iconic medieval Citadel on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of April. It provided an atmospheric venue for the first science festival on the island. The aim of the festival was to engage the public with science, to inspire the next generation towards scientific endeavour, and to showcase Gozo as a potential future hub for scientific discussion and development.

I would like to conclude by thanking, as always, the editorial board of Xjenza Online, the new board members, the referees and all the authors who have contributed to this issue, which I believe to be one of the best.

I hope you enjoy this issue, until next time!

*Giuseppe Di Giovanni*  
*Editor in Chief*