



## Xjenza Online at MNS2017 Malta

Giuseppe Di Giovanni<sup>\*1</sup> and David C. Magri<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>*Department of Physiology and Biochemistry, University of Malta, Msida, MSD 2080, Malta*

<sup>2</sup>*Department of Chemistry, Faculty of Science, University of Malta, Msida, MSD 2080, Malta*

The 6<sup>th</sup> conference of the Mediterranean Neuroscience Society (MNS), MNS2017, was organized by Prof. Giuseppe Di Giovanni, Co-ordinator of Malta Neuroscience Network (MNN) of the University of Malta and held at the Radisson Blu Hotel in St. Julian's during the week of Monday 12 June to Thursday 15 June.

The MNS2017 is a part of the effort of MNS to bring its contribution to the development of neuroscience in the Mediterranean region facilitating the exchanges with scientists from the rest of the world.

The previous MNS Conferences were organized in June 2015 in Pula (Italy), Istanbul (Turkey) 2012, Alexandria (Egypt) 2009, Marrakech (Morocco) 2006, Montpellier (France) 1997.

These meetings have proved to be highly beneficial, not only for the scientific exchanges between Mediterranean neuroscientists, but also in terms of training opportunities for students and young researchers.

More than 450 delegates, including neurologists, psychiatrists, psychologists, basic and clinical researchers from 41 Countries attended the MNS2017 in Malta.

HE Marie Louise Coleiro Preca, President of Malta, opened the Conference (see her speech in this volume) together with Prof. Alfred J. Vella, the Rector of the University of Malta, Prof. Marc Landry, Mediterranean Neuroscience Society (MNS) President (University of Bordeaux, FR) and Prof. Giuseppe Di Giovanni.

The meeting gathered scientists, not only from the broad Mediterranean area, offered a rich program, spanning from molecular and cell biology to behaviour under normal and pathological conditions. This included 9 main lectures, over 60 symposia, poster sessions and social events. The meeting has been highly beneficial, not only for the scientific exchanges, but also in terms of training opportunities for students and young researchers.

Nine special keynote speakers were in the programme!

Two University of Malta Plenary Lectures by Giacomo Rizzolatti (IT/MT), and Vincenzo Crunelli (UK/MT). The others were given by:

- Juan Lerma from Spain, Secretary General of the Federation of European Neuroscience Societies (FENS);
- Raphael Mechoulam, from Israel. He discovered and isolated the molecule of THC, the main active principle of cannabis, in the 60s (see his commentary in this issue);
- Michela Matteoli, from Italy, member of the European Molecular Biology Organization (EMBO);
- Pierre J. Magistretti from Switzerland, President of International Brain Research Organization (IBRO);
- Rosa Cossart from France;
- Carmen Cavada from Spain;
- Ilana Gozes from Israel (see her commentary in this issue).

Xjenza Online was a major supporter of the MNS2017, we published a SI on the Proceedings of the Conference that was distributed to the 500 attendees (Xjenza Online Vol. 5 (SI), 2017), organized a Workshop on how to publish and gave a prize for the best Maltese posters.

Three Poster prizes were given to the best posters presented at MNS2017

1. Best Poster Prize Xjenza/RIDT For the best Maltese Posters presented at MNS2017.
2. Best Poster Prize Elsevier/J Neurosci Methods-Neuropharmacology For the Best Methodological and Pharmacological Posters
3. Best Poster Prize Springer Nature/The Receptors

The awarded received the prizes at the ceremony held at the end of the conference on the 15 June.

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

## Xjenza/RIDT Best Poster Prizes @ MNS2017



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Ms Theresia Dalli. Abstract Title “Mycoplasma pneumonia associated encephalopathy: a case report”

Ms Rebecca Borg. Abstract Title “Phenotypic overlap between disruption of SNRNP biogenesis and SMN-GEMINS complex perturbation: implications for motor neuron disease”

Mr Norbert Abela. Abstract Title “The long term brain effects of bingeing on alcohol and marijuana in adolescent tobacco users: a study on motivation in operant food-reinforced responding”

Mr Francis Delicata. Abstract Title “Serotonin-2A



AND -2C receptor modulation of the lateral Habenula activity in the context of nicotine addiction: a neuroanatomical and electrophysiological study”

The meeting had 2 free workshops on Wednesday 14 June, “How to get your paper published”, and “Statistics for neuroscientists”.

## Xjenza and Elsevier Workshop on How to Write and Publish an Academic Paper at MNS2017 Malta

Journals exist for the purpose of disseminating new research findings and the latest scholarly thinking by professional communities worldwide. This workshop presented an opportunity for authors and would-be authors to gain insight into journal publishing from the editors of *Journal of Neuroscience Methods*, *Neuropharmacology* and *Xjenza Online*. The event covered a number of publishing related topics including how to:

- Choose the right journal;
- Tips on writing a manuscript;
- The editorial process;
- The peer-review process;
- Publishing ethics: plagiarism and data fabrication;
- Open access and funding policies.

The workshop was sponsored by Elsevier, the Malta Chamber of Scientists and the University of Malta. Around 40 researchers were in attendance for the workshop, which was held on Wednesday afternoon from 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm in room Marie Louise 1.



**Figure 1:** The Xjenza/RIDT poster prize awardees Rebecca Borg, Norbert Abela, Francis Delicata and Vincenzo Crunelli of the University of Malta & Cardiff University and Editor-in-Chief of the *Journal of Neuroscience Methods* (UK), Giuseppe Di Giovanni, Coordinator of Malta Neuroscience Network (MNN) of the University of Malta (MT), Liana Fattore, Mediterranean Neuroscience Society (MNS) Vice-President (CNR, IT), Bruno Frenguelli of the University of Warwick (UK) and Editor-in-Chief of *Neuropharmacology*, Prof. Marc Landry, Mediterranean Neuroscience Society (MNS) President (University of Bordeaux, FR) (from the left).



**Figure 2:** RIDT's CEO Wilfred Kenely and Prof. Giuseppe Di Giovanni.

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 Xjenza Online) on various aspect of publishing a research paper. The workshop opened with in-

troductory presentations by Shamus O'Reilly on neuroscience journals and Natalie Farra on neuroscience books.

Vincenzo Crunelli of the University of Malta & Cardiff University and Editor-in-Chief of the *Journal of Neuroscience Methods*, discussed the importance of authorship and guidelines for deciding who should be listed as an author, and in what order, on a research paper. Bruno Frenguelli of the University of Warwick and Editor-in-Chief of *Neuropharmacology*, gave a presentation on editorship and how an editor goes about deciding whether a submitted manuscript is suitable for consideration, and the considerations an editor must make on deciding whether a manuscript submitted for peer-review is acceptable or not for publication.

The workshop concluded with presentations by Giuseppe Di Giovanni of the University of Malta and Editor-in-Chief of *Xjenza Online* and Associate Editor of *Journal of Neuroscience Methods*, on the peer-review process followed by David Magri of the Malta University and an Associate Editor of *Xjenza Online* on publishing ethic, from many dos and don'ts, with a brief mention of example case studies.

Further information about the conference can be obtained from the website: <http://www.mnsociety.net/> and <http://www.mcs.org.mt/index.php/xjenza>.