January 2022 MNS Newsletter

MNS

Mediterranean
Neuroscience Society

Greetings to MNS scientists all over the world!

We want to thank you for your support during this extraordinary year and wish you a Happy New year. May 2022 bring seeds of hope and offers inspiration, motivation and opportunities to early career researchers and the scientific community at large.

We also hope 2022 brings you all that you desire for your personal lives.

See you in Croatia, Dubrovnik!

Yours,

Giuseppe Di Giovanni, MNS President

on behalf of

MNS Council and MNS2022 Secretariat

The Mediterranean Neuroscience Society (MNS) was created in 2009 and works towards three main objectives:

- First, strengthen exchanges between Mediterranean neuroscientists.
- Second, promote education in the neurosciences and increase public awareness of progress made;
- Third, sustain scientific, training and networking events, such as, in particular, the biennial Mediterranean Neuroscience Conference.

Research on brain function in health and disease is among the priorities for today's societies, and several indicators put the Mediterranean research area among strategic issues for the European Union (EU).

To reach these objectives, the MNS's policy is to work in close cooperation with existing national and international Neuroscience Societies. In particular, we are a proud member of the International Brain Research Organization – IBRO and act in synergy with the Federation of European Neuroscience Societies – FENS.

The mission of the Society: Research on brain function in health and disease is among the priorities for today's societies, and several indicators put the Mediterranean research area among strategic issues for the EU. Many South-North collaborations and networks have emerged in recent years through bilateral and multi-lateral actions, supported by the EU or by regional actions, whether for setting up teaching curricula (Tempus programs), or building human potential (FP7 programs).

The MNS was created to support and help strengthen existing and new projects that bring together neuroscientists from all shores of the Mediterranean:

- by offering travel stipends and prizes to young scientists, especially from the southern areas of the Mediterranean
- by actively organizing events dedicated to north-south networking and scientific exchange, as well as advanced student training
- by enhancing the visibility of north-south collaborations and projects, spotlighting them in "bottom-up" contributed symposia during the MNS conference or in satellite events
- by providing an efficient interface and access to larger societies such as IBRO and FENS.

The last Mediterranean Conference of Neuroscience was organized in 2019 in Marrakech (Morocco), preceded by editions in 2017 in St. Julian (Malta), in Pula-Sardinia (Italy) in 2015, Istanbul (Turkey) in 2012, Alexandria (Egypt) in 2009. MNS plans to further open future Mediterranean Conferences to showcase the richness and creativity of Mediterranean research in all types of neuroscience, as well as of strategies to improve cross-Mediterranean cooperation.

2022 MNS Membership renewals are open!

Dear colleague,

The Mediterranean Neuroscience Society needs your help to continue and expand its actions!

Your Society membership runs from 1st January to 31st December each year, so now is the time to start thinking about renewing your membership for 2022. We hope that you are safe and well and have not been seriously affected by the impacts of the pandemic. We recognise there will be some challenging times ahead, so we have kept our 2022 membership subscriptions at the 2021 rates. We would love for you to continue your membership journey with the Mediterranean Neuroscience Society and stay with us until next year.

If you are still not a member and you want to help us strengthen Mediterranean neuroscience cooperation, please join the MNS! Help us organize events, propose your projects, remain informed about our initiatives and support us. Get actively engaged or sponsor us by becoming a member!

After you sign-up on **https://www.medneuroscisociety.org/** (see below for detailed instructions), you will be able to apply for 2022 membership and enjoy

MNS BENEFITS:

1. Receive regular updates from MNS (Society e-newsletter & email announcements)
2. Discounted MNS congress/meeting registration fees
3. Free access to lectures and courses supported by MNS
4. Opportunities to apply for MNS support & Awards
5. Listing/access to the members' directory
6. Right to vote in MNS elections and MNS General Assembly
7. Be nominated/ right to nominate candidates for MNS Council, and serve on MNS Committees
8. Career training, and a be part of a vibrant online community

Annual membership fees are:

- Regular Member: 40 €
- Student Member: 15 €
- Sponsor Member: ⩾ 100 €

STEPS TO JOIN MNS TODAY

1. Click **https://www.medneuroscisociety.org/member-register.php**, sign-up and create a new profile, if you are joining the MNS for the first time.
2. Click on **https://www.medneuroscisociety.org/member-login.php**
3. Click on PAYMENT ANNUAL FEES and select the method of payment (Bank Transfer or Credit Card)
4. Welcome to the MNS community and enjoy the benefits

MNS website

Our website is constantly updated. Visit us at **www.medneuroscisociety.org.** Please, sign in as a member to create a profile at **https://www.medneuroscisociety.org/member-register.php** and register to MNS2022 to be able to submit your abstract for poster/oral presentation for MNS2022!

As a result of COVID-19 Pandemic, MNS President will call a Virtual General Assembly (VGA) to approve the proposal of a year extension of the Council mandates. The VGA will be called early 2022.

The new approved Bylaws and Rulebook can be found
https://www.medneuroscisociety.org/mns-council-and-bylaws.html

PAST EVENTS

1) 4th IBRO-ARC-MNS workshop

Under the auspices and support of Alexandria University, the activities of the 4th IBRO-ARC workshop entitled: "Integrated perspective on the central nervous system functions during inflammation and pandemics" and co-supported by the Mediterranean Neuroscience Society (MNS) was held from October 11th to 14th, 2021 in Hurghada city in a hybrid system, with the participation of distinguished professors in the field of neuroscience from Egypt, France, Malta, Greece, India and Thailand. The workshop was coordinated by Prof. Amira Zaky, from the Faculty of Science at Alexandria University. This workshop provided a unique and special scientific environment that facilitated positive interaction both at national and international levels. In addition, it offered an opportunity for communication between specialized scientists in the field with junior researchers.

The workshop aimed to present the recent advances in neuroinflammation mechanisms and the role of neuronal circuits in controlling such processes. The workshop themes also shed light on the correlations between pandemics with special attention to COVID-19 and CNS dysfunction.

The major themes of the event were:

- The structure and development of the central nervous system.
- The role of central circuits in controlling functions as diverse as pain perception, addiction, Parkinson's disease and Alzheimer's disease.
- The impact of epidemic diseases on the nervous system, especially the emerging corona virus.
- Virtual training workshops on modern technologies in the field of molecular biology and bioinformatics applications.

A total of 25 junior researchers and students representing five countries Egypt, Tunisia, Morocco and Cameroon were participated to the workshop activities actively participated in the workshop. Some presented their research as indicated in the table below and were subjected to evaluation by two professors.

The Best Presentation Awards were as follow:

- 1st Award: Eman Khaled - Egypt
- 2nd Award: Fayza Eid - Egypt
- 3rd Award: Eliasu Musa - Nigeria
- The Excellence Award at the level of post-doctoral research; Dr. Yassine Ait Bali- Morocco

2) IBRO-MENA School

The IBRO-MENA School and Conference on Clinical Neuroscience: From the Laboratory to the Bedside was held in Tunis, Tunisia, from 1-6 November 2021.

This IBRO-MENA school and conference aimed to introduce students to neurogenomics and to try to bridge the gap between basic neuroscience and clinical practice. The course consisted of a 3-day advanced neurogenetics school followed by a 3-day clinical neuroscience conference. The school aimed to introduce the students to the new era of genomics and molecular biology brought by next-generation sequencing through practical NGS and Bioinformatics workshops. The conference was on pathophysiology, diagnosis, and management of neurological disorders. The participants attended didactic lectures given by internationally recognized experts as well as have panel discussions with question-and-answer sessions. They also presented their research and got a chance to discuss with faculty. This course was intended for neurology residents, neurologists, and graduate and undergraduate neuroscience students from the African and Middle eastern region.

The Mediterranean Neuroscience Society contributed with a Virtual Session

A virtual session was organized by MNS Council members on 6th November 2021.

Speakers: Isabel Varela Nieto, Christina Dalla and Georgia Hodes

Moderators: Christina Dalla and Olfa Masmoudi

Mediterranean
Neuroscience Society

8th Mediterranean Neuroscience Society (MNS) Conference

Hotel Dubrovnik Palace, Dubrovnik, Croatia

May 29 – June 2, 2022

https://www.mns2022conference.org/

Mediterranean
Neuroscience Society

8th MNS Conference

May 29 - June 2, 2022 / Dubrovnik, Croatia

As the president of the MNS2022 Local Organizing Committee, it is my great pleasure to invite you to participate in the 8th Mediterranean Neuroscience Society (MNS) Conference that will be held in the beautiful city of Dubrovnik, Croatia, from May 29th to June 2nd 2022.

The President of MNS, Giuseppe Di Giovanni, myself and the other members of the Scientific and Local Committees will strive to make this meeting a very successful event, both scientifically and socially.

On behalf of the Local Organizing Committee of the 8th MNS Conference, I hope to welcome you to Dubrovnik to enjoy a stimulating atmosphere and the early Croatian summer on the Adriatic coast.

With best regards,

Professor Goran Šimić, MD, PhD
President of the Local Organizing Committee of the
8th MNS Conference

Call for oral and poster presentations – MNS 2022

The 8th Mediterranean Neuroscience conference that will be held in Dubrovnik (Croatia, May 29-June 2, 2022) is now accepting submissions for oral and poster presentations.

Info at **https://www.medneuroscisociety.org/member-login.php**

The MNS Meeting Scientific Committee invites authors to submit abstracts for oral and poster presentations. Submissions can be made via your MNS member panel https://www.medneuroscisociety.org/member-login.php

All abstracts must follow the instructions listed below and be submitted by the 28th of February 2022. Abstract submission is free of charge. The requirement to submit the abstract is to be registered to MNS2022.

To submit your abstract, click **https://www.mns2022conference.org/proposal-submission/**

ABSTRACT SUBMISSION DETAILS

- Before submitting your abstract, please review carefully the Abstract format instructions.
- Abstracts must be submitted by 28th February 2022, for consideration by the Scientific Committee.
- To be able to submit an abstract, the correspondence author must be registered and have paid to attend the conference.

Terms and Conditions

By submitting an abstract, authors confirm that they understand and accept the following rules for participation in MNS Meeting 2022:

- All author(s) approve submitting this work for presentation
- The author(s) transfer(s) all copyright ownership of the named abstract to MNS Meeting 2022
- At least one author must be available to present the paper if selected for the program. The authors will immediately notify the MNS Meeting Secretariat if they are unable to present the paper or if the presenting author has changed. The organizers reserve the right to remove a presentation from the program if conditions require it.

To submit your abstract, click **https://www.mns2022conference.org/proposal-submission/**

MNS Travel Grants 2022

MNS will provide some travel grants to attend MNS 2022, thanks to the organizations and sponsors.

Application Deadline: 28th February 2022

Eligibility: (please read carefully before applying)

MNS will provide travel grants for students, post-docs and early-stage researchers that do not hold a permanent academic position to support their active participation in the MNS 2022 conference in Dubrovnik, Croatia. Priority will be given to candidates living in the South-Mediterranean area and those that have never been sponsored by MNS before. Applicants should have a presentation at the meeting and provide the following documents by 28th February 2022 to the President of MNS, Prof Giuseppe Di Giovanni at president@medneuroscisociety.org

MNS Conference / Dubrovnik – Croatia / May 29 – June 2, 2022

Required documents include:

1) CV

2) Abstract to be submitted at: president@medneuroscisociety.org

3) Support letter from the supervisor or department head indicating the status and need for travel support

4) Proof of PhD/student status

6) Membership to MNS and proof of payment performed at: **https://www.mns2022conference.org/registration-fee/**

Important dates and deadlines for the 8th Mediterranean Neuroscience conference

January 1st, 2022: Early registration & Oral/Poster abstract submission open, Travel grant application open

February 28th, 2022: Oral/Poster Abstract submission & Travel Grants submission close

March 31st, 2022: Poster Abstracts available on the MNS2022 website/ Travel Grants announced

May 1st, 2022: Deadline for Early Registration

May 29th – June 2nd, 2022: MNS 2022 & Onsite Registration

June 2nd, 2022: MNS Best Poster Prizes Announced

MEET MNS2022 Key-Note Speakers

TRACY BALE - Baltimore, MD, USA - IBRO Presidential Lecture

Tracy L. Bale is a Professor of Pharmacology and Director of the Center for Epigenetic Research in Child Health and Brain Development in the School of Medicine at the University of Maryland, Baltimore. She completed her Ph.D. at the University of Washington in the Department of Pharmacology, and her postdoctoral work at the Salk Institute with Dr. Wylie Vale. Dr. Bale was Professor of Neuroscience at the University of Pennsylvania for 15 years prior to her move to UMB. Her research focuses on understanding the role of stress dysregulation in neurodevelopmental and neuropsychiatric diseases, and the sex differences that underlie disease vulnerability using mice as the model organism. She is interested in developing models of parental stress and the germ cell involvement in transgenerational epigenetic programming of neurodevelopment. She serves on many internal and external advisory committees, panels, and boards and served as Chair of the NNRS CSR study section and was a Reviewing Editor at the Journal of Neuroscience for the last 6 years. She has been the recipient of several awards for her research in this area including the career development award for early career achievement and promise by the Society for Neuroscience, the Richard E. Weitzman Memorial award as exceptionally promising young investigator award by the Endocrine Society, the Medtronic Award from the Society for Women's Health Research for outstanding research that has led to the improvement of women's health, and recently the Daniel H. Efron award from the American College of Neuropsychopharmacology. She was recently elected President of the International Brain Research Organization (IBRO).

IVANA DELALLE - Brown University, Providence, RI, USA

Ivana Delalle is a Professor of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine at the Warren Alpert School of Medicine at Brown University and the Director of Neuropathology Service at Lifespan Academic Medical Center. Dr. Delalle attended the Zagreb University School of Medicine in Croatia, where she received her MD, followed by her PhD in the Developmental Neuroanatomy Laboratory headed by Professor Ivica Kostovic. Dr. Delalle subsequently joined Developmental Neurobiology Laboratory headed by Professor Verne Caviness at Harvard Medical School where she elucidated the expression of cell cycle regulators in relation to the cortical development, completing her Research Fellowship in Neurology. Dr. Delalle pursued further postgraduate training as a resident at Massachusetts General Hospital and became board certified by the American Board of Pathology in Anatomic Pathology and Neuropathology in 2001. Before joining Lifespan Academic Medical Center and Brown University in 2019, Dr. Delalle worked in the teaching hospitals of Harvard Medical School and Boston University School of Medicine as a neuropathologist and mentor committed to the education of medical and graduate students, residents, and neuropathology fellows. Dr. Delalle's research program bridges basic and clinical science, by aiming to advance the understanding of pathophysiology of psychiatric and neurodegenerative diseases with the focus on Alzheimer's Disease (AD). The elucidation of the pathophysiologic mechanisms of AD has lately been driven by genome-wide association studies (GWAS) to identify specific genes or genomic regions that are associated with disease risk. However, the information on the expression pattern of these genes' protein products in healthy brain and in neurological diseases is almost universally lacking. The studies led by Dr. Delalle closed that gap of knowledge for two genes including BIN1 which harbors the second most common AD risk variant after APOE4. Together with her international team of co-investigators, Dr. Delalle currently focuses on harnessing the potential of biospecimens collected in large epidemiologic studies in USA and Germany to study microRNA expression in human plasma and brain tissue samples in combination with functional studies in experimental models. Her objective is to determine how microRNAome signatures in mild cognitive impairment and AD reflect AD-associated pathology and serve as a biomarker for developing AD.

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JEAN-ANTOINE GIRAULT - Paris, FR - FENS Presidential Lecture

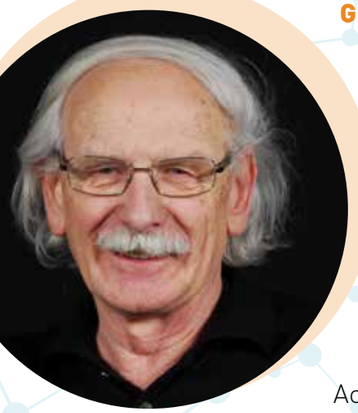
Jean-Antoine Girault, MD, PhD, holds an Inserm research director position. He is currently head of the Institut du Fer à Moulin, an Inserm-UPMC center of research, with about ten teams working on the development and plasticity of the nervous system. His research is mainly on the signalling mechanisms involved in the plasticity of the nervous system, in normal and pathological conditions. The fields of application concern drug addiction and Parkinson disease, as well as axoglial interactions in myelinated fibers. The approaches used include molecular and cellular biology, functional neuroanatomy, and behavioural studies, etc. Member of various professional committees and the French and American societies for Neurosciences, Jean-Antoine Girault has actively participated in the creation of the Neuropôle de recherche francilien (NeRF). Very involved in teaching and training of young researchers and doctors, he has been the director of the Paris School of Neuroscience (ENP) between 2007 and 2009.

He is the President- Elect of the European Society for Neuroscience (FENS).

IRA MILOSEVIC - Göttingen, DE - Croatian Society for Neuroscience invited Speaker

Ira Milosevic graduated from the University of Zagreb (Zagreb, Croatia) in 2001, and did her PhD with Erwin Neher and Reinhard Jahn at Max the Planck Institute (Göttingen, Germany) on the cell biology of chromaffin cells1. Subsequently, she worked on the role of endophilins in endocytosis2 and contributed to ER-plasma membrane t tethering principles3 as a postdoc with Pietro DeCamilli at Yale University (New Haven CT, USA). In 2013, Ira was awarded the Emmy Noether Young Investigator Award from the German Research Council to establish an independent group at the ENI in Göttingen that focuses on the molecular underpinnings of synaptic function. Her group works on fundamental aspects of synaptic vesicle recycling related to neurological and neurodegenerative diseases using genomic, imaging and cell biological approaches. She is the invited as Speaker Croatian Society for Neuroscience invited Speaker

GIACOMO RIZZOLATTI - Parma, IT - MNS Emeritus Member Lecture



Giacomo Rizzolatti is Professor of Human Physiology at the Università degli studi di Parma, where he is the Director of the Department of Neurosciences. Formerly President of the European Brain Behavior Society and the Italian Society for Neuroscience, as well as member of the European Medical Research Council, Professor Rizzolatti has, for several years, directed the European Training Program in Brain and Behaviour Research (ETP) sponsored by the European Science Foundation. He is member of Academia Europaea and of Accademia dei Lincei as well as Honorary Foreign Member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. He was recently elected Associé étranger of the Institut de France's Académie des Sciences. Among Professor Rizzolatti's major awards are the Golgi Prize for Physiology, the George Miller Award of the Cognitive Neuroscience Society, the Accademia dei Lincei's Feltrinelli Prize for Medicine and the Herlitzka Prize for Physiology awarded by the Accademia delle Scienze di Torino. Since the early eighties, Professor Rizzolatti has been recording the activity of nerve cells in the brain specialised for the control of hand actions such as grabbing objects or picking items up. In 1996, this resulted in the discovery of "Mirror Neurons" that is neurons which fire or become active both when one performs such hand actions as well as when one observes them in another. Some scientists consider "Mirror Neurons" as one of the most important findings in the last decade. Their potential importance lies with the fact that they may be the basis through which we are able to understand the intentions of others, acquire language and share feelings. For his continuous support to neuroscience in the Mediterranean regions will be awarded the MNS Emeritus Membership during the mNS2021.

LASZLO ZABORSZKY - Newark, NJ, USA

Distinguished Professor at Rutgers University (NJ, USA), founding Editor-in–Chief, Brain Structure and Function. Author of over 115 scientific papers, book chapters and a monograph. His research, supported by the NIH since 1986, has profound implications in the field of neural basis of attention, cognition as well as for such diseases as Alzheimer's. Editor: Neuroanatomical Tract–Tracing Methods 2-3 (1989 Plenum; 2006 Springer). President, New York Hungarian Scientific Society (2012-2016), President, Association of American Hungarian Academicians (2018-2020), Foreign Member, Hungarian Academy of Sciences (2007-). Board of Trustees Award for Research Excellence (President, Rutgers University, 2016), Knight Cross, Order of Merit (President of Hungary, 2013).

GEORGE PAXINOS - UNSW, Sidney, AU

Scientia Professor George Paxinos studied psychology at The University of California at Berkeley, McGill University and Yale University before taking up a lectureship at The University of New South Wales, in Sydney. He is now an NHMRC Senior Principal Research Fellow at Neuroscience Research Australia and Scientia Professor at The University of New South Wales.

He identified 91 hitherto unknown regions in the brain of rats and humans and has published 57 books on the brain and spinal cord of humans and experimental animals and a novel that deals with environmental degradation. Most scientists working on the relationship between brain and emotion, motivation and thought, including neurologic or psychiatric diseases, or animal models of these diseases, use Paxinos' atlases and concepts of brain organization. His first book, The Rat Brain in Stereotaxic Coordinates, is the most cited work in neuroscience. His Atlas of the Human Brain received the American Association of Publishers Award for Excellence in Publishing in Medical Science and the British Medical Association Illustrated Book Award. He received the Alexander von Humboldt Award and holds three honorary doctorates. In 2019 he was made a distinguished fellow of the Royal Society of New South Wales.

He served as president of the Australian Neuroscience Society and of the IBRO World Congress of Neuroscience.

SHERIF EL-KHAMISY - Sheffield, UK

Sherif El-Khamisy is a pharmacist by training, a Wellcome Trust Investigator, and a Lister Institute Fellow at the University of Sheffield. Sherif's lab uses a combination of biochemical, genetic, and whole animal approaches to study how cells maintain genomic integrity in health and disease. His early work revealed the importance of repairing chromosomal single-strand breaks to maintain neurological function. More recently, the lab identified new players and mechanisms for repairing oxidative and protein-linked chromosomal breaks and uncovered their connection to human disorders such as ataxia, dementia and ALS.