

EFIC-Grünenthal Grant awards eight innovative research projects **Encouragement for young scientists engaging in pain research**

Brussels/Aachen, June 2011. Eight clinical and human experimental research projects on the subject of pain from six European countries – the winners of the EFIC-Grünenthal Grant (E-G-G) – have been selected. Projects were selected by the Sub-Committee on Research of the European Federation of International Associations for the Study of Pain Chapters (EFIC®) from more than 40 submissions. Selected proposals will be funded by an unrestricted grant of the pharmaceutical company Grünenthal, for carrying out innovative and exploratory clinical pain research projects. The bi-annual grant totalling 200,000 Euro will be divided between the winning projects. The individual grants are valued at up to 30,000 Euro per project. The importance of supporting pain research is underlined by the rising numbers of applications. In 2010, the highest number of submissions received in years had been evaluated by the jury of the EFIC® Sub-Committee on Research.

Among the applications, eight projects of very high standard were chosen, showing in their diversity that basic pain research still has many facets and unanswered questions. The winning projects are

- “Modulation of central cerebral pain processing by transcranial direct current stimulation (tDCS) using ultra-high field functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) at 7 Tesla”, by Dagny HOLLE (Germany)
- “The contribution of axonal sensitization to pain and hyperalgesia. NGF-induced changes of signal transformation in human C-fibers.”, by Barbara NAMER (Germany)
- “Examining the functional role of Kv7 sub-types in gastrointestinal pain using a novel human pre-clinical model.”, by Madusha PEIRIS (United Kingdom)
- “Genome-wide association study of pressure pain threshold – a step forward to uncovering genes underlying pain sensation”, by Ozren POLAŠEK (Croatia)
- “Linking altered central pain processing and genetic polymorphism to drug efficacy in chronic low back pain”, by Andreas SIEGENTHALER (Switzerland)
- “Pain Sensory Profiles in Diabetic Peripheral Neuropathic Pain”, by Stefano TAMBURIN (Italy)

- “Investigation of the cerebral neuronal activity in pain-related brain areas of patients with fibromyalgia syndrome and interleukin-4 deficiency using nearinfrared spectroscopy”, by Nurcan ÜÇEYLER (Germany)
- “Pain sensitivity of children with Down’s syndrome: Is it really different?”, by Abraham VALKENBURG (Netherlands)

“For young researchers it is often extremely difficult to receive research funds, especially when they are not yet well known in their field of research. The EFIC-Grünenthal Grant is an important exception giving a fair chance to relevant and profound projects, even if the researcher did not have the possibility to publish many studies,” acknowledges Andreas Siegenthaler, whose winning project aims at defining predictors for successful and effective drug regimes. Barbara Namer is looking forward to finally starting with her research topic “The contribution of axonal sensitization to pain and hyperalgesia. NGF- induced changes of signal transformation in human C-fibers. The EFIC-Grünenthal Grant is an excellent chance to put projects into practice that you really care about.”

The progression of pain research through new ideas and approaches is essential, as pain is a condition affecting the everyday lives of millions of people worldwide and also poses a huge economic burden. Understanding the mechanisms of pain is crucial to improve treatments and the patients’ conditions. Therefore, the E-G-G is to promote pain research on a long-term basis and was and will be given to those who do basic work in laboratories. All EFIC-Grünenthal Grant winners will be presented on September 21st 2011 during the Opening Ceremony of the 7th EFIC[®]-Congress “Pain in Europe” taking place in Hamburg, Germany.

Within the scope of the collaboration, Grünenthal and the EFIC[®] also provide an opportunity for the exchange of information and experiences with and between promising junior scientists which may identify treatment gaps and potential solutions for new medications. According to these thoughts and aims, former winners of the E-G-G 2008 and 2009 will give insights into their awarded projects presenting the progress and results at the EFIC[®]-Symposium “New Findings in Clinical Pain Research” at the EFIC[®] congress in Hamburg on September 22nd.

For further information please visit www.e-g-g.info.

About EFIC

The European Federation of IASP[®] chapters (EFIC[®]) is a multidisciplinary professional organisation in the field of pain science and medicine, made up of the 35 European Chapters of National Pain Societies of IASP[®] (International Association for the Study of Pain). Established in 1993, EFIC's 35 constituent chapters represent Pain Societies from 35 countries and close to 20,000 scientists, physicians, nurses,

physiotherapists, psychologists and other healthcare professionals across Europe, who study pain and treat patients suffering from pain.
For more information, please visit www.efic.org.

About Grünenthal

The Grünenthal Group is an independent, family-owned international research based pharmaceutical company with headquarters in Aachen, Germany. Building on its unique position in pain, its objective is to become the most patient-centric company to be a leader in therapy innovation. Altogether, the Grünenthal Group has affiliates in 36 countries worldwide. Grünenthal products are sold in more than 100 countries and approx. 4,900 employees are working for the Grünenthal Group globally. In 2010, Grünenthal reached revenues of about 910 Mio €. More information: www.grunenthal.com.

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