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Editorial

Following a well-established calendar, this time of the year coincides with the announcement of the next **Annual Meeting** of the SSN. A new website has been created for the program, early registration, and abstract submission (<http://ssn.epfl.ch>). We can look forward to a stimulating meeting together with the *Swiss Society for Behavioural Neurology*. An important innovation is that this joint meeting will be accredited for “continuous education” by two major clinical societies. This recognition is well deserved by the organizers, who have put together an attractive program for both basic researchers and clinicians. We hope that it will contribute to building bridges between these two worlds of Neuroscience.

This Newsletter also gives us the opportunity to announce several major changes that will take place within the SSN in the coming months. Our central preoccupation is to catalyze specific actions for the benefit of our members and for the promotion of Neuroscience in Switzerland. The Committee has decided several initiatives (detailed on pages 3-4), including a modification of the organization of our Society, making it more efficient and representative, and launching novel activities targeted at our members.

The list is not exhaustive. Further changes are in the pipeline, notably concerning our links with the USGEB and the organization of the 2005 Annual Meeting in Zurich. These are challenging times and we hope that you will both support and benefit from these novel initiatives.

For the Committee of the SSN,

Jean-Marc Fritschy

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Swiss Society for Neuroscience
Swiss Society for Behavioural Neurology
Saturday 17th January 2004, CHUV, Lausanne



The SSN 2004 Annual Meeting

The next annual meeting of the SSN will take place at the CHUV in Lausanne on 17th January 2004. It will be held jointly with the Swiss Society for Behavioural Neurology. This meeting will be accredited for continuous medical education by the Swiss Society of Neurology and Swiss Society of Radiology. Following a now well-established tradition, the meeting is free of charge. Registration is requested for administrative purposes (but is not mandatory).

The program, abstract submission form, and registration form are available on-line at: <http://ssn.epfl.ch> as well as on our website <http://swissneuroscience.ch>. While on-line registration and abstract submission are strongly encouraged, the organizers ask everybody to send a hardcopy for confirmation (see detailed instructions on the websites above). Abstracts need to be sponsored by a member (or candidate-member) of the SSN or of the SSBN. Each member can be co-author on multiple abstracts but can sponsor only one abstract.

The highlights of the meeting include a plenary lecture sponsored by the Association for the Decade of the Brain, by Wolf Singer (Max-Planck Institute for Brain Research, Frankfurt), a Datablitz, a poster session, and a presentation of “interesting clinical studies”. The SSN Best publication Award will be presented (see below), along with the Volker Henn Award for the three best posters and the prize for the best clinical study. The meeting will be concluded by a second plenary lecture by Faraneh Vargha-Khadem (University College, London).

Deadlines:

Abstract submission: 15th November
Registration: 15th December

The SSN Best Publication Award

The deadline for submitting applications for the Best Publication Award is approaching (30st September, 2003). Please see the SSN website (or the previous Newsletter) for detailed instructions.

In the interest of the Award, we strongly encourage all (former) student-members who fulfill the conditions to apply. Attached is a poster to be printed out and distributed as widely as possible in your Institution.

The amount of the Award has been raised to Fr. 2'000.-. It will be given at the next Annual Meeting in Lausanne.

Up-coming IBRO and FENS fellowships

The IBRO Fellowship for Young Investigators: This fellowship, which is sponsored by the Swiss National Science Foundation (SNF), is awarded yearly on a competitive basis to a foreign postdoctoral student for a one-year stay in a Swiss clinical or academic research laboratory. The role of the SSN is to collect applications and suggest candidates to the SNF.

Please send a letter of application, CV, list of publications, and letter of support by the host laboratory to the president of the SSN

before the end of the year. Four Committee members will pre-select the best applications to be submitted to the SNF.

Deadline: 31st December 2003.

The WERC/IBRO-FENS PhD Fellowship Program: This new initiative of the FENS is sponsored by the IBRO. It offers students from developing countries the possibility to perform a PhD (or equivalent) study in a Western European University with excellent training qualifications.

Applications are to be co-submitted by the candidates and their host laboratory. For detailed instructions, please visit the IBRO or the FENS websites (<http://www.ibro.org>; <http://www.fens.org>).

A call for applications will be issued every second year.

Deadline for the first round: 15th October 2003.

Changes at the SSN

As announced in the previous Newsletter, the Committee of the SSN has decided to launch several initiatives to better pursue the goals of our Society and to increase its attractiveness and “raison d’être” for our members (see below).

In addition, the Society will be reorganized with the creation of Chapters, representing all major areas of basic and clinical Neuroscience. Each Chapter will be headed by Committee members active in the corresponding area, who will have the responsibility to represent and promote the interests and activities of the field within the SSN.

This new organization will appear on the website, so that the responsible Committee members of each Chapter can be contacted directly for specific questions. New members of the SSN will be asked to define their fields of interest, and posters at the annual meeting will be subdivided according

to these Chapters. In the long run, it is expected that Chapters will gain in autonomy and establish links with corresponding societies in Switzerland and abroad.

The following Chapters are foreseen:

- *Molecular, Cellular, and Developmental Neuroscience*
Dominique Muller, Paolo Paganetti, Markus Ruegg, Peter Sonderegger
- *Systems and Computational Neuroscience*
Hans-Ruedi Lüscher, Eric Rouiller, Egbert Welker
- *Cognitive and Behavioral Neuroscience*
Stéphanie Clarke, Isabelle Mansuy, Christoph Michel
- *Clinical Neuroscience*
Alain Barth, Claudio Bassetti, Nicole Schaeren-Wiemers

Proposed activities for 2004

Four novel initiatives are being planned for 2004. More detailed information will be available in the coming months.

1) *Participation to the Annual Workshop of the Bern-Fribourg Neuroscience Program (Benefri):* The organizers of this 3-day workshop are offering to open it to all student-members of the SSN (for details, see <http://pylwww.unibe.ch/benefri>).



2) *A PhD-student day.* To give PhD students the opportunity to “discover” the world of research in Industry, we are

exploring the possibility to organize a one-day site-visit in a Pharmaceutical Company (probably Novartis in 2004). This day will be combined with a keynote lecture and social events for fostering informal contacts among students with various scientific backgrounds and interests.

3) *Workshop on “Animal Experimentation”*: Since the law requires continuous education for all persons responsible for animal experiments, the SSN is considering organizing a yearly workshop that would be accredited by the Federal Veterinary Office. Watch out for future announcements.

4) *Membership drive*: A campaign will be launched in 2004 to substantially increase our membership. Among others, PhD students enrolling in the various Neuroscience Programs will be targeted. A leaflet presenting the SSN and its goals will be prepared and distributed as widely as possible.

Links with the USGEB

For several decades, the USGEB has been a high profile organization regrouping scientific Societies representing the classical disciplines of biology. The annual USGEB meeting has been a highlight for many of us. The emergence of Societies, such as ours, representing an area of research rather than a scientific discipline, is a challenge at the least because of the multiplication of meetings and congresses.

Joining the USGEB as a member Society might be a means to reduce this competition and would provide the SSN a unique opportunity for joint activities, notably during the annual meeting. At the same time, the Committee strongly feels that such a move should not be taken if it jeopardizes our links with clinical societies.

In 2005, however, a coincidence of the calendar brings both our annual meeting and

the USGEB meeting to Zurich. We have therefore approached the USGEB to discuss the opportunity to hold a joint meeting. In order not to lose the link with a clinical society, this meeting would last two days (Friday with the USGEB, Saturday with a Clinical Society). This project has the support of the USGEB and we strongly hope to bring it to completion.

At the occasion of such a joint meeting, we would then re-consider the decision whether or not we should apply for membership. As for the other projects, we like to present these plans to you now, even though they are still at the embryonic stage. This leaves plenty of time for reactions from the membership, which are eagerly awaited.

Announcements

<http://www.fens2004.org>



Deadline for early registration and abstract submission: 31st January 2004

Minisymposium

**NCCR Neural Plasticity and Repair
Center of Transgenesis**

*New developments in transgenesis
and knock-out technologies*

February 6, 2004; 13 h 30 – 16 h 00
University of Zurich (Irchel Campus),
Room 35F51 (Brain Research Institute)
Contact: isabelle.mansuy@cell.biol.ethz.ch