

2013 ACTERIA Prize Winners: Early career scientists who will make a difference



In late 2012, EFIS (www.efis.org) announced its partnership with the *Fondation ACTERIA* – Acting on European Research in Immunology and Allergology – and the call for nominations for the ACTERIA Prizes awarded by EFIS. Established to recognize and reward Europe's young talents in these two disciplines, two Doctoral Thesis Prizes, for the best dissertations defended in the last 3 years, and two Early Career Research Prizes, going to investigators with up to 10 years post-doctoral experience, carry cash awards plus the financing of three-year research projects to be performed in European institutions. Following the review of nomina-

tions received from EFIS-affiliated national immunological societies, the first ACTERIA Prizes have been awarded to four young scientists who are destined to play a leading role in immunology and allergology in Europe in the years to come.

The applications of the candidates were painstakingly evaluated and the winners selected by a prestigious jury chaired by Prof. Catherine Sautès-Fridman, Head of the Department of Immunology, Cancer and Inflammation, Cordeliers Research Center, Paris (FR) and Past President of EFIS, and including the 2011 Nobel Prize laureate in Physiology and Medicine Prof. Jules Hoffmann; Prof. Bart Lambrecht, Group leader at the VIB Department for Molecular Biomedical Research, Gent (BE); Prof. Fiona Powrie, Head of the Experimental Medicine Division at the John Radcliffe Hospital, University

of Oxford (UK); and Prof. Federica Salustio, Group leader in Cellular Immunology, Institute for Research in Biomedicine, Bellinzona (CH) and President of the Swiss Society for Allergology and Immunology.

The ACTERIA Prizes will be awarded for the first time and exceptionally in Milan, Italy on August 23rd, 2013 at a special ceremony of the 15th International Congress of Immunology, during which each of the winners will present his or her work. Thereafter, the awards will be presented at the triennial European Congress of Immunology organized by EFIS, starting in 2015 in Vienna.

EFIS is proud to partner with the *Fondation ACTERIA* in the awarding of these extraordinary prizes, which are destined to gain visibility and prominence throughout the European immunology and allergology communities in the years to come.

The winners of the 2013 ACTERIA Prizes awarded by EFIS are:



Dr. Elina Kiss, Postdoctoral Fellow, Institute of Medical Microbiology and Hygiene, University of Freiburg (DE), awarded the ACTERIA Doctoral Prize in Immunology for her research activity showing that the aryl hydrocarbon receptor (AhR) controls the pool size and function of innate lymphoid cells by sensing diet-derived signals.



Dr. Alexander Eggel, Postdoctoral Fellow, Institute of Immunology, University of Bern (CH), awarded the ACTERIA Doctoral Prize in Allergology, for his work on the selection of designed ankyrin repeat proteins (DARPs) for the inhibition of allergic reactions.



Dr. Nicolas Manel, Junior Group Leader “Human Innate Immunity”, INSERM U932, Institut Curie, Paris (FR), awarded the ACTERIA Early Career Research Prize in Immunology for his investigations demonstrating a cell-intrinsic interaction mechanism for retroviruses eliciting type 1 IFN responses and cellular activation in dendritic cells infected by HIV-1.



Dr. Stefanie Eyerich, Group leader ‘Skin Immunology’, ZAUM/IAF, Technical University and Helmholtz Center, Munich (DE), awarded the ACTERIA Early Career Research Prize in Allergy for her work on the deciphering of T helper cell subsets and their function in inflammatory and allergic dermatological diseases.

The Else Kröner-Fresenius Award announced



Dr. Ruslan Medzhitov
Winner of the Else Kröner-Fresenius Award

ELSE KRÖNER-FRESENIUS-STIFTUNG

Forschung fördern. Menschen helfen.



The Else Kröner-Fresenius Immunology Award [1] was launched to acknowledge groundbreaking discoveries in medicine and to facilitate highly innovative and clinically relevant future research. This year's award, commemorating the 25th anniversary of the death of the German pharmacist, entrepreneur and humanitarian, is the first of what will be quadrennial prizes to distinguish pioneering and promising research. On June 5th, 2013, in a ceremony at the German Historical Museum in Berlin, the inaugural prize was bestowed on Ruslan Medzhitov in recognition of his outstanding contributions to the understanding of the molecular mechanisms underlying innate immunity, and for his creative proposal of how to harness his research for innovative intervention measures for infectious and inflammatory diseases. Yale University Professor of Immunobiology and Howard

Hughes Medical Institute Investigator since 2001, Medzhitov demonstrated that innate immune recognition is essential for the stimulation of adaptive immunity and elucidated the importance of recognition of symbiotic bacteria for the maintenance of physiological homeostasis.

Beyond acknowledging Medzhitov's achievements, the prize will also reward his future work to translate those accomplishments into health benefits. Indeed, Medzhitov and his group will seek to identify means to stimulate the most appropriate immune response for a given infection, with direct consequences for the rational design of tailor-made vaccines against infectious, inflammatory, and malignant diseases. Moreover, he will focus on the functional aspects of pathogen sensing, i.e., how the recognition of pathogen invasion via defined molecules is complemented by sensing of discrete harmful

functions. This will lead to the development of means to control helminth infections and allergic responses, which are likely sensed via functions rather than molecules.

Medzhitov was selected after a very thorough multistep process from out of 45 very promising nominations received from national immunology organisations belonging to the International Union of Immunological Societies (IUIS). An international jury of eminent immunologists, chaired by IUIS President and former President of EFIS, Stefan H.E. Kaufmann, evaluated all nominations. In addition to the above-mentioned ceremony in Berlin, Medzhitov will also deliver the Else Kröner-Fresenius Award Lecture this coming August 25th, 2013 during the 15th International Congress of Immunology in Milan (August 22–27, 2013).

1 *Eur. J. Immunol.* 2012, 42: 1366.

New Member of EFIS

With its decision of April 6, 2013, the EFIS Board approved of the request of the Ukrainian Society of Specialists in Clinical Immunology and Allergy (UTIAI) to join EFIS. The UTIAI, presided by Prof. Igor P. Kaidashev, has 51 members and was recently accepted as a member of IUIS. With the UTIAI, EFIS now counts 31 affiliates.

EFIS @ ICI 2013

Visit the EFIS booth in the Immunology Village at ICI 2013 (Milan, August 22–27, 2013), enter the EFIS raffle to win a travel bursary to the European Congress of Immunology (Vienna, 2015) or a subscription to the *European Journal of Immunology*. Visitors can also look forward to interactive “Meet the Editors” question and answer sessions at which advice on writing for scientific journals will be offered. See you in Milan this summer!