

Publishable Final Activity Report

General data of the project

Contract Number:	LSHM-CT-2005-019063
Title of the project:	Network of European Neuroscience Institutes
Acronym of the project:	ENINET
Instrument Type:	Coordination Action
EC-Funding:	1.282.500 €
Start date of the project:	01/11/2005
Duration:	55 months (prolongation of originally 36 months according to Amendment N° 002 of 16 th July 2007; and Amendment N° 003 of 21 st August 2009)
Project website:	www.eni-net.org
Project coordinator name:	Erwin Neher
Project coordinator organisation:	Max-Planck-Gesellschaft zur Förderung der Wissenschaften e.V.
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Website: www.eni-net.org

Logo:



1.2 Participants/ Contractors involved

Role	No	Participant name	Participant short name	Scientific Team Leader	Country
CO	1	Max-Planck-Gesellschaft zur Förderung der Wissenschaften e.V.	MPIBPC	Erwin Neher	DE
CR	2	Universitätsmedizin Göttingen	UMG-GOE	Diethelm Richter	DE
CR	3	Institut National de la Recherche Scientifique	INSERM	Christophe Mulle	FR
CR	4	Institut Pasteur	PASTEURT	Pierre-Marie Lledo	FR
CR	5	Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique	CNRS-DR10	Bernard Poulain	FR
CR	6	Université René Descartes	PARIS 5	Alain Marty	FR
CR	7	University of Bristol	UNIVBRIS	Jeremy Henley	GB
CR	8	University College London	UCL	Paola Pedarzani	GB
CR	9	Universidad Miguel Hernandez	UMH	Juan Lerma*1)	ES
CR	10	University of Seville	US	José Lopez-Barneo	ES
CR	11	Karolinska Institutet	KI	Ola Hermanson*3)	SE
CR	12	Institute of Experimental Medicine, Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic	IEM ASCR	Eva Sykova	CZ
CR	13	Nencki Institute of Experimental Biology of the Polish Academy of Sciences	NENCKI	Leszek Kaczmarek	PL
CR	14	Ecole Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne	EPFL	Ralf Schneggenburger*2)	CH

*1) replaced Carlos Belmonte in May 2008

*2) replaced Henry Markram in November 2008

*3) replaced Sten Grillner in May 2009

1.2.1 Associated Partners

Organisation name	Team Leader	Country	Associated Partner since
European Brain Research Institute (EBRI)	Antonio Cattaneo	Italy	July 2006
The Center for Neuroscience and Cell Biology	Rodrigo Cunha	Portugal	July 2006
Center for Neurogenomics and cognitive Research Amsterdam	Matthijs Verhage	The Netherlands	June 2007
Institute of Molecular Biology and Biotechnology Crete	Nektarios Tavernarakis	Greece	June 2007
Centre for Neuroscience Research University of Edinburgh	Peter Brophy	Scotland	June 2007
Helmholtz Zentrum München	Wolfgang Wurst	Germany	July 2008
Neurosciences Fondamentales at Geneva	Ralf Schneggenburger	Switzerland	Nov. 2008
University of Lausanne	Ralf Schneggenburger	Switzerland	Nov. 2008
Institute of Experimental Medicine, Hungarian Academy of Sciences	Tamás F. Freund	Hungary	Nov. 2008
University of Aberdeen Institute for Medical Sciences	Tibor Harkany	Scotland	May 2009

1.3 Project objectives

The European Neuroscience Network was created to support young investigators in the neuroscience field and bring them together on a European-wide basis. The project's main objectives are to support and encourage the scientific exchange between the different groups and institutes, to support training and scientific discussion through workshops and meetings, to promote young neuroscientists early in their independence, to create common standards throughout Europe, to increase the mobility of Neuroscientists by supporting collaborations, laboratory visits and to transfer neuroscience techniques.

Reviewing the development of the project from its start in November 2005 until the end in May 2010 the goals of the network to provide a stimulating platform for Young Investigators in order to support them in their independent work can be regarded as entirely attained. In fact, the ENINET has developed into a fruitful, dynamic and steadily growing network, which really serves its purpose.

Work performed and results achieved

The ENINET was officially inaugurated during the Kick off Meeting in Prague, where all ENINET members met for the first time. Since this promising start with 14 contractors the network has steadily grown. In 2006, the EBRI Rome as well as the Center for Neuroscience Coimbra became Associated Partners of the ENINET with three independent young investigator groups. In June 2007 three additional partners including new young investigator groups located in Edinburgh, Amsterdam and Crete have been acknowledged. Moreover, the Helmholtz Zentrum Munich represented by Andrea Huber-Brösamle and Heinz Köster at the Annual Network Meeting in May 2008, was approved as 6th Associate Partner of the ENINET with three new Young Investigator groups. In addition to that, the Institute of Experimental Medicine, Hungarian Academy of Sciences with Dr Tamás F. Freund as chairman was approved in November 2008. In February 2009, a Switzerland-based ENINET group was built, comprising the three Universities in the "Lake Geneva Area" with four Young Investigator groups. Last but not least, the Institute of Medical Sciences at the University of Aberdeen became member of the ENINET. At the same time, several new young investigator groups were approved at the institutes of the contractors so that altogether 24 ENINET partners with a total of 73 Young Investigator groups are participants of the network now.

The fact that all deliverables agreed upon in the ENINET contract have been fulfilled is also a clear sign of its success. The five Annual Network Meetings, for instance, were very well accepted and turned out to be the most important means to stimulate discussions, to establish scientific contacts and plan future activities. Subsequently, an increasing number of lab visits and lecture programs have been organized during the whole period of the project, which shows that the network has reached a state where interactions beyond meetings such as mutual laboratory visits, joint research work and lecture programs have become vitally important. Another sign of success is the fact that a number of additional meetings were organized by exceptionally motivated neuroscientists. The Grant Application Meeting, for instance, which took place twice, was originally not part of the Deliverables. It was initiated by the Task Force and approved by the Steering Committee. Also the PhD Symposium was an extraordinary meeting initiated by students for students. Since the meeting was very successful, the Steering Committee approved its annual organization. In addition to that, the Mini-Symposia, which took place in 2008 and in 2010, represent another newly created form of meeting. These symposia are small and focused meetings on highly relevant and original topics, which turned out to be a good means to cover novel and current trends in neuroscience rapidly.

Moreover, all in all three social events have been organized. ENINET members met at SFN Meeting in San Diego as well as in Chicago and at the FENS Meeting in Geneva so that the ENI network became visible on an international platform beyond Europe.

As far as dissemination and outreach is concerned several measures have been taken to enhance the visibility of the ENINET. The ENINET website, for instance, has completely been restructured. Vincent Houde, a professional webs designer from Rome changed the ENINET homepage <http://www.eni-net.org> into a user-friendly, more dynamic and powerful instrument of communication. Moreover, Ola Hermanson, who replaced Sten Grillner as team leader at the KI Stockholm, wrote an article on the ENINET in the public service review: European union issue 18, page 304-305 "Support, encourage, promote...the scientific independence and excellence of young investigator..." with the purpose to further increase the awareness level of ENINET. In addition, the Satellite events in San Diego and Chicago were a good means to present the network on an international platform.

The building of the "Task Force", which was formed by some of the Young Investigators, can be regarded as another sign of the dynamics of the ENINET. Angel Barco, Rafael Fernandez Chacon, David DiGregorio, Helene Marie, Ola Hermanson and Stefan Eimer brought this workshop into being in order to promote the objectives of the ENINET. The workshop was very successful in fostering special initiatives.

Beyond that, several actions have been taken to ensure the continuance of the network. An additional business meeting, for instance, was arranged in Paris to discuss the future of the ENINET. In this connection, alternative funding possibilities were evaluated. Furthermore, a new chair of the ENINET Steering Committee has been elected. In August 2009, Prof. Walter Stühmer replaced Prof. Erwin Neher. Moreover, Prof. Erwin Neher achieved a further cost-neutral extension of the ENINET project until the end of May 2010, so that there is time to use the remaining funds for more coordination activities, to secure funds from other sources and to establish a permanent structure as an important contribution towards a European Research Area in the Neurosciences.

During the last Annual Meeting the following decisions were made concerning the future of the ENINET:

Walter Stühmer will head the re-application for the COST action for which we failed to pass the first time but obtained encouragements for a re-submission. Walter Stühmer asked that the young investigators help him work on this application. He will get back to the young investigators and the other PIs

of the network soon with a plan on how to proceed, and a general scheme of the application. Then he will put the proposal together after receiving input

also from the PI's.

Rafael Chacon will head the efforts to work with EMBO for sponsoring meetings. He asked other EMBO members who were present (Juan Lerma, Tibor Harkany and Alan Carleton) to help him in this task.

Christophe Mulle will enquire about other means to fund the network in a more consistent manner (e.g. ask each institution to participate a quota per year to belong to the network? Feasibility of finding other sources of funding via Brussels?). His task is a bit less defined, but he expects the input from the various members.

There was a general conclusion that everyone unanimously wants the network to continue, since it has proven to be very effective, and it contributed enormously to the success of everyone involved. This network will continue to grow, but needs appropriate funding.

Achieved end results

The goal of the network is a major impact on the quality of research in the Neurosciences field achieved through an improvement in the career structure of young scientists. The Neurosciences address some of the most challenging objectives in our steadily aging societies. Brain diseases, particularly neurodegenerative diseases, already represent a considerable social and economical burden in European efforts. Tackling these growing future problems depends heavily on creative contributions of young investigators. It is therefore a 'must' to attract the best young scientists and retain them within Europe. In recognition of this important need 23 major European Neuroscience Institutes form ENINET dedicated to the promotion of the independent work of young investigators. The network provides an excellent platform for the young investigator groups to interact, provide access to advanced instrumentation, and receive support on both scientific and administrative problems. It monitors and disseminates good practice in the organizational handling of independent young groups.

The network strongly encourages mobility in order to support the transfer of knowledge, expertise and techniques. It comprises young neuroscientists from different fields creating and interdisciplinary forum, which fosters collaborations across fields, ultimately leading to the development of new methods and techniques.

All in all, the following objectives of the network have been achieved: Creating interdisciplinary fora, sharing knowledge and expertise, developing new techniques and training young neuroscientists.

Publications

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Dissemination and use

Publishable results of the Final plan for using and disseminating the knowledge: None