

Short Report: ECNP Research Internship 2017/2018

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Intern:

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Host:

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I am very grateful for the experience I gained in the Neuropsychopharmacology Labs of the Biological Tower of Biometec, University of Catania.

This visit enriched my knowledge of behavioral and cognitive analysis in animal models of psychiatric disorders. Not only I could compare and even improve protocols of behavioral tests we also perform in our facility (i.e. Elevated Plus Maze, Novel Object Recognition test, Forced Swim Test, Sucrose Preference Test), I was also given an opportunity to get in touch with tests I have never performed before (i.e. PPI, Passive Avoidance Test, Morris Water Maze, T-maze).

It also helped me gain precious insights into methodology of molecular biology supported by intensive practical experience. I actively participated in routinely performed analyses (i.e. PCR and real time PCR, ELISA, Western Blotting) with the excellent guidance of Giovanni Giurdanella, Roberta Di Marco and their colleagues. I was also given a chance to observe histological and immunohistochemical analyses in ongoing experiments.

Most importantly, I discussed topics of my scientific interest – schizophrenia, depression and alcohol dependence with focus on the role of dopamine D3 receptors and dysbindin in the pathophysiology and as a novel pharmacological target for the potential treatment.

I highly recommend this Internship, as it promotes communication, sharing of scientific knowledge, ideas and building international collaboration networks – everything good science stands for.

I would like to thank ECNP and prof. Drago for providing me this opportunity and I am really looking forward to applying gained experience and collaboration in future projects.

Tibor Stark