

## RUSSIAN SCIENTISTS MEET TO DISCUSS HOT TOPICS IN OPTOGENETICS AND OPTOPHARMACOLOGY

On April 11-15, 2018 the Sechenov Institute of Evolutionary Physiology and Biochemistry of the Russian Academy of Sciences (IEPhB RAS) in Saint Petersburg has welcomed scientists from all over Russia and abroad (France, Germany, UK, USA) at the First Conference and School on Optogenetics and Optopharmacology. The Conference was organized by IEPhB RAS together with the Department of Physiological Sciences of RAS, I.P. Pavlov Russian Physiological Society, Institute of Higher Nervous Activity and Neurophysiology of RAS (IHNA&NPh RAS, Moscow) and Peter the Great St. Petersburg Polytechnic University. ESN has supported organisation of this event via its neurochemistry initiative and ESN Secretary Natalia Nalivaeva has attended the meeting. The conference attracted 162 participants from whom 93 were young scientists. During 3 days of the conference the leading Russian and foreign scientists delivered 30 research talks and 5 lectures for students. From the posters presented by young scientists two have been selected by ESN Secretary Natalia Nalivaeva together with the local organisers and their first authors were awarded free ESN membership for 2018-2019. ESN welcomes its new members Alexander Erofeev (Saint Petersburg) and Gulnur Smirnova (Moscow). The titles of their presentations were “Light modes of ChR2 expressed in hippocampal neurons in cell culture” (presented by A. Erofeev) and “Anchoring motifs for central or peripheral localization of the opsins for optogenetic prosthetics of the retina” (presented by G. Smirnova).



**Picture legends.** *Top left:* in the Lecture theatre. *Top right:* ESN Secretary Natalia Nalivaeva gives a presentation about ESN and ISN at the opening sessions. *Bottom left:* Natalia Nalivaeva (at the lectern) and Michael Firsov present the award to a winner of the poster session Gulnur Smirnova. *Bottom right:* General photo at the opening of the Conference.

The Conference and School have been organised at a very high scientific and technical levels and congratulations should go to the Director of the IEPHb RAS DSc Michael L Firsov who co-chaired the Organizing Committee with Prof Pavel M Balaban (IHNA&NPh RAS, Moscow) and also to all the team of the Local Organising Committee chaired by Dr Kira Kim. The moderator of this Conference and School was Prof Peter Bregestovsky from INSERM (Marseille, France) whose brilliant lectures and active participation in the discussions set a role model for the young scientists. At the closing ceremony it was unanimously agreed to organise the second conference in 2 years time with a wider international participation. ESN will keep you updated on its progress.

**To learn more about the ESN Neurochemistry Initiative please visit**

<http://neurochemsoc.eu/support-to-european-neurochemistry-initiatives/>