ALBA-FKNE DIVERSITY PRIZE 2021 ANNOUNCED AT

THE VIRTUAL FENS REGIONAL MEETING 2021

Prof Marian Joëls (Netherlands) has been awarded the ALBA-FKNE Diversity Prize 2021 for her contribution to advancing gender equality in brain research. The prize highlights a scientist or group that has made outstanding contributions to promoting diversity in brain sciences and is a partnership between the ALBA Network and the FENS-Kavli Network of Excellence (FKNE), with the support of the FENS CHET (Committee of Higher Education and Training of the Federation of European Neuroscience Societies). The winner will be announced on Thursday 26th August 2021 at 8:40 CEST at the FENS Regional Meetings 2021 (FRM) and on ALBA and FENS social media channels under the form of a video.

Dr Laura Andreae (King's College London, UK), FENS-Kavli Scholar and chair-elect of the ALBA network, said: "The idea behind this prize is not just to recognise the incredible contributions to improving diversity by a single individual, but also to help inspire the entire community and remind us of how change is possible by all our actions"; "we strive toward diversity in neuroscience to allow the world to benefit from everyone's talents and ideas, regardless of their background or identity, and to allow everyone the opportunity to participate in the exciting process of understanding how the brain works", added Dr Andrew Lin (University of Sheffield, UK), FENS-Kavli Scholar and chair of the ALBA-FKNE Diversity Prize Committee. "Prof Joëls has worked tirelessly over many years to promote women in neuroscience, for example, reducing the imbalance between male and female speakers at the FENS Forum and advocating for more balanced gender ratios in leadership appointments."

Prof Marian Joëls, Professor of Neurobiology of Environmental Factors at the University of Groningen; Dean of the Faculty of Medical Sciences and Member of the Board of Directors at the University of Groningen (Netherlands), received the award and a €2,000 prize for her constant efforts in fostering gender equality in neuroscience. Among other initiatives, she founded and led networks and courses for female scientists to promote mentoring and community-building, and she helped create the MacGillavry Fellowship at the University of Amsterdam to recruit talented female scientists. She has had a leading role in training and mentoring young scientists of diverse backgrounds and creating opportunities for involving

young scientists in science policy and community actions. From 2012-2014, Prof Joëls served as the first female president of FENS. Prof Joëls insisted on the need for diversity in scientific organizations: "For the optimal functioning of organizations like universities, diversity is not just nice to have but a need to have. Making space for diverse viewpoints enables the organization to adapt to a continuously changing academic world."

The committee was overwhelmed by the incredible efforts made by all the nominees: "With equality and diversity becoming more recognised as important priorities in the neuroscience community, next year we hope to award multiple prizes so that we can recognise the wide range of initiatives being undertaken to improve all aspects of diversity in neuroscience."

The ALBA-FKNE Diversity Prize, awarded for the first time in 2020, will be celebrated every year at the FENS Forums of Neuroscience and FENS Regional Meetings.

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The [ALBA Network](#) aims to promote equity and diversity in the brain sciences. The goal of ALBA is to establish a global network in order to share best practices and provide better visibility, networking and mentoring opportunities to scientists from underrepresented groups in brain research.

The [FENS-Kavli Network of Excellence (FKNE)](#) is a self-organised and multidisciplinary Network comprising 30 outstanding early- to mid-career independent European neuroscientists. Inaugurated in 2014 by FENS and The Kavli Foundation, FKNE aims to improve neuroscience research in Europe and beyond through scientific exchange, providing opportunities for young scientists and facilitating dialogue between scientists, policymakers, and society.

The [FENS Committee of Higher Education and Training (CHET)](#) is responsible for the implementation and development of programmes for higher education and training within FENS

About FENS – the [Federation of European Neuroscience Societies (FENS)](#)
The Federation of European Neuroscience Societies is the main organisation for neuroscience in Europe. FENS mission is to advance research and education in neuroscience within and outside Europe, to facilitate interaction and coordination between its members. It currently represents 44 European national and single discipline neuroscience societies, with 22,000 member scientists from 33 European countries.
Website: www.fens.org Contact information: office@fens.org

The **FENS Forum of Neuroscience** is the largest international neuroscience meeting in Europe, covering all fields from basic to translational neuroscience. In 2022, the FENS Forum will be organized in collaboration with the French Society of Neuroscience and will take place on 9-13 July 2022 in Paris, France.
Website: https://forum.fens.org/

FENS Regional Meetings (FRM) are national or regional scientific meetings organised by FENS member societies with support of FENS. FRMs are held biennially, alternating with the FENS Forums. In 2021, the FRM will be organized by the Lithuanian and Polish Neuroscience societies, and will take place online on 25-27 August 2021.

Website: https://fensfrm2021.pl/