**Awardees of the Mentoring and Ph.D. Thesis Prizes 2018 have been announced**

**The FENS-Kavli Network of Excellence awards have been presented at the FENS Forum 2018 meeting in Berlin, on the 9th of July.**

Professor Fotini Stylianopoulou (University of Athens) has been awarded the FENS-Kavli Network of Excellence Mentoring Prize for her outstanding contributions in facilitating the careers of neuroscientists in Europe. FENS-Kavli Scholars recognise the essential of role mentoring in facilitating both careers of neuroscientists and also in scientific progress and founded this prize to recognise and promote outstanding mentoring. 30 nominations came in from across Europe, all demonstrating an inspiring commitment to mentoring. Prof. Stylianopoulou was nominated by current and former colleagues for going above and beyond in her efforts to teach and champion researchers, showing them that "the sky is the limit" and that "a true scientist never stops inquiring, combining information, seeing beyond the obvious and the dogma, but most importantly listening to what others have to say no matter if they are colleagues or undergraduate students." Along with the stellar support of direct trainees, Prof Stylianopoulou has made an enormous difference to the European Neuroscience community. She was a pioneer of neuroscience research and teaching in Greece being one of the first people to teach neuroscience to graduate students in Greece and a founding member and former president of the Hellenic Society for Neurosicence. Prof. Stylianopoulou has also served as Secretary General of FENS, demonstrating her commitment to fostering neuroscience careers both in her own laboratory and throughout the world community.

Dr. Arseny Finkelstein has been awarded the inaugural FENS-Kavli Network of Excellence PhD Thesis Prize. Dr. Finkelstein conducted his PhD project in the lab of Dr. Nachum Ulanovsky at the Weizmann Institute in Rehovot, Israel. With meticulous work, he discovered and quantitatively characterized 3D head direction cells in the freely moving bats using his own custom developed tracking device. This system can be considered a 3D compass in the brain. Dr. Finkelstein and colleagues published these results in Nature in 2015. Then, he went on to show that certain neurons of the bat hippocampus encode the directions and the proximity of spatial goals, potentially forming the basis of goal-directed navigation, which work resulted in a shared first author publication in Science. These results are ground-breaking, because navigation is traditionally studied only in two dimensions and extending it to the full space required the development of novel technology applied to an uncommon model organism. This convinced the jury to select Dr. Finkelstein as the winner of 54 entries, which were often also of outstanding quality. Dr. Finkelstein continues his work at Janelia Research Campus, HHMI, USA with Dr. Karel Svoboda.

The prizes, which consist of a special plaque and €2,000 Euros each, have been awarded at the FENS Forum 2018 on the 9th July.

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