

# SIROCCO

Silencing RNAs: organizers and coordinators of complexity in eukaryotic organisms

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## SIROCCO PARTNERS HONOURED

### DETLEF WEIGEL ELECTED TO NATIONAL ACADEMY OF SCIENCES



SIROCCO Partner Detlef Weigel has been elected to the National Academy of Sciences in as a full member (US citizen).

The National Academy of Sciences announced the election of 72 new members and 18 foreign associates from 15 countries in recognition of their distinguished and continuing achievements in original research.

The election was held at the 146th annual meeting of the Academy. Those elected bring the total number of active members to 2,150. The National Academy of Sciences is a private organization of scientists and engineers dedicated to the furtherance of science and its use for the general welfare. It was established in 1863 by a congressional act signed by Abraham Lincoln that calls on the Academy to act as an official adviser to the federal government, upon request, in any matter of science or technology.

In a speech to NAS members during the Academy's 146th annual meeting, US President Barack Obama announced major initiatives to boost research funding and urged NAS members to join him in creative efforts to engage young people in science.

<http://www8.nationalacademies.org/onpinews/newsitem.aspx?RecordID=04282009>

### OLIVIER VOINET AWARDED 2009 EMBO GOLD MEDAL



SIROCCO Partner Olivier Voinnet has been awarded the 2009 EMBO Gold Medal for his pioneering work on the mechanisms and roles of gene silencing via RNA in plants.

With this annual award, the European Molecular Biology Organization (EMBO) recognizes the outstanding contributions of young

researchers in the molecular life sciences. The EMBO Gold Medal is widely regarded as one of the most prestigious life sciences awards in Europe, highlighting the high standards of Europe's best scientists.

"Olivier Voinnet is one of the most extraordinary young scientists that I have encountered," writes SIROCCO Coordinator David Baulcombe. During his time in the Baulcombe lab from 1996 to 2001, Olivier's discoveries laid the foundation for his later understanding of the way plants use silencing to defend themselves against viruses, and how viruses, in turn, counteract this defense.

Olivier will receive the EMBO Gold Medal and an award of 10,000 euro on 30 August 2009 at *The EMBO Meeting* in Amsterdam where will give a special lecture about his research.

<http://www.embo.org/news/embo-gold-medal09.html>



## RESEARCH SPOTLIGHT



IFN-gamma-inducible Irga6 mediates host resistance against Chlamydia trachomatis via autophagy.

Al-Zeer MA, Al-Younes HM, Braun PR, Zerrahn J, Meyer TF.  
PLoS ONE. 2009;4(2):e4588. Epub 2009 Feb 26.

Identification of novel cyclooxygenase-2-dependent genes in Helicobacter pylori infection in vivo.

Walduck AK, Weber M, Wunder C, Juettner S, Stolte M, Vieth M, Wiedenmann B, Meyer TF, Naumann M, Hoecker M. Mol Cancer. 2009 Mar 24;8:22.

Semiconserved regulation of mesendoderm differentiation by microRNAs.

Ketting RF. Dev Cell. 2009 Apr;16(4):487-8.

A C-terminal silencing domain in GW182 is essential for miRNA function.

Eulalio A, Helms S, Fritsch C, Fauser M, Izaurralde E. RNA. 2009 Apr 21. [Epub ahead of print]

The C-terminal domains of human TNRC6A, TNRC6B, and TNRC6C silence bound transcripts independently of Argonaute proteins.

Lazzaretti D, Tournier I, Izaurralde E.  
RNA. 2009 Apr 21. [Epub ahead of print]

A large-scale chemical modification screen identifies design rules to generate siRNAs with high activity, high stability and low toxicity.

Bramsen JB, Laursen MB, Nielsen AF, Hansen TB, Bus C, Langkjær N, Babu BR, Højland T, Abramov M, Van Aerschot A, Odadzic D, Smicius R, Haas J, Andree C, Barman J, Wenska M, Srivastava P, Zhou C, Honcharenko D, Hess S, Müller E, Bobkov GV, Mikhailov SN, Fava E, Meyer TF, Chattopadhyaya J, Zerial M, Engels JW, Herdewijn P, Wengel J, Kjems J. Nucleic Acids Res. 2009 Mar 12. [Epub ahead of print]

**SIROCCO Mid-term Review  
Brussels 6 April 2009**

**SIROCCO**

Coordinator David Baulcombe  
Subproject 1 Leader Tamas Dalmay  
Subproject 2 Leader Irene Bozzoni  
Subproject 3 Leader Elisa Izaurralde  
Subproject 4 Leader Detlef Weigel  
Subproject 5 Leader Thomas F. Meyer  
Subproject 6 Leader Gyorgy Hutvagner  
Annick Harel-Bellan  
Jozsef Burgyan  
Caroline Dean  
Peter Mouritzen  
Web developer Rishi Nag  
Project manager Aileen Hogan

**European Commission**

Project Officer  
Christina Kyriakopoulou  
Deputy Head of Unit  
Bernard Mulligan  
External expert  
Aris Economides  
Regeneron Pharmaceuticals

**Results:**

- Second competitive call to be launched
- Non-funded project extension to be considered by the EC
- Allocation of funds to the consortium for sequencing to be considered by the Commission
- Changes to the Annual Report will be required
- Decisions from the review not yet confirmed in writing



**UPCOMING EVENTS:**

- ▶ TECHNICAL WORKSHOP ON SRNA CLONING AND SEQUENCING SUMMER 2009—DETAILS TO BE ANNOUNCED
- ▶ NEXT CONSORTIUM MEETING 16-18 NOVEMBER 2009 HINXTON UK

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