

Stem Cell Revolutions for neurodegenerative diseases

Public conference and scientific workshop

University of Milan, Palazzo Greppi, 27 November 2024

Registration link: <https://forms.office.com/e/AX3taaG0qK>

I. Stem Cell Revolutions: a European alliance for Parkinson's disease

The morning session will focus on the results of 16 years of European stem cell research on Parkinson's disease with a specific focus on the transplantation of stem cell derived neurons in the first-in-human European trial in patients. It will highlight the importance of competitive EU funding policies with reference to three European research consortia¹ dedicated to the topic and coordinated by the University of Milan.

The session is dedicated to professionals in different sectors, including biotech entrepreneurs and professionals, scientists and students interested at the clinical, collaborative and financial aspects of stem cell research.

09:30 – 09:45 **Institutional greetings**

Anna Maria Bernini, Minister of University and Research of the Italian Republic – TBC
Marina Brambilla, Rector of the University of Milan

09:45 – 10:15 **Maria Leptin**, European Research Council, President

An overview on Europe's key role for research and innovation

10:15 – 11:15 **The European research trajectory on Parkinson's disease:**

from early stem cell research to the first-in-human transplantation in patients

Anders Björklund (Lund University), Malin Parmar (Lund University), Roger Barker (University of Cambridge)

Chair: Paolo Calabresi (Policlinico Gemelli, Rome)

The beginnings and initial hurdles of research on dopamine cell replacement therapy for Parkinson's Disease – The revival of the field under European leadership using human embryonic stem cells as source for transplantable neurons – The EU-funded breakthroughs leading to *STEM-PD*, the first European trial of stem cell-derived dopamine neurons in patients with Parkinson's disease, now ongoing and awaiting its first results

11:15 – 11:30 *Coffee break*

11:30 – 12:00 **The US effort and results in the field of stem cells for Parkinson's disease: synergies and joint efforts with Europe**

Chair: Fabio Blandini (Policlinico of Milan)

Viviane Tabar (Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center, New York)

Lorenz Studer (Sloan Kettering Institute, New York)

12:00 – 12:30 **Patients' perspective**

Andrew Cassy, *STEM-PD* trial participant, in dialogue with Roger Barker (University of Cambridge)

12:30 – 13:30 **The social, economic and industrial impact of European research policies**

Chaired and introduced by Mario Monti, former European Commissioner for Internal Market and Competition

Arjon van Hengel, European Commission DG Research and Innovation, Deputy Head of Unit for Health Innovations & Ecosystems,

Joachim Fruebis, Novo Nordisk, Corporate Vice President, Head of Cell Therapy R&D

¹ **NeuroStemCell** (2008-2013; 13 partners from 7 countries); **NeuroStemCell-Repair** (2013-2017; 13 partners from 4 countries) and the current Consortium **NeuroStemCell-Reconstruct** (2020-2024; 13 partners from 6 countries).

II. The science behind stem cell therapy for Parkinson's Disease

The afternoon session will be strictly scientific and will focus on the latest advancements of cells research for Parkinson's Disease. Participants will have the unique opportunity to meet leading experts in the field.

The session is dedicated to the scientific community, including postdocs and PhD students.

14:30 – 15:00	<i>Registration and coffee</i>
15:00 – 15:30	40 Years of Research on Cell Therapy for Parkinson's Disease Anders Björklund (Lund University)
15:30 – 15:45	In memory of Ernest Arenas
15:45 – 16:30	Lorenz Studer (Sloan Kettering Institute, New York)
16:30 – 17:15	Viviane Tabar (Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center, New York)
17:15 – 17:45	<i>Coffee break</i>
17:45 – 18:30	Roger Barker (University of Cambridge)
18:30 – 19:15	Malin Parmar (Lund University)
19:15 – 19:30	Conclusion