

Experimental Design and Practical Data Analysis in Positron Emission Tomography (PET) & Transferable Skills Training course

We are more than happy to announce that the first TOBeATPAIN scientific workshop took place at St Thomas' Hospital in London during the first week of May and was a great success. The early stage researchers (ESRs) had the chance to meet for the first time and exchange ideas, discuss their project plans and organise future events including patient and public involvement activities.

The workshop, entitled “Experimental Design and Practical Data Analysis in Positron Emission Tomography (PET)”, was hosted by Professor Federico Turkheimer, Dr Mattia Veronese and other members of the molecular neuroimaging group at the Department of Neuroimaging at King's College London (KCL). The primary focus of the workshop was to introduce the ESRs to the importance of functional imaging both for preclinical and clinical studies, lending weight to the analysis of the results by providing multiple hands-on sessions. Moreover, a key feature of the course was the in-depth presentations on the basics of IBM SPSS® and MATLAB®, while also by thoroughly explaining the statistical basis of the PET analysis the instructors covered the whole process of setting up and analysing an experiment. Finally, the workshop was assisted by the book “Experimental Design and Practical Data Analysis in POSITRON EMISSION TOMOGRAPHY” and “Statistics without equations” written by Professor Turkheimer and Dr Veronese, so that the ESRs will have a point of reference before commencing on future experiments. Finally, the workshop was concluded by a Transferable Skills Training course given by Dr Aiofe Kiely from the Alzheimer's Organisation entitled “Knowledge communication: Public engagement, fundraising and CSR”, where ESRs gained insight into writing public-oriented scientific articles raising awareness, and also learned the importance of communicating basic research to people that suffer from a pathological condition.

Before the completion of the first scientific workshop, the ESRs met the director of the programme Professor Marzia Malcangio, who has expressed her excitement to work with the eleven ESRs, thus underlining that the future of the TOBeATPAIN programme will involve collaborations among passionate scientists from different institutes around Europe aiming to understand and tackle pain. Undoubtedly, the first scientific workshop was only the beginning for the TOBeATPAIN researchers with more events to be announced.

By Georgios Sideris Lampretsas

TOBeATPAIN Early Stage Researcher 1