Obituary: Ferdinando Rossi (1960-2014)

It is with great sadness that we announce the death of Professor Ferdinando Rossi.

Ferdinando Rossi served as an Associate Editor for EJN since 2008 and was elected member, and later served as chair, of the FENS committee for the Network of European Neuroscience Schools in 2010. Dr. Rossi’s unfailing commitment to the continued development of education and training in neuroscience greatly supported the goal of FENS to establish a strong NENS-network for students in Europe. As a highly esteemed member of the EJN editorial board, Dr. Rossi edited manuscripts in the broad field of Developmental Neuroscience and specifically research on neuronal specification and differentiation, axon regeneration, stem cells and transplantation. The Italian Neuroscience community lost one of its most visible proponents.

Dr. Rossi was a Professor of Physiology at the University of Turin and he served as the Director of the Institute of Neuroscience of the Foundation “Cavaleri-Ottolenghi” (NICO) and of the Scuola Superiore di Studi dell’Università di Torino. He was one of the driving forces behind the restructuration of Neuroscience research at his Alma mater. Dr. Rossi was widely appreciated for his wisdom and management capacities. Most recently, he has been nominated as Advisor for research to the President of the University.

Ferdinando Rossi was born in Turin on August 3, 1960. He graduated in medicine at the University of Turin. Except for a postdoctoral stay in Paris in 1993-1994, he remained committed to his Alma mater throughout his career. He was promoted Professor of Physiology in 1999 and was a member of the Academy of Sciences of Turin. His research focused on mechanisms controlling the specification of neuronal progenitor cells during brain development and on neuronal regeneration and reactive plasticity in the lesioned adult brain. His MD thesis in 1985 was entitled “Morphology of Purkinje cell axon terminals in the intracerebellar nuclei following inferior olive lesion”, epitomizing what would become his main scientific interests: understanding the development and plasticity in the cerebellum. Furthermore, Dr. Rossi made key contributions to our understanding of host-graft interactions for neuronal subtype specification and survival.

Ferdinando Rossi was strongly committed to research and education, as well as to serving the community. Ferdinando was a kind and enthusiastic friend and an esteemed colleague. We will miss him dearly.

Jean-Marc Fritschy and Martin Sarter
co-Editors in Chief, EJN

Marian Joëls
FENS President