

EMBARGOED UNTIL: 10 July, 5:15 pm CEST

The Peter Seeburg Integrative Neuroscience Prize 2022 awarded to Dr Robert C. Malenka

10 July 2022. Robert C. Malenka, M.D., Ph.D, Pritzker Professor of Psychiatry and Behavioural Sciences, Stanford University (US) has been awarded the Peter Seeburg Integrative Neuroscience Prize 2022 for his ground-breaking research in identifying the mechanically distinct forms of synaptic plasticity present in the human brain. His work has helped to distinctly separate the steps which lead to the varying forms of synaptic plasticity, while also identifying the proteins which contribute to the altering of synaptic efficacy over time. Recently, Dr Malenka isolated a novel form of synaptic plasticity in the nucleus accumbens, the part of the brain associated with reward pathways.

Dr Malenka has been the recipient of numerous awards including the Pasarow Foundation Award for Extraordinary Accomplishment in Neuropsychiatry Research (2011) and the Society for Neuroscience Julius Axelrod Prize (2016). His papers have been cited more than 100,000 times and have provided foundational knowledge about the mechanisms of synaptic plasticity and modulation in the mammalian brain. His laboratory continues to conduct research on the synaptic and circuit mechanisms that mediate motivated behaviours of relevance to a range of brain disorders including addiction, autism, and depression.

The Prize, named after the German neuroscientist Peter H. Seeburg, a pioneer in molecular neurobiology, was founded to recognise outstanding advances in the understanding of executive brain functions and cognitive processes. While the ultimate goal is to understand how the brain works as a whole, Dr Seeburg appreciated that complex questions often must be broken down in order to become accessible to experimental scrutiny. The Prize recognises those who continue his legacy by successfully embedding molecular and cellular events in a circuit and systems context to make significant advances in explaining cognitive and behavioural processes such as emotion, learning, memory, attention, and decision-making.

In even years, the Prize is presented at the FENS Forum, with this year's ceremony taking place at the FENS Forum 2022 in Paris, France. In odd years, the Prize is presented at the Society for Neuroscience (SfN) annual meeting (next in 2023). The recipient will receive a USD 100,000 prize and complimentary registration, transportation, and accommodation during the meeting.

The Peter Seeburg Integrative Neuroscience Prize 2022 will be presented at FENS Forum on Sunday 10 July at 17:15-17:30. The Prize is endowed by the Schaller-Nikolich Foundation, and honours original and groundbreaking achievements in neuroscience.

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