

# In the Lab



**Merab Tsagareli, Ph.D., D.Sc.**, is invited Professor of Physiology at Tbilisi Medical University, and Director of the Pain and Analgesia Laboratory at Beritashvili Center for Experimental Biomedicine in Tbilisi, Georgia. His research focuses on the behavioural studies of transient receptor potential (TRP) channels and analgesic and tolerance effects of non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) in relation with the descending pain modulation system. Most recently, Dr. Tsagareli has combined his interests in NSAIDs and TRP channels to investigate the effects of NSAIDs on TRP channel functioning. His other interest is the history of neuroscience and particularly Ivane Beritashvili, his legacy and doctrine of the image driven behavior.

**Q What motivates you on your way to the lab?**

**A** At the moment we have two exciting projects developing through Ph.D. students. The talented young colleagues in my team inspire me with new ideas on an experimental design. This is an interesting challenge for us to develop novel types of analgesics.

**Q What is your favorite piece of lab equipment?**

**A** Since my student days my first love was electrophysiology with intracellular recording of electrical slow and fast potentials. Now we have a patch-clamp technique for registration currents in channels, but we don't have the necessary funds to complete this method.

**Q What encouraging words would you give to young people considering a neuroscience career?**

**A** The brain is the most complicated and mysterious organ of the body; we know so little about how it works and creates thoughts. We need a competent theory of mind and consciousness, so please join us and study to help solve this!

**Q Do you enjoy sports or other hobbies outside the lab?**

**A** My hobbies are pop songs, classic music and ballet, and also photography. On Sunday mornings, I usually go to play football with my 12 year old son and his friends. I also like to go to my wife's village, where I can rest in silence, away from the urban bustle.

**Q If so, do your activities have any impact on your work in the lab, or vice versa?**

**A** My hobbies and activities are teaching students and travelling to scientific meetings, both of which have a positive impact on my research. These help me with new ideas and aspirations.