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PRESS RELEASE

Prof. George A. Garinis, FORTH affiliated researcher, earns an ERC Proof of Concept Grant



George A. Garinis, Researcher at the Institute of Molecular Biology and Biotechnology of the Foundation for Research and Technology – Hellas (FORTH) and Professor of Genetics at the Department of Biology, University of Crete, is one of just 62 scientists from across Europe that recently secured funding from the innovation-supporting Proof of Concept Programme of the European Research Council (ERC). It is worth noting that only 2 Greek Researchers were funded by this Programme, both members of FORTH.

ERC Proof of Concept Grants are open only to researchers who have already received funding from the ERC in the past and are intended to facilitate the final stage of capitalizing on forefront research results to develop innovative products and services.

The objective of the new research project that was funded by the ERC is the development of novel therapeutic strategies against chronic inflammation to combat age-related disorders, an ever-increasing contributor to human disability and morbidity in modern societies. Chronic inflammation is the main contributor of multiple diseases (co-morbidity) that are most significant at later stages in life: diabetes, cardiovascular diseases, autoimmune disorders, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, many forms of cancer and most common forms of dementia. The latter contributes to a marked decrease in workforce and to an increased pressure on health systems and social care structures in terms of demand for care. The proposed novel strategy provides the means towards an innovative medicine that will effectively address real but unmet therapeutic needs for a wide range of devastating diseases associated with chronic inflammation.

The Program will exploit the expertise of the PRAXI Network, an established Technology Transfer Unit at FORTH with long-standing experience in assisting SMEs and research organizations throughout Greece.

Short bio: George A. Garinis is a Professor of Genetics at the department of Biology of the University of Crete and is also heading the Genome Stability and Mammalian Physiology laboratory at the IMBB-FORTH. He earned his Ph.D. degree at the University of Athens, and trained as a postdoctoral researcher at the Erasmus Medical Center in Rotterdam, Netherlands. His research focuses on DNA damage and its impact on mammalian physiology, aging and cancer. He received several notable scientific prizes, including an ERC Consolidator Grant, an EMBO Young Investigator Award and has published a number of papers in prominent journals. In May 2019, Professor George A. Garinis was elected an EMBO member. The last 5 years, he has coordinated several national and European Research programs and he currently coordinates two European programs on DNA repair mechanisms (aDDress-ITN) and aging (HealthAge-ITN).



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