

**Institute of Molecular Biology and Biotechnology  
Foundation for Research and Technology-Hellas**

**PRESS RELEASE**

**Heraklion, Greece, December 21, 2012**

**IMBB researcher receives the Empeirikeion Foundation Academic Excellence Prize**

**Nektarios Tavernarakis, a Research Director at the Institute of Molecular Biology and Biotechnology (IMBB) of the Foundation of Research and technology Hellas (FORTH), and a Professor-elect at the Medical School of the University of Crete was awarded today the Grant Academic Excellence Prize of the Empeirikeion Foundation.**

This prestigious award is given to Greek scientists in Greece or abroad, who have made substantial, groundbreaking contributions to Science, in any discipline. It is worth noting these highly competitive prizes are not awarded regularly. This year's award spans a period between 2009 and 2012. By giving these prizes, the Foundation is aiming to reinforce the creative work of Greek scientists, to reward their continuous and consistent efforts to develop science and civilization, to honor their national stature and to contribute to the creation of new standards in the Greek community.

Nektarios Tavernarakis was selected to receive the award for his seminal research achievements, relevant to ageing, neurodegeneration, and learning and memory. For his scientific accomplishments, Nektarios Tavernarakis has received several notable scientific prizes including a European Research Council (ERC) Advanced Investigator grant award, the European Molecular Biology Organisation (EMBO) Young Investigator award, the International Human Frontier in Science Program Organization (HFSP) long-term postdoctoral fellowship, the Dr. Frederick E. G. Valergakis Post-Graduate Research Grand Program Academic achievement award of the Hellenic University Club of New York, the Bodossaki Foundation Scientific Prize for Medicine and Biology, the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation, Friedrich Wilhelm Bessel research award and the Research Excellence award of the Foundation for Research and Technology. Prof. Tavernarakis is also an elected member of EMBO.

For more information on the research interests and activities of Nektarios Tavernarakis and his team, please visit the Lab's web site (<http://www.elegans.gr/>).

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