Report for the ANA

**ANA supports an interdisciplinary networking event at the FENS-meeting in Paris**

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During the last decade, the advance in methodology allowed neuroscientists to address increasingly complex research questions such as the foundation of social behavior, the neuronal correlates of free-behaving animals and the subjective experience of pain, perception and disease states. However, these research questions unavoidably exceed a simplified description of the relation between brains as the material basis and the observation of behaviors, but include elements of subjective experience. Consequently, neuroscientists enter research areas in which other disciplines such as sociology or psychology doubtlessly have their expertise in spite of different conceptual frameworks and methodologies. This renders the ability to successfully exercise interdisciplinarity an ever increasing demand and challenge for young scientist. In fact, interdisciplinarity opens up new and enriching opportunities to overcome the contemporary fragmentalism of the brain sciences and grapple with the inherent complexity of nature. At the same time, perils and pitfalls are lurking in interdisciplinary research that can be recognized – and ideally avoided – by using philosophical methodologies and approaches. To raise awareness for the need of interdisciplinarity and create a deeper understanding how philosophy can contribute to this endeavor, a networking event entitled “Are we equipped to work interdisciplinarily? – On the lack of philosophical education of neuroscientists!” was organized by **Isabella Sarto-Jackson** (Konrad Lorenz Institute for Evolution and Cognition Research, Klosterneuburg, Austria) and **Markus Kunze** (Center for Brain Research of the Medical University of Vienna, Austria) together with the Italian neuroscientist **Igor Branchi** (Sapienza University, Rome, Italy). The speakers drew on their longstanding expertise in multi- and interdisciplinary research and presented examples of interdisciplinarity in practice.

More than 250 neuroscientists participated in this evening event, in which plenary talks by French neuroscientist Jean-Pierre Changeux and American philosopher, turned neuroscientist, Ann-Sophie Barwich provided fascinating frameworks for interdisciplinarity. In his talk, Changeux advocated for the importance of interdisciplinary work by putting particular effort into dialogue and mutual understanding between disciplines while at the same time emphasizing the necessity of preserving disciplinary competence and independency. Barwich pointed out that the critical difference between sciences and humanities lies in the methodology, not in the use of particular methods (that can be straightforwardly learned) and thus in conceptualizing what counts as evidential. The plenary talks were followed by a panel discussion also including German philosopher Sidney Carls-Diamante and the three organizers all reporting about their individual experiences doing research in interdisciplinary settings in different scientific cultures. Finally, the audience was invited to enter the discussion and to share their experiences and expectations, which opened a wide exchange on a broad variety of topics for which the time was too short.

This event was made possible by the generous support of ANA and the EBBS (European Brain and Behavioural Society) as well as by a highly successful initiative launched by Young ANA Chair Bruno Benedetti (Paracelsus Medical University, Salzburg, Austria) reaching out to young European neuroscientists.