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Press Release

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Halyna Shcherbata is EMBO Young Investigator

The European Molecular Biology Organisation (EMBO) announced today the selection of 27 new EMBO Young Investigators. Among them is Halyna Shcherbata at the Max Planck Institute (MPI) for Biophysical Chemistry in Göttingen. With the prestigious EMBO Young Investigator Award the organization honors exceptional achievements in research and offers financial and practical benefits.

In naming Halyna Shcherbata EMBO Young Investigator the organization acknowledges her highly successful research on fundamental developmental processes. Research of the biologist is focused on the role of microRNAs (miRNAs) in development using the fruit fly *Drosophila* as a model organism. miRNAs are small stretches of RNA that can silence genes and, therefore, are important for gene regulation. The Shcherbata lab works on understanding how miRNAs take part in controlling the development of an organism and how they contribute to diseases such as muscular dystrophy. The scientist further investigates the role miRNAs play in ensuring that maintenance and differentiation of stem cells in an organism are properly balanced.

“The status of EMBO Young Investigator helps researchers under the age of 40 build their first independent teams and achieve a level of recognition that offers immediate benefits,” says Gerlind Wallon, Manager of the Young Investigator Programme. “The networking activities provide an additional layer of support for the young researchers.”

The Young Investigator Programme was established by EMBO in 2000. It supports the career of excellent young scientists in molecular biosciences who have established their first research group in the past four years. In 2014, 202 researchers applied for the Young



Halyna Shcherbata
(Image: Max Planck Institute for Biophysical Chemistry)

Investigator Programme, which is open for scientists from Europe, Israel, and Singapore. 13 percent of the candidates who applied were selected. The new investigators originate from eleven countries. The award includes financial support of annually 15,000 Euros for three years. Additionally, the young scientists can choose from a number of benefits designed to improve their research environment, such as non-scientific skills training for the award winners and their students. Also, the Young Investigators gain access to core facilities at the European Molecular Biology Laboratory EMBL and funding for their group members and themselves to attend conferences. The awardees join a distinguished group of 342 current and past Young Investigators. (fk)

Further information

<http://www.mpibpc.mpg.de/shcherbata> - Website of the Max Planck Research Group Gene Expression and Signaling, Max Planck Institute for Biophysical Chemistry, Göttingen

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