

ECNP Research Internship – “A crash course on how to be a neuroscientist”  
2020 01 06 – 2020 01 17

Host: prof. David Nutt, MD, FRCP,  
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During two weeks that I have spent in the Neuropsychopharmacology Unit and Centre for Psychedelic Research at the Department of Brain Sciences of the Imperial College London, I was immersed in research and teaching activities from Day 1.

During the internship, I joined many researchers during their days, allowing me to understand the psychopharmacology research process in its complexity. The team is working on an array of different aspects of neuropsychopharmacology, starting from the creation of substances for neuroimaging to clinical studies on psychedelics. To name a few of the experiences during my stay, I saw the “angry” neurons in the brain tissue slices of hangover mice, the PET imaging scanners in their very controlled environment, and brain images on the computer. I was explained all the complex process researchers have to undergo until the emergence of the “nice blob” on the functional imaging pictures we see in journals, and it does not seem an easy task. It was also very interesting to get to know the kitchen of the emerging psychedelic research, as researchers in Imperial College London have been able to demonstrate some fascinating findings in terms of clinical efficacy and neurobiological changes after the administration of these substances, which is very important for the scientific progress in psychiatry.

I also attended a number of events in different parts of London, all related to diverse prof. Nutt’s activities, including lectures for general and professional audiences, as well as a book launch. In addition, after a discussion regarding the drug policy with prof. Nutt, I ended up writing an article on Lithuania’s alcohol policy that we seek to publish in the upcoming months.

All in all, I had a very rich and pleasant experience with prof. Nutt and his team, and I gained deeper insight into the neuropsychopharmacology research process that I am sure I will apply in my future career. I am thankful to the European College of Neuropsychopharmacology for this great opportunity and David Nutt with his vibrant team for welcoming me so warmly.



With prof. David Nutt at the launch of his new book