Report on the 4th Protein Misfolding and Neurological Disorders Meeting for the ISN

The 4th Protein Misfolding and Neurological Disorders Meeting was successfully held from 16-19th September 2011 on Heron Island, Queensland, Australia. The meeting is a biannual event bringing together researchers working on basic protein misfolding and diseases associated with protein misfolding, with an emphasis on neurological diseases. The 2011 meeting was attended by 60 delegates from 9 countries with 27% of delegates coming from overseas.

Following a survey of attendees at the meeting, the program was extremely well received by the delegates with 100% of respondents rating the program standard, content and relevance as excellent or very good. Delegates appreciated the calibre of the invited speakers, as particular mention was made regarding this. Talks covered aspects of protein misfolding and disease ranging from basic science topics to clinical applications (such as therapeutics and diagnostics) with a mix of international and national speakers, both senior and junior.

The ISN funding supported the Young Investigator Session at the meeting which was chaired by Professors Don Cleveland (UCSD; USA) and Bart De Strooper (University of Leuven; Belgium), two prominent leaders in the field. The speakers were:

- **Andrew Watt (University of Melbourne; Australia)**
  Investigating Alzheimer's disease in the blood cellular fraction
- **Gawain McColl (Mental Health Research Institute of Victoria; Australia)**
  New Alzheimer's Disease Models of *Aß* toxicity in *C. elegans*
- **Julie Nigro (CSIRO; Australia)**
  Understanding the role of AMP-activated protein kinase in the pathogenesis of Alzheimer's disease
- **Amit Kumar (University of Southern Mississippi; USA)**
  Non-esterified fatty acids generate distinct low-molecular weight amyloid-β (Aβ42) oligomers along pathway different from fibril formation.
- **Anja Knaupp (Monash University; Australia)**
  In vitro formation of protein aggregates as potential cofactors for tPA mediated plasmin generation
- **Tim Johanssen (University of Melbourne; Australia)**
  The Metal Chaperone Activity of the Alzheimer's Drug, PBT2 Rescues Glutamate-induced Excitotoxcity

The ISN session was advertised in the conference abstract book and acknowledged in the session slides and welcoming/farewell comments by the organizing committee. The support of the ISN was also advertised on the conference website (www.proteinmisfolding.org).

Expenditure of ISN funding:

We received $4,000 funding from the ISN of which 60% ($2400) was used to fund young researchers who applied for travel awards. Travel awards were given to Julie Nigro, Gawain McColl and Andrew Watt to the amount of $350 each (Total: $1050) and Amit Kumar was awarded $1350 based on his additional travel expenses being based in the USA. The remainder of the funding ($1600) was used to defray the registration costs of our two international speakers who chaired this session. Total expenditure: $4000.