

How to Develop Your Research Capacity for Chemogenetic Experiments from Scratch:

Disseminating the Impact of the GEMSTONE Project at Acibadem University

CALL FOR PARTICIPANTS

Are you an early to mid-career researcher or research support staff in neuroscience?

Want to build your capacity in chemogenetics from scratch?

Join us for this dissemination event, where we will share key lessons from GEMSTONE!



Tuesday–Wednesday
17–18 June 2025



ACU Kerem Aydinlar Campus
Istanbul, Turkey



Details and registration:
www.gemstoneproject.eu



Funded by
the European Union



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This gathering is a two-day dissemination event taking place on **17-18 June 2025** at the ACU Kerem Aydınlar Campus in **Istanbul**. The programme aims to share the experiences, challenges, and results derived from the Horizon Europe-funded GEMSTONE Project, emphasizing on-the-job learning, empirical observation, and the trial-and-error methods employed throughout the project. Designed to equip researchers with both scientific and managerial skills, the event will highlight the importance of day-to-day experience and the development of practical skills in advancing research capacity. It seeks to foster collaboration and knowledge transfer within the regional neuroscience community, with participants from Widening countries, including the **Balkans, Georgia, and Turkey**.

AIMS: The primary aim of this event is to disseminate the lessons learned and best practices developed during GEMSTONE's journey to establish research capacity in chemogenetics. By combining insights gained through hands-on approaches with theoretical knowledge, the event will provide participants with comprehensive guidance in critical areas such as team management, infrastructure planning, time management, financial oversight, and data handling, all of which are essential for initiating chemogenetic experiments. The sessions will incorporate practical examples, case studies, and discussions of real-world challenges encountered during GEMSTONE's implementation. Additionally, the event will highlight GEMSTONE's scientific achievements in studying neurodevelopmental diseases, showcasing the progression from foundational efforts to advanced outcomes achieved through empirical practices and systematic learning. By sharing these experiences, we aspire to inspire other institutions to pursue similar capacity-building efforts and bridge the gap in research capability between Widening countries and leading European institutions.

AUDIENCE: The event is tailored for **20-25** participants, primarily early to mid-career researchers and research support staff from neuroscience institutions across the Balkans, Georgia, and Turkey. Attendees are expected to be individuals interested in developing or enhancing their capacity for conducting chemogenetic experiments, particularly in the context of neurodevelopmental disorders such as Parkinson's disease and epilepsy research. Participation will require prior registration, and while there is no admission fee, attendees will be responsible for their own travel, accommodation, and meal expenses. Refreshments and lunch will be provided.

RESULTS: By the conclusion of the event, participants will have acquired both practical knowledge and access to materials, templates, and case studies that will enable them to replicate best practices in their own institutions. Through the incorporation of insights derived from on-the-job experiences, attendees will gain a deeper understanding of the complexities and solutions involved in capacity-building for chemogenetics. The event is also expected to catalyze new networking and collaboration opportunities, strengthening regional ties within the neuroscience community. Furthermore, it will enhance the visibility of ACU and its contributions to neurodevelopmental research on a global scale. Ultimately, the event seeks to empower researchers with the tools, empirical knowledge, and insights needed to advance their work while contributing to the broader goal of reducing disparities in research capacity across Europe.

REGISTRATION: Please send your up-to-date CV to gemstone@acibadem.edu.tr by **15 May 2025**. Selected participants will receive confirmation via email. Limited spots available – registration is on a first come, first served basis.

TENTATIVE PROGRAMME

How to Develop Your Research Capacity for Chemogenetic Experiments from Scratch: Disseminating the Impact of GEMSTONE Project at Acibadem University

DAY 1: Tuesday, 17 June 2025

09:30 – 10:15 45 min	Registration – Welcome coffee	
10:15 – 11:00 45 min	Introduction to the GEMSTONE Project – Opening speech – Overview of the project and its goals	Prof. Filiz Onat
11:00 – 11:45 45 min	Plenary session 1: Introduction to absence epilepsy – Tecto-thalamic pathway and possible contributions to the pathophysiology	Assoc. Prof. Magor László Lőrincz (Moderator: Prof. Mehmet Batu Erman)
11:45 – 12:00 15 min	Coffee break	
12:00 – 12:45 45 min	Plenary session 2: Introduction to chemogenetics – Advantages and potential of chemogenetic methods	Prof. Merab Kokaia (Moderator: Prof. Revaz Solomonias)
12:45 – 13:45 60 min	Lunch break	
13:45 – 14:45 60 min	Capacity-building session 1: Team management – Determining team size and qualifications – Division of labour and resource allocation – Organizational chart examples and practical insights	Assoc. Prof. My Andersson (Moderator: Prof. Güldal Süyen)
14:45 – 15:00 15 min	Coffee break	
15:00 – 16:00 60 min	Capacity-building session 2: Infrastructure management – Laboratory setup: equipment, materials, and specifications – Overcoming supply chain challenges – Detailed equipment and material lists	Prof. Filiz Onat / Assoc. Prof. Nihan Çarçak Yılmaz (Moderator: Prof. Levent Altıntaş)
16:00 – 16:15 15 min	Coffee break	
16:15 – 17:15 60 min	Capacity-building session 3: Time management – Planning experiments and timelines – Managing overlapping processes and contingencies	Prof. Filiz Onat / Assoc. Prof. Nihan Çarçak Yılmaz (Moderator: Prof. Beki Kan)

TENTATIVE PROGRAMME

How to Develop Your Research Capacity for Chemogenetic Experiments from Scratch: Disseminating the Impact of GEMSTONE Project at Acibadem University

DAY 2: Wednesday, 18 June 2025

10:00 – 10:30 30 min	Registration – Welcome coffee	
10:30 – 11:30 60 min	Capacity-building session 4: Financial management – Budgeting for human resources and equipment/consumables – Cost breakdowns by experiment phases and repetitions – GEMSTONE budget tables as case studies	Cem Öztürk (Moderator: Prof. Devrim Öz Arslan)
11:30 – 11:40 15 min	Coffee break	
11:45 – 12:45 60 min	Capacity-building session 5: Data management – Data acquisition, handling, and processing – Long-term sustainability and sharing of data	Talat Taygun Turan (Moderator: Assoc. Prof. Meltem Kolgazi)
12:45 – 13:45 60 min	Lunch break	
13:45 – 14:45 60 min	Scientific results of chemogenetic experiments in GEMSTONE – Comparing baseline to achieved results – Summary of best practices and key takeaways	Assoc. Prof. Nihan Çarçak Yılmaz (Moderator: Assis. Prof. Elif Nedret Keskinöz)
14:45 – 15:00 15 min	Coffee break	
15:00 – 16:00 60 min	Open discussion and Q&A – Participant questions and feedback	Moderator: Cem Öztürk
16:00 – 16:45 45 min	Certificate distribution – Group photo	
16:45 – 18:45 120 min	Closing reception – Networking opportunity – Reflections on the event and collaboration	