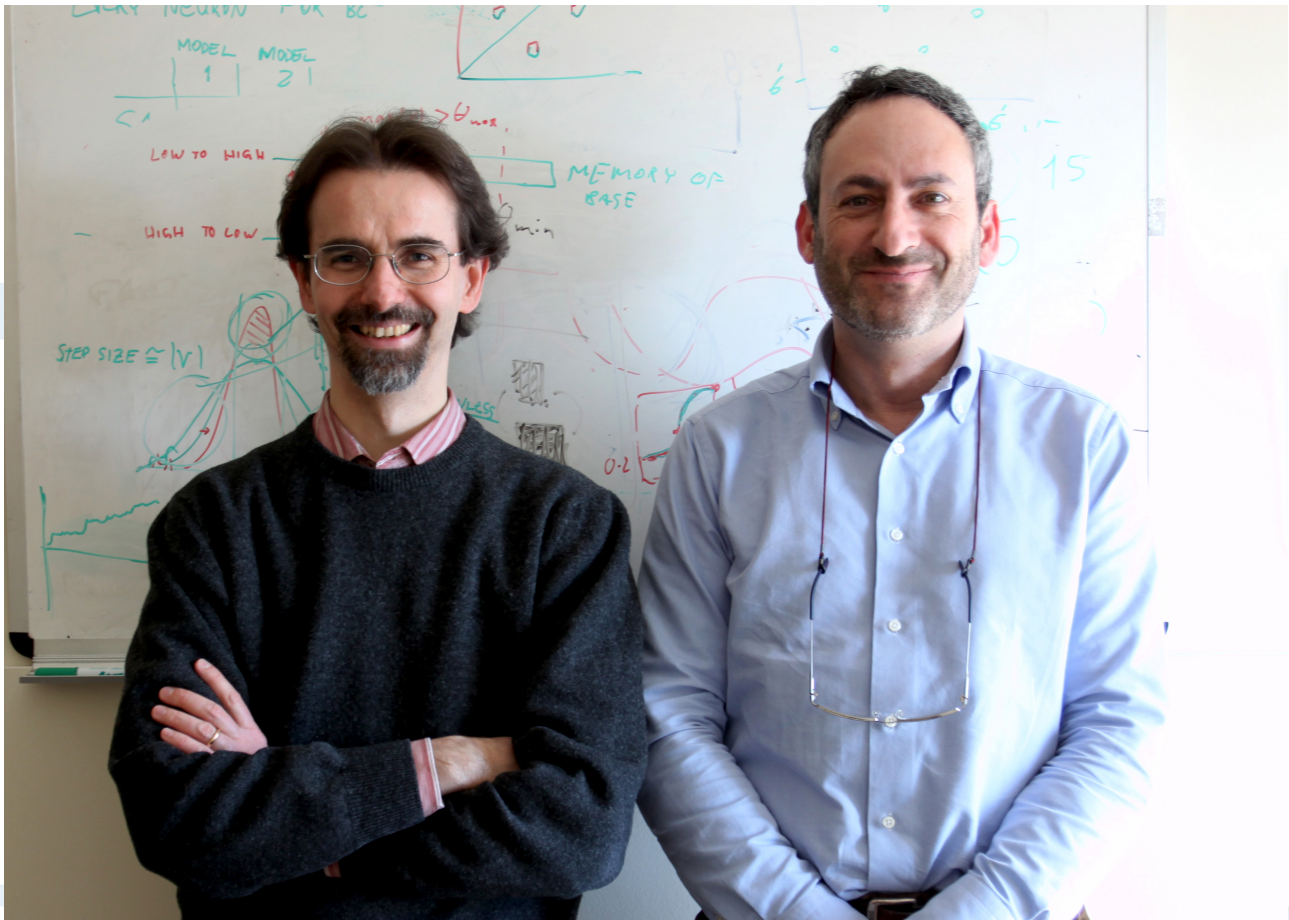




International School for Advanced Studies

## Two SISSA scientists earn The Human Frontier Prize



**The scientists won a prestigious international research grant for the next three years**

25 March 2013

**Mathew Diamond and Davide Zoccolan**, two neuroscientists of the International **School for Advanced Studies (SISSA)** of Trieste, are among the recipients of an important award that will finance an international research project over the next three years.

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The **Human Frontier Science Program (HFSP)** assigns every year a limited number of grants to research projects meeting the highest standards of excellence carried out by international teams. Mathew Diamond and Davide Zoccolan of SISSA of Trieste are among the winners of this year's edition. The two scientists, alongside three other international researchers (Winrich Freiwald of The Rockefeller University, Rodrigo Quian Quiroga of the University of Leicester and Haim Sompolinsky of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem), have been just awarded a total grant of



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US\$450,000 (about €350,000) per year for the next three years. Out of the over 800 applications submitted this year only about fifteen projects were selected, which confirms the high standard of the research carried out by SISSA.

"The research project we have proposed investigates the neural basis of objects' perception in human beings, in primates and in rodents" explains Diamond, who has won the HFSP grant for as many as three times, starting from 2004. "We investigate the **perception of objects** through a 'multimodal' approach, that is, through the integration of various senses, in particular **tact** – a topic my laboratory is specialized in - and **sight**."

Vision is the focus of Davide Zoccolan's team: "The project's ultimate goal is to understand how tactile and visual input is mapped by the brain to represent a concept. The **multimodal** aspect is a key element. For instance, a banana, be it observed, tasted or touched will evoke the same concept. The synergy between my team and Diamond's is therefore a strong point of the project."

#### **Contacts:**

Communication Office:

[pressroom@sissa.it](mailto:pressroom@sissa.it)

Tel: (+39) 040 3787557 | (+39) 340-5473118, (+39) 333-5275592

via Bonomea, 265

34136 Trieste

For further information on SISSA: [www.sissa.it](http://www.sissa.it)