



WIOLETTA WALESZCZYK (1962–2020)

It is with deep sorrow that we inform you of the passing away of Professor Wioletta Waleszczyk on March 15th, 2020, after several months of struggling with illness. Wioletta was our colleague, Head of the Laboratory of Neurobiology of Vision, and a scientist with deep knowledge, passion, insight, and research talent. A modest and upright woman, open, and full of kindness to others.

Professor Waleszczyk associated her scientific life with the Nencki Institute. After graduating from the Faculty of Physics at the University of Warsaw, where she specialized in medical physics, she started working at the Institute, encouraged by prof. Andrzej Wróbel to get involved in systemic studies of the visual system. As professor Wróbel recalls: “I was impressed by her interest in the study of the nervous system, and the ease of interpretation of biological facts, unexpected in a person with a degree in physics.” She received a doctoral degree in neurophysiology in 1995, in the team of prof. Żernicki (under the supervision of prof. Krystyna Dec). In 2006, working in the lab of prof. Andrzej Wróbel, she obtained the degree of habilitated doctor.

In 2008, she organized and took over the management of the Laboratory of Neurobiology of Vision. In 2017, she received the title of professor.

Professor Waleszczyk has conducted research on the processing of visual information, in recent years expanding her studies on the plasticity of the sensory systems, rehabilitation of visual deficits using visual training, non-invasive current stimulation, and gene therapy. She and her team had significant achievements in that field, which are highly appreciated in the international environment. She initiated and maintained fruitful cooperation with centers in Australia, Hungary, Germany, as well as Italy, Finland, Sweden, and Great Britain, implementing alone or in cooperation NCN, NCBiR, MNiSW, ERA-Net Neuron, PAN-WAN, and FENS-SfN projects. She is the author or co-author of many important scientific papers, translations of textbooks, and English-language articles. She promoted three doctors of sciences and was a supervisor of the next five doctoral students.

Professor Waleszczyk worked with commitment and talent for the popularization of science, as well as for the scientific community, serving with a dedication to many editorial boards of scientific journals. She was the chairman of the Editorial Board of *Acta Neurobiologiae Experimentalis* (2017-2020), a member of the editorial boards of the *European Journal of Neuroscience*, *ISRN Neuroscience*, *Neuroinformatics*, *Frontiers in Neuroscience*, and *Świat Mózgu*. Her high competence resulted in invitations to the organizing committees of scientific conferences of the Polish Society for Neurosciences (PTBUN, 2011, 2015, 2017), and the Polish Society of Cognitive Science (2016), as well as evaluating committees of prestigious scientific projects, such as the ERC Consolidator grant. She also served as the Secretary of the PTBUN (2011-2015). With passion and enthusiasm, she organized events popularizing science, such as Brain Week, Science Festival, Brain on Holidays, and Workshops of the National Children's Fund. She was awarded the Gold Cross of Merit for her professional activity.

Her premature departure interrupted the implementation of projects and plans, leaving her students, colleagues, and friends, in deep sadness. Professor Wioletta Waleszczyk death is a serious loss for the scientific community. We will miss her very much, and she will remain in our memory.

Małgorzata Skup, Julita Czarkowska-Bauch, Andrzej Wróbel