The 2017 European Young Researchers' Award

EVALUATION SUMMARY

The International Selection Committee for the European Young Researchers' Award 2017 appointed by the Euroscience Board, has selected two awardees: **Ms. Alejandra Consejo and Mr. Pavlo Bazilinskyy** for the 2017 award. As in all odd years, this year's EYRA is to recognize PhD candidates (or PhD graduates who defended their PhD in 2017), who have demonstrated an outstanding research performance, leadership and outreach and have incorporated a clear European dimension in their research.

The Committee first selected eight candidates on the basis of three different criteria: scientific quality, leadership and communication skills and European dimension of the research, the most important being scientific quality. For those candidates, independent reports by experts in the fields of the candidates were obtained; it is on the basis of these reports and of its own evaluations that the jury made its final decision during a virtual meeting early October. The discussion resulted in the unanimous and enthusiastic choice of Alejandra Consejo and Pavlo Bazilinskyy as the 2017 EYRA laureates.

Alejandra Consejo is Spanish. After her BA and MA in Physics and Physical Technology at the university of Zaragoza, she obtained in 2014 a Marie Curie early stage researcher fellowship at Wroclaw University of Science and Technology (Poland) under the supervision of Robert Iskander, within the AGEYE Marie Curie Initial Training Network, with a secondment at the University of Manchester. She defended her PhD in June of 2017. Since the beginning of 2017, she has been in the Department of Ophthalmology in Antwerp University Hospital, in the Physiological Optics research group with Professor Jos Rozema, Professor Marie-José Tassignon and Professor Carina Koppen, while being also the principal investigator of a research project at Wroclaw University of Science and Technology funded by the Polish National Center of Science.

Alejandra's research focuses on vision science, more specifically on the physical properties of the human eye, and how they evolve with ageing. She has worked specifically on the limbus/sclera transition, presbyopia (eye ageing), the effect of contact lens wear, using mathematical modelisation. Her research requires excellent clinical skills, since it involves dealing with patients, but also advanced technical, modelisation and computational abilities. Her papers and conference presentations have attracted a great deal of interest from experts in the field, as manifested by three awards in specialised conferences. In her application, Alejandra listed 5 journal papers, two e-abstracts, and fourteen conference communications. Since the spring of 2017, she has submitted two new papers, and two conference publications.

In addition to her research, Alejandra is very involved in sharing her research with a wide audience, giving talks in public centres and schools in Spain and Poland, preparing a film available on Youtube, etc. She was also one of the founding members of the Polish chapter of the Marie Curie Alumni Association. She was interviewed, as co- founder of this organization,

in The European Forum of Young Innovators 2016. The event was broadcasted in streaming and it is available on YouTube. She has written several online articles telling about her Marie Curie fellow experience and explaining the main outcomes of her research on different online platforms, such as the European Youth Portal.

Pavlo Bazilinskyy is Ukrainian; he obtained his high school degree in the Natural Science Lyceum 15 in Kiev, and started university studies in the National University in Kiev. He then transferred to the Mikkeli University of Applied Sciences (Finland) where he obtained his Bachelor in Engineering in 2012; during his last year, he was an exchange student at the university of Wolverhampton in England (UK). While studying, he worked as a software developer in Finland. In 2012, he was accepted as an Erasmus Mundus Masters student at the university of St Andrews in Scotland (UK) and Maynooth University in Ireland. In 2014, he started a PhD programme at Delft University, as a Marie Curie early stage researcher in the Human Factors of Automated Driving project, with a secondment at TU München, working under the supervision of Prof. de Winter.

Within the field of automated driving, Pavlo's research project is to use the auditory modality as a channel of communication between human and machine. Before engaging in this direction, he launched an online questionnaire to find out how people with automated cars wish to communicate with them, and pursued the approach of asking users at various stages of his research, bringing in the practice of participatory research to the field and the tools of crowdsourcing to perform the studies. In the spring of 2017, Pavlo conducted a successful on-road study on innovative auditory interfaces with Volvo Trucks in Sweden. In his application, Pavlo included a bibliography listing seven papers or conference communications. Since then he submitted four conference papers, one of his journal publications was accepted and he made three conference presentations; and he is now finishing two publications on his recent experiments on Human Factors of Automated driving.

Beyond his research, Pavlo is a co-founder of the startup i*nventme*, which aims at building a bridge between the worlds of academia and industry by bringing professors, their students and companies together. He is very active in the Marie Curie Alumni Association, both as the chair of the "Bridging Science and Business" working group; in that capacity, he organised an event in Gdansk in September of 2017 on the topic of balancing between business and academia, which attracted 50 researchers from all over Europe. He is the vice-president of the MCAAA BeNeLux chapter. He is also involved in the Erasmus Mundus Students and Alumni Association, with the goal of helping talented students building their future.

Pavlo is an accomplished saxo player and triathlete.

The International Selection Committee consisted of
Dr. *Stephane Berghmans,*
Dr. *Slobodan Radicev,*
Professor Maria Luísa Lima
Professor Anastasia Kiratzi
Professor Jerzy Langer
and Chair Professor *Martin Andler*