

Florentia Papastefanaki

I am a neurobiologist (PhD), holding a Research Staff Scientist position in the Laboratory of Cellular and Molecular Neurobiology-Stem cells since 2009. I am scientifically interested in neuron-glia interactions during nervous system development and regeneration aiming at translational approaches for treatment of neurotrauma, such as brain and spinal cord injuries, neurodegenerative diseases, and brain infection, using animal and *in vitro* models. During my scientific journey I have applied *ex vivo* and *in vivo* gene therapy approaches in conjunction with therapeutic cell transplantation and I have tested functionalized nanoparticles as drug delivery systems (visiting researcher at ZMNH, Hamburg). Recently, I expanded my research interests to cell reprogramming and induced pluripotent stem cell (iPSC) technology to develop more-relevant-to-human *in vitro* models of neurodegenerative disorders and was assigned as the Head of the Human Embryonic and Induced Pluripotent Stem Cell Unit of the Hellenic Pasteur Institute. Our currently ongoing major project aims the study of neuron-glia dynamics related to alpha-synuclein-mediated pathologies by implementing the generation and characterization of human astrocytes and neurons from human iPSCs carrying the p.A53T-alpha-synuclein mutation that causes early onset familial Parkinson's disease (funded by HFRI to Dr R. Matsas). Moreover, as Work Package Leader or Team Member, I have been actively involved in several other research projects of the Lab and the Institute funded by national and international sources. In addition, I teach in two Master's programs, regularly supervise BSc and MSc students for their theses and train young scientists coming to the lab as PhD students, post-doctoral fellows or research scientists in laboratory practice, biosafety, and demanding techniques. I am member of the APELLA Faculty Electors Body while I regularly manage administrative issues, such as procurement, operational flows, etc. Since 2021, I serve as president of the Institutional Animal Protocols Evaluation Committee being also a member of the Animal's Welfare Body.

Updated list of publications:

<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/?term=papastefanaki+f&sort=date>