

PHILIPPE WIENER LECTURE IN CAMBRIDGE



Biographical Note

Pierre Vanderhaeghen graduated as an MD/PhD from the Université libre de Bruxelles (ULB), followed by a postdoctoral training at the Harvard Medical School. He is currently Professor at the ULB and Director of the newly created ULB Neuroscience Institute. He is an elected Member of the Belgian Royal Academy of Medicine and European Organization of Molecular Biology (EMBO), and recipient of numerous awards including the Francqui and de Spoelberch Prizes. He currently holds an Advanced Grant of the European Research Council to study the links between the development and evolution of the human cerebral cortex.

The cerebral cortex is the most complex and important structure in our brain, and is the target of most neurological diseases. Over the last years the group of Pierre Vanderhaeghen pioneered an entirely novel cellular model of cortical development from embryonic stem cells, where a complex network of cortical nerve cells can be generated in the laboratory, outside of the brain. This breakthrough constitutes an important step to study the mechanisms of human brain evolution and diseases, and in the long run opens interesting perspectives for brain repair.