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# Pune to host fifth edition of global Drosophila conference

**Shoumojit Banerjee**

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## Event to help researchers on fruit fly interact with peers

The city is set to host the fifth edition of the Asia Pacific Drosophila Research Conference (APDRC5), which is being organised in the country for the first time by the Indian Institute of Science Education and Research (IISER).

This biennial conference, which is to be held between January 6 and 10, aims to promote the interaction of Drosophila researchers in the Asia-Pacific region with their peers in the rest of the world. It will bring together scientists from all over the world who use the fruit fly, Drosophila, as a model organism to address basic and applied questions.

“Drosophila is one of the most widely-used and preferred model organisms in biological research across the world for the last 100 years. Several discoveries in biology have been made using this. Its genome is entirely sequenced and there is enormous information available about its biochemistry, physiology and behaviour,” said professor (biology) Sutirth Dey of IISER.

The event will feature 430 delegates: 330 Indian and 100 foreign. It will see the participation of two Nobel laureates, professors Eric Wieschaus and Michael Rosbash, known for their seminal contribution to the fields of development biology and chronobiology respectively.

Prof. Wieschaus, an American evolutionary developmental biologist, shared the Nobel in Physiology in 1995 with Edward B. Lewis and Christiane Nüsslein-Volhard for his work on genetic control of embryonic development, while Prof. Rosbash shared the Nobel in Physiology along with

Michael Young and Jeffrey Hall for their discoveries of molecular mechanisms controlling the circadian rhythm.

“This event is one of the largest meetings of Drosophila researchers in the whole world and attracts scientists working in diverse disciplines ranging from cell and molecular biology to ecology and evolution,” said Prof. Dey.

Explaining the choice by the APDRC board of IISER to organise the meet, he said the institute is one of the premier scientific research institutes of the country and is very strong in Drosophila research, given that there are five professors and 30 Ph.D. scholars who were using Drosophila to answer questions in developmental biology.

A total 57 talks and 240 posters on topics ranging from gametogenesis and stem cells, morphogenesis and mechanobiology, hormones and physiology, cellular and behavioural neurobiology, infection and immunity and ecology and evolution are scheduled for the conference.

“One of the highlights of this conference is that we are explicitly encouraging undergraduates from various institutes of the world to participate in it. There is a pre-conference symposium called ‘signals from the gut’ in collaboration with the National Centre for Cell Science, as well as a pre-conference microscopy workshop on super-resolution microscopy. This will feature microscopes from fluorescence imaging to super resolution imaging (50 nm resolution) which are vital for certain kinds of fly work,” Prof. Dey said.

The last four editions of this conference took place in Taipei, Seoul, Beijing and Osaka.

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