

2003 Hans Sigrist Stipend

I came from Italy to Switzerland in 1997 to work at my master degree thesis at the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine of the University of Bern. In 1998 I was employed as veterinary assistant at the equine clinic of the University of Bern. I started my specialization in anaesthesiology that I concluded in 2002 with the Diploma of the European College of Veterinary Anaesthesia. In the meantime I had started a PhD program at the University of Aalborg, Denmark, focused on physiological aspects of equine pain. All experiments have been carried out in Switzerland, under the supervision of Prof. Schatzmann, leader of the Anaesthesiology Section here in Bern. The tutoring for the theoretical aspect of the research came from Denmark, where Prof. Arendt-Nielsen of the Sensory-Motor Interaction Center of the Biomedical Engineering Faculty accepted to collaborate for this equine project. Many projects have been planned but without the Habilitation Stipendium that I received last year they would have remained a dream. Thanks to Hans Sigrist Stipend I had not only the opportunity to go on with my PhD project, that will be finished by the end of 2004, but also to plan new studies about pharmacological modulation of pain in horses



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and about perioperative pain in different domestic species, including animals commonly used in experiments that strongly deserve proper and targeted pain therapy. Doctoral students have been involved in the various projects and this will allow both on a short and on a mid term to expand the research field and to get precise answers on specie-specific pain perception and modulation. Having received the Stipend, I can fully concentrate on the research, without any clinical, night or didactic duties. This is a huge advantage, allowing me to stay continuously concentrated on the subject without distractions, with optimal time investment. I know that to conclude the habilitation in two years from now is a very ambitious program, but I am convinced that it is feasible only because I can count on a full-time dedicated mental energy.

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