



Garvan Institute of Medical Research

Leaders in Science & Society



Professor Olivier Pourquié

Department of Genetics, Harvard Medical School
Professor of Pathology, Brigham and Women's Hospital

“Development of the musculo-skeletal axis”

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Host: Professor Richard Harvey

Olivier Pourquié, Ph.D. is currently Professor at Harvard Medical School and the Brigham and Women's Hospital. He was the director of the Institute for Genetics and Molecular and Cellular Biology in Strasbourg and before a Howard Hughes Medical Institute Investigator at the Stowers Institute for Medical Research in Kansas City, USA. His lab provided the first evidence of the existence of a molecular oscillator -the segmentation clock- associated to the rhythmic production of vertebral precursors (the somites) in the embryo. The work from the Pourquié laboratory has imposed vertebrate segmentation as a novel paradigm to study spatiotemporal regulation of signaling in development. Together, his discoveries have had important consequences for our understanding of the patterning of the vertebrate embryonic axis and provided a conceptual framework to explain human spine malformations such as congenital scoliosis. Pr Pourquié is an elected EMBO and Academia Europea member and is the recipient of several prestigious awards including the Lounsbery Grand Prize of the French and American Academy of Sciences, the Allianz Grand Prize of the French Academy of Sciences and a European Research Council Advanced grant.