

## CURRICULUM VITAE      March 9<sup>th</sup> 2018

Name: AIRAS, Laura Maaria  
Gender: Female  
Date of birth: 24.11.1965  
Place of birth: Turku, Finland  
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### **Personal Statement**

Docent Laura Airas obtained her medical degree at the Turku University, in Turku, Finland. She started her PhD work in the laboratory of Professor Sirpa Jalkanen during medical school, and did a basic immunology and cell biology PhD, of which 7 months was at the Glaxo Institute of Molecular Biology in Geneva, Switzerland in a high level international research environment. She was awarded a special mention for a PhD of High Scientific Quality. She obtained her specialization in neurology in 2001 and a docentship in neurology in 2007, both at the University of Turku. Her main interest is in pathological mechanisms of progressive MS, and she was in 2008 among the first in the world to apply PET imaging to the study of neuroinflammation in MS. She is an experienced clinician and has unique skill sets in the field of neuroimmunology. She is also well connected with scientists of different backgrounds (PET, metabolomics, immunology) and with excellent track records. She spends half of her professional time as a clinical neurologist, mainly consulting for MS-patients, and also actively participates in randomised clinical trials for MS. She is leading a research group, whose aim is to develop treatments for neuroimmunological diseases where no treatment is yet available, such as progressive MS. The group uses here both methods of pre-clinical research (such as animal studies), and clinical PET imaging in a truly translational way. Laura Airas has supervised four PhD students and 19 extended studies projects with medical students. She has authored over 70 peer-reviewed articles in international journals. In 2015 she received an international Grant for Multiple Sclerosis Innovation (GMSI) award. She spent the academic year 2016-2017 as a visiting professor at the Yale University, and became the first professor of neuroimmunology at the University of Turku on September 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017.

### **Academic qualifications**

1991: Licentiate of Medicine, (MD) University of Turku, Finland  
1996: PhD, University of Turku, Finland  
2001: Specialist in neurology. University of Turku, Finland  
2007: Associate professor. University of Turku, Finland  
2017: Professor of Neuroimmunology, University of Turku, Finland

### **Education abroad:**

1992: Glaxo Institute of Molecular Biology (PhD student) Geneva, Switzerland

### **Professional positions and Employment**

1997-2001      House officer, Department of Neurology, Turku University Hospital  
2002            Lecturer, Department of Neurology, University of Turku  
2007-2008     Chief neurologist, Vakka-Suomi District Hospital  
2007-2017     Associate Professor, University of Turku, Finland  
2008-2010     Lecturer, Department of Neurology, University of Turku  
2010-2011     Chief administrative doctor, Department of neurology, Turku University Hospital  
2011- 2015     Consultant in neurology, Turku University Hospital  
2016- 2017     Visiting professor at Yale School of Medicine, Neurology department  
2016-           Finnish Academy Clinical Researcher  
2017-           Consultant in neurology, Turku University Hospital  
2017 -           Professor of Neuroimmunology, University of Turku

### **Scientific recognition:**

1996 Recognition of thesis work of high scientific quality, University of Turku  
 2015 Grant for Multiple Sclerosis Innovation Award

**Scientific activities:**

*Ad hoc* reviewer for over 10 neurology, neuroimmunology and medical journals

2011 Opponent at academic dissertation, University of Tampere, Finland  
 2015 Opponent at academic dissertation, University of Oslo, Norway

**Research trainees supervised**

1 postdoc (graduated from University of Oxford), PhD students: 4 graduated from University of Turku.  
 Masters thesis: 2 biomedicine, 1 psychology; 19 extended studies medicine. Currently under supervision: 6  
 PhD, 2 masters thesis, 2 extended studies medicine.

**Research funding:** Finnish Academy, Foundations, University of Turku, industry

**Clinical research experience**

2000- Principal investigator in industry-sponsored interventional MS-studies: 8 phase III and 2  
 phase II, and 3 register studies. Investigator in 3 stroke studies.

2003-2005 Coordinator and principal investigator: Multiple sclerosis and pregnancy in Finland. An  
 academic study.

2006 - Coordinator and principal investigator of clinical PET imaging studies in multiple sclerosis.

**Other qualifications**

2009 Course in GCP

2011 Qualification in medical leadership

**Positions of trust:**

2004-2006 Secretary General, Finnish Neurological Association, 2010- Secretary of the Finnish  
 Neuroimmunological society, 2010- Consulting neurologist for the Finnish Myasthenia gravis patient  
 organization, 2010-2011 Deputy board member of the Finnish Neurological Society, 2016- Member of the  
 ECTRIMS Council (European Committee for Treatment and Research in Multiple Sclerosis), 2017- Member of  
 the Scientific Advisory Panel for European Council of Neuropsychopharmacology (ECNP), 2018- Faculty  
 Member of ECTRIMS

PUBLICATIONS peer-reviewed articles 78. h index = 23