Professor Mriganka Sur

Professor Mriganka Sur is the Paul E. and Lilah Newton Professor of Neuroscience and Director of the Simons Center for the Social Brain at Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), USA which he founded after 15 years as Head of the Department of Brain and Cognitive Sciences at MIT. Professor Sur received the B. Tech. degree in Electrical Engineering from the Indian Institute of Technology Kanpur in 1974, and the M.S. and the Ph.D. degrees in Electrical Engineering from Vanderbilt University, USA in the year 1975 and 1978, respectively. After postdoctoral and faculty positions at Vanderbilt University, SUNY Stony Brook, and Yale University School of Medicine, Professor Sur joined the Department of Brain and Cognitive Sciences at MIT as an Associate Professor in 1986 and rose to the rank of full Professor in 1993.

Professor Sur is one of the pioneers in the study of brain plasticity. He studies the organization, plasticity and dynamics of the cerebral cortex of the brain using experimental and theoretical approaches. He has discovered fundamental principles by which neural networks are formed during the course of development and how they evolve during learning. His laboratory has identified gene networks underlying cortical plasticity, and pioneered high resolution imaging methods to study cells, synapses and circuits of the intact brain. His research group has demonstrated novel mechanisms underlying disorders of brain development, and proposed innovative strategies for treating such disorders.

Professor Sur has received numerous awards and honours, including the Meghnad Saha Award of the Institute of Electronics and Telecommunication Engineers, India (1976), Charles Judson Herrick Award of the American Association of Anatomists (1983), Whitaker Health Sciences Fund Faculty Award (1986), McKnight Neuroscience Development Award (1988), Sigma Xi award (2001), the Distinguished Alumnus Award of IIT Kanpur (2002), and the NIH BRAIN Initiative Inaugural award (2014). He is an elected Fellow of the Royal Society of the UK, the National Academy of Medicine of the US, the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, the American Association for the Advancement of Science, the World Academy of Sciences, and the Indian National Science Academy. Professor Sur has trained over 75 doctoral students and postdoctoral fellows, and has received many awards for outstanding teaching and mentoring. A few of them include Graduate Student Council Teaching Award, MIT (1989),

School of Science Prize for Excellence in Graduate Teaching and Advising, MIT (2000), and the Brain and Cognitive Sciences Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Advising, MIT (2013). Professor Sur has occupied the DBT Distinguished Biotechnology Chair at the National Brain Research Centre, India, and currently occupies the Narayana Murthy Distinguished Chair in Computational Brain Research at IIT Madras.