



## **Joseph J. Fins is the new president of the International Neuroethics Society**

November 12, 2021 – The Board of Directors of the International Neuroethics Society (INS) appointed Dr. Joseph J. Fins to serve as president for a 2-year term beginning at the conclusion of the 2021 INS Annual Meeting on November 5. The president serves as chair of the 15-member Board and guides efforts to achieve the mission of the Society to encourage and inspire research and dialogue on the responsible use of advances in brain science.

A physician, medical ethicist, and renowned bioethicist, Dr. Fins is currently Chief of the Division of Medical Ethics at Weill Cornell Medical College and Chair of the Ethics Committee at New York-Presbyterian Weill Cornell. He has been a member of the INS Board since 2014 and is the sixth president of the Society since its founding in 2008.

At a welcome address at this year's annual meeting, Dr. Fins outlined several priorities for the Society that he aims to institute during his presidency. His areas of focus are to:

- Increase membership with targeted outreach with the neuropsychiatric and medical community, to help patients and families confronting neuropsychiatric conditions and navigating new technologies;
- Direct the considerable talents of Society membership and leadership to contribute to constructive and informed public policy, so important to deliberative democracy;
- Further internationalize the Society with increased engagement in science diplomacy and deeper discourse about neuroethics among Spanish-speaking colleagues;
- Further democratize and diversify the Society with more opportunities for early career professionals and targeted outreach to Historically Black Colleges and Universities; and
- Develop a philanthropic strategy and stronger fiscal footing for the Society.

“It’s a good time to be in neuroethics,” said Dr. Fins. “It’s never been more important, because neuroscience is on the march.” Detailing the changing dynamics in medicine, mental health care, and the increased burden of neuropsychiatric disorders during the pandemic, he stressed that “neuroethics is at the center of all this, and we have the responsibility to be responsive.”

He continued, “I would urge us to think about how the Society could uniquely respond to these pressing concerns. The pandemic and its sequel will be with us for a very long time and [the] INS needs to be part of that conversation.” A video of his [full address](#) is available for viewing.

Additional appointees are Ilna Singh, Martha Farah and Debra JH Mathews, who will remain on the [INS Board](#) and along with new appointees Veljko Dubljevic and Laura Specker Sullivan are beginning 3-year terms. Ending her term on the Board this year is Karen S. Rommelfanger.

Dr. Fins takes over the presidency from Dr. Nita Farahany, who had been president since October 2019 and will continue for 1 year in the role of Immediate Past President. Former presidents of the Society are: Nita Farahany (2019–2021), Hank Greely (2017–2019); Judy Illes (2016–2017); Barbara Sahakian (2014–2016), and Steven E. Hyman (2008–2014).

The International Neuroethics Society is a professional association of scientists, scholars, students, and practicing legal and health professionals leading the discussion on the complex ethical issues arising from brain research and an expanding understanding of the mind. Experts in the ethical, legal, and societal impacts of advances in neuroscience, Society members are uniquely equipped to communicate the value and implications that new knowledge, technologies, and potential applications bring to human health and wellbeing.

### **Brief Bio for Dr. Fins**

Joseph J. Fins, MD, MACP, FRCP is The E. William Davis, Jr. M.D. Professor of Medical Ethics, Chief of the Division of Medical Ethics and Professor of Medicine at Weill Cornell Medical College and Chair of the Ethics Committee at New York-Presbyterian Weill Cornell where he is an Attending Physician and Director of Medical Ethics. A member of the Adjunct Faculty and Senior Attending Physician at Rockefeller University, he co-directs the Consortium for the Advanced Study of Brain Injury (CASBI) at Weill Cornell Medicine and Rockefeller. He is the Solomon Center Distinguished Scholar in Medicine, Bioethics and the Law and Visiting Professor of Law at Yale Law School where he directs CASBI@YLS. The author of over 400 publications, he is a co-author of the 2007 *Nature* paper describing the first use of deep brain stimulation (DBS) in the minimally conscious state. His research is supported by the NIH BRAIN Initiative. His most recent book is



‘Rights Come to Mind: Brain Injury, Ethics and The Struggle for Consciousness’ (Cambridge University Press, 2015). A member of the NY State Task Force on Life and the Law, Dr. Fins is an elected Member of the National Academy of Medicine (formerly the Institute of Medicine) of the National Academies of Sciences, a Fellow of the Hastings Center, Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, and an Academico de Honor (Honored Academic) of the Real Academia Nacional de Medicina de España (the Royal National Academy of Medicine of Spain) by Royal Appointment. He has served as president of the American Society of Bioethics and Humanities.

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