

Comments by Prof. Curt Callan, Professor of Theoretical Physics at Princeton University, on Ilya Nemenman's job application (in a telephone conversation with Rob de Ruyter on 12 Dec.)

Ilya is an extraordinarily capable person, enormously talented and with a very interesting curiosity into the outstanding theoretical problems in a new field. Callan knew Ilya well when he was a student, and is most familiar with the work that Ilya did when a PhD student at Princeton, less familiar with Ilya's recent work on analysis of micro array data. Ilya's PhD project expanded earlier work in inference, done by Bialek, Callan and Strong, and Callan says he is impressed with Ilya's contributions.

Callan notes that in sheer theoretical power, Ilya's quality is very high. Had he stayed in the field of string theory, Ilya would have had the capability to go to the top and move the field forward. There are few people around of his theoretical caliber, who are also interested in experimental facts in the way that Ilya is. Callan likes Ilya's pioneering style very much, and has great respect for his accomplishments thus far.