Stuart Hughes is Director and Head of Pharmacology at Vertex Pharmaceuticals Europe Ltd. After obtaining a PhD in Cellular and Molecular Neuroscience from Cardiff University in 1999 he spent several years as a postdoctoral scientist studying the mechanisms that underlie a host of physiological and pathological brain rhythms. In 2006 he was awarded a Wellcome Research fellowship to continue this work and made important contributions to the understanding of the cellular events that lead to the slow waves of deep sleep as well as the neural mechanisms that shape the so-called alpha rhythm of relaxed wakefulness. In 2008 he took up a position as a group leader in CNS research at Eli Lilly and Company, pursuing a range of ion channel targets for treating a variety of neurological and psychiatric disorders. In 2013 he moved to Vertex Pharmaceuticals to lead the UK in vivo pharmacology group where his main areas of focus have been on orphan diseases, cancer and neurodegeneration.