



First Meeting of the Italian Stress Network

## **STRESS, BRAIN AND BEHAVIOR: ADVANCES IN TRANSLATIONAL NEUROSCIENCE**

Rome - 12,13 February 2026

Sapienza University of Rome - Department of Physiology and Pharmacology "V. Erspamer"  
Room A Pharmacology Building CU024

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### ***Program***

#### **February 12<sup>th</sup>, 2026**

12:30 - 13:45

**Registration**

13:45 - 14:00

**Opening and Welcome Remarks**

14:00 - 15:30

**Session 1 - *Stress Drives Aging***

Chair: Alessandro Bartolomucci and Luca Carnevali (University of Parma, Italy)

- Fabrizio d'Adda di Fagagna (Istituto Fondazione di Oncologia Molecolare, Milan, Italy)  
*A Primers of Hallmarks of Aging for Stress Biology*

- Alessandro Bartolomucci (University of Parma, Italy; University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, USA)  
*Mechanisms of Stress-induced Acceleration of Aging*

- Alessandra Berry (Istituto Superiore di Sanità, Rome, Italy)  
*Early Life Stress, Nutrition and Aging*

- Margherita Barbetti (University of Parma, Italy)  
*Stress Drives Aging Associated Cardiovascular Diseases*

15:30 - 16:15

**Round Table - *From Lab to Life: How Stress Shapes Society and Health***

Moderators: Marco A. Riva and Patrizia Campolongo

Participants:

- Filippo Caraci (University of Catania, Italy)
- Raül Andero Galí (ICREA, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, Spain)
- Simone Macrì (Istituto Superiore di Sanità, Rome, Italy)
- Miriam Melis (University of Cagliari, Italy)
- Caterina Scuderi (Sapienza University of Rome, Italy)



16:15 -16:45

**Coffee Break**

16:45 - 17:45

**Data Blitz Presentations**

17:45 - 18:45

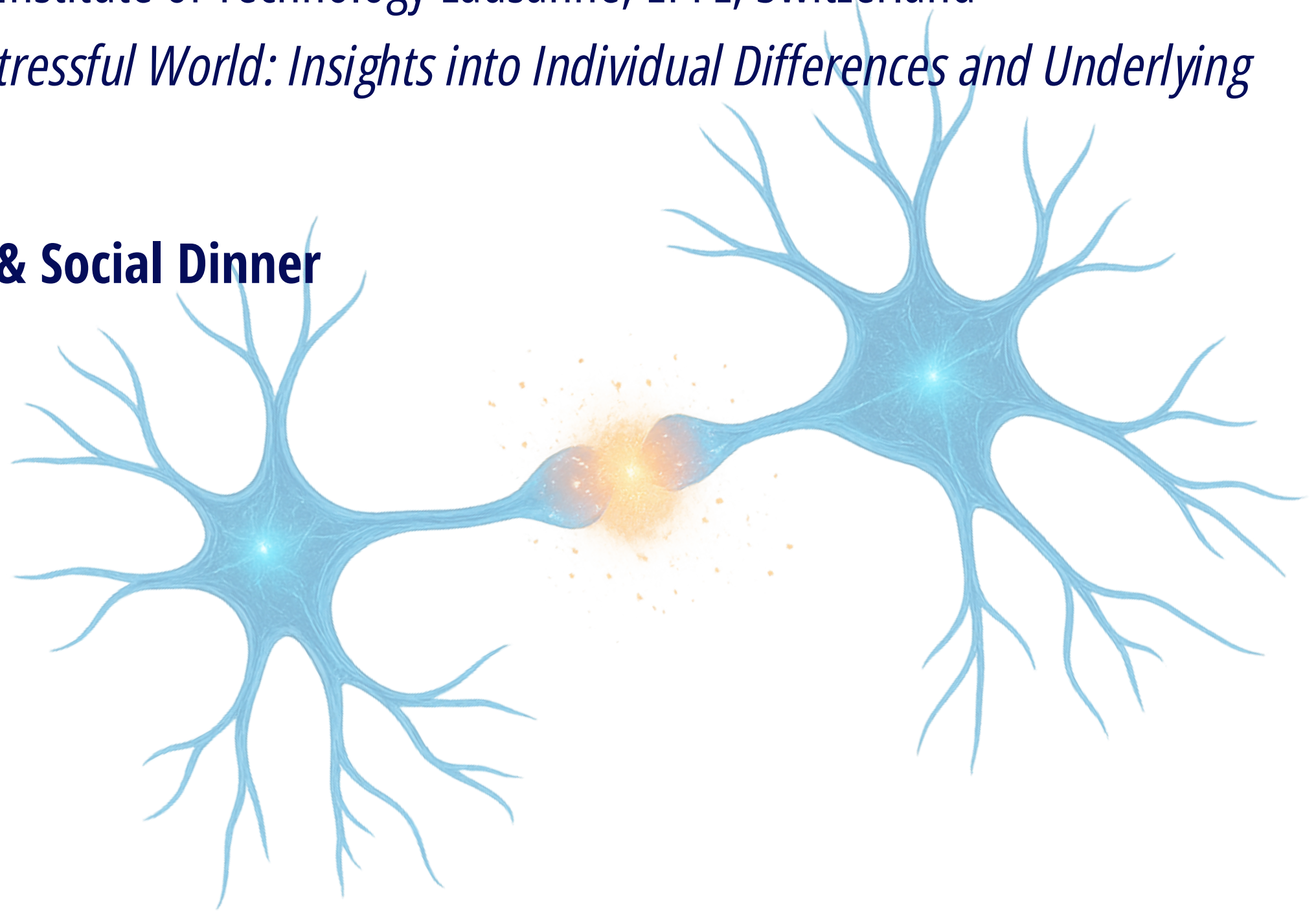
**Keynote Lecture:** Carmen Sandi

Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Lausanne, EPFL, Switzerland

*Navigating a Stressful World: Insights into Individual Differences and Underlying Mechanisms*

19:45 - 00:00

**Tiber Cruise & Social Dinner**







**February 13<sup>th</sup>, 2026**

9:00 - 10:30

**Session 2 - Pharmacological Modulation of Stress Response**

Chair: Simona Scheggi (University of Siena, Italy)

- Marco Bortolato (University of Florida, Gainesville, USA)

*Neurosteroids as Novel Therapeutic Agents for Depression: Role of the Enzyme 5- $\alpha$  Reductase 2 in Sex-dimorphic Responses to Stress*

- Danilo De Gregorio (IRCCS San Raffaele Hospital, Milan, Italy)

*The Additive Effect of Ketamine to the Electroconvulsive Stimulation in a Model of Chronic Social Defeat Stress*

- Vittoria Borgonetti (University of Siena, Italy; The Scripps Research Institute, La Jolla, USA)

*Targeting IL-18 Signaling in the Central Amygdala in a Rat Model of Comorbid PTSD and Alcohol Use Disorder*

- Federico Brandalise (University of Cagliari, Italy)

*Stress on the Powerhouse: Sex-specific Subcellular Mechanisms Compromise VTA Circuits Upon Prenatal Cannabis Exposure*

10:30 - 11:00

**Coffee Break**

11:00 - 12:30

**Session 3 - Trauma, Resilience and Psychiatric Vulnerability**

Chair: Gian Marco Leggio (University of Catania, Italy)

- Laura Musazzi (University of Milano Bicocca, Italy)

*Hippocampal Multiomic Signature of Stress Vulnerability and Ketamine Antidepressant Response in the Rat Chronic Mild Stress Model*

- Gian Marco Leggio (University of Catania, Italy)

*Functional and Structural Adaptations Underlying Sex-biased Traumatic Stress Susceptibility and Resilience*

- Giulia Federica Mancini (Sapienza University of Rome, Italy)

*From Trauma to PTSD: Dissecting Vulnerability and Resilience in a Rat Model*

- Anna Monai (Italian Institute of Technology, Genova, Italy)

*Negative Events Influence Behavior through Prefrontal Cortex CRF Mechanisms*

12:30 - 13:30

**Lunch**

13:30 - 15:00

**Poster Presentation**

15:00 - 16:30

**Session 4 - *Psychopathological Implications of Stress During Development***

Chair: Francesca Cirulli (Istituto Superiore di Sanità, Rome, Italy)

- Juliet Richetto (University of Zurich-Vetsuisse, Zurich, Switzerland)

*Preconception Social Stress: From Placental Adaptations to Lifelong Behavioral Outcomes*

- Annamaria Cattaneo (University of Milan, Italy)

*From Mother to Child: Biological Mechanisms Linking Depression in Pregnancy to Offspring Outcomes*

- Chiara Musillo (Istituto Superiore di Sanità, Rome, Italy)

*Stress and Nutrition During Pregnancy Share Common Mechanisms and Have Sex-specific Effects on Brain Development*

- Livio Provenzi (University of Pavia, Italy)

*Exploring Mechanisms of Brain-to-brain Attunement Across Socio-emotional Stress Regulation: EEG Hyperscanning in the Parent-infant Dyad*

16:30 - 17:00

**Awards & Closing Ceremony**

