



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

Preliminary program

February 12th, 2026

12:30 - 13:45

Registration

13:45 - 14:15

Opening and Welcome Remarks

14:15 - 15:45

Session 1 - *Stress Drives Aging*

Chair: Alessandro Bartolomucci (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

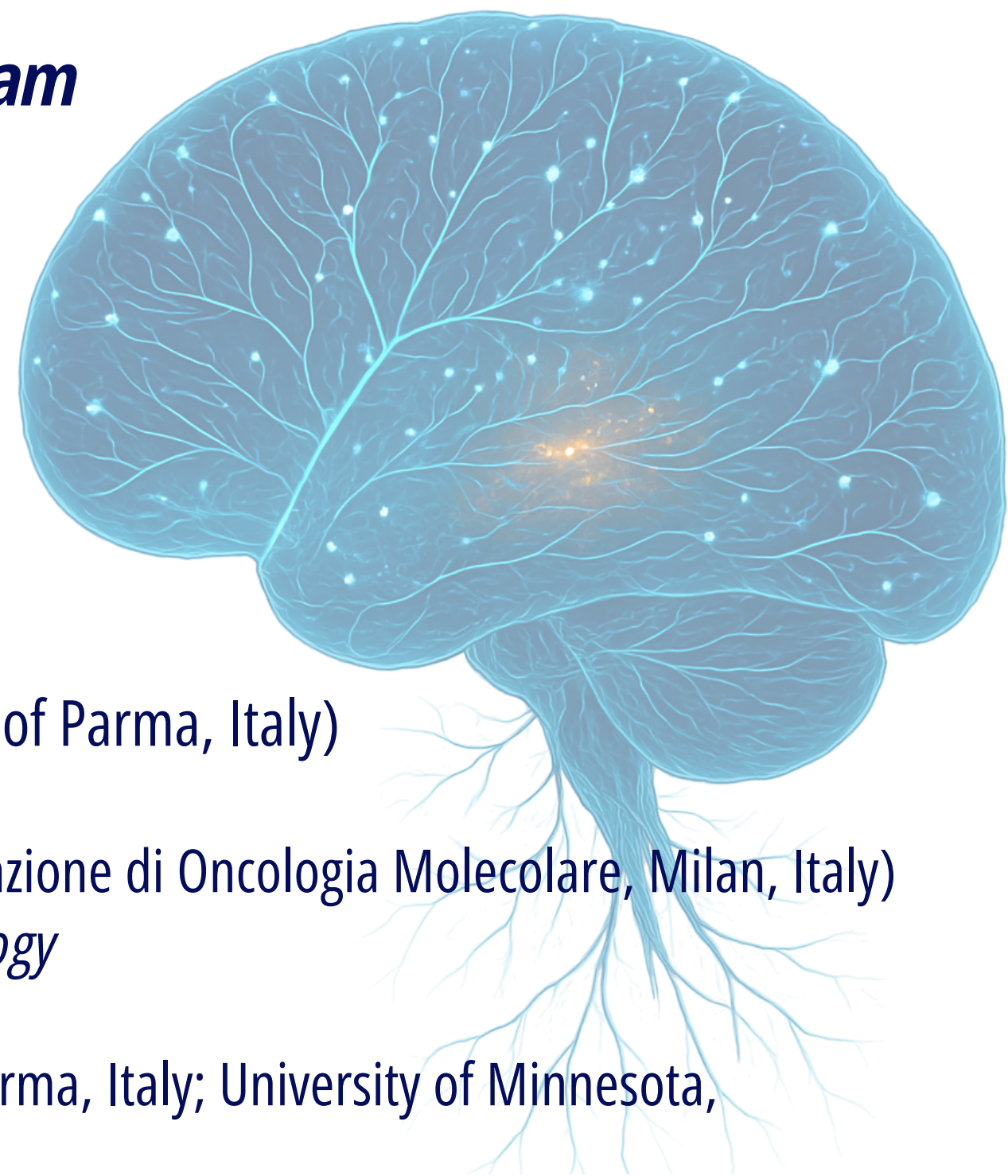
15:45 - 16:30

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)
- Raul Andero Gali (CREA, 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)



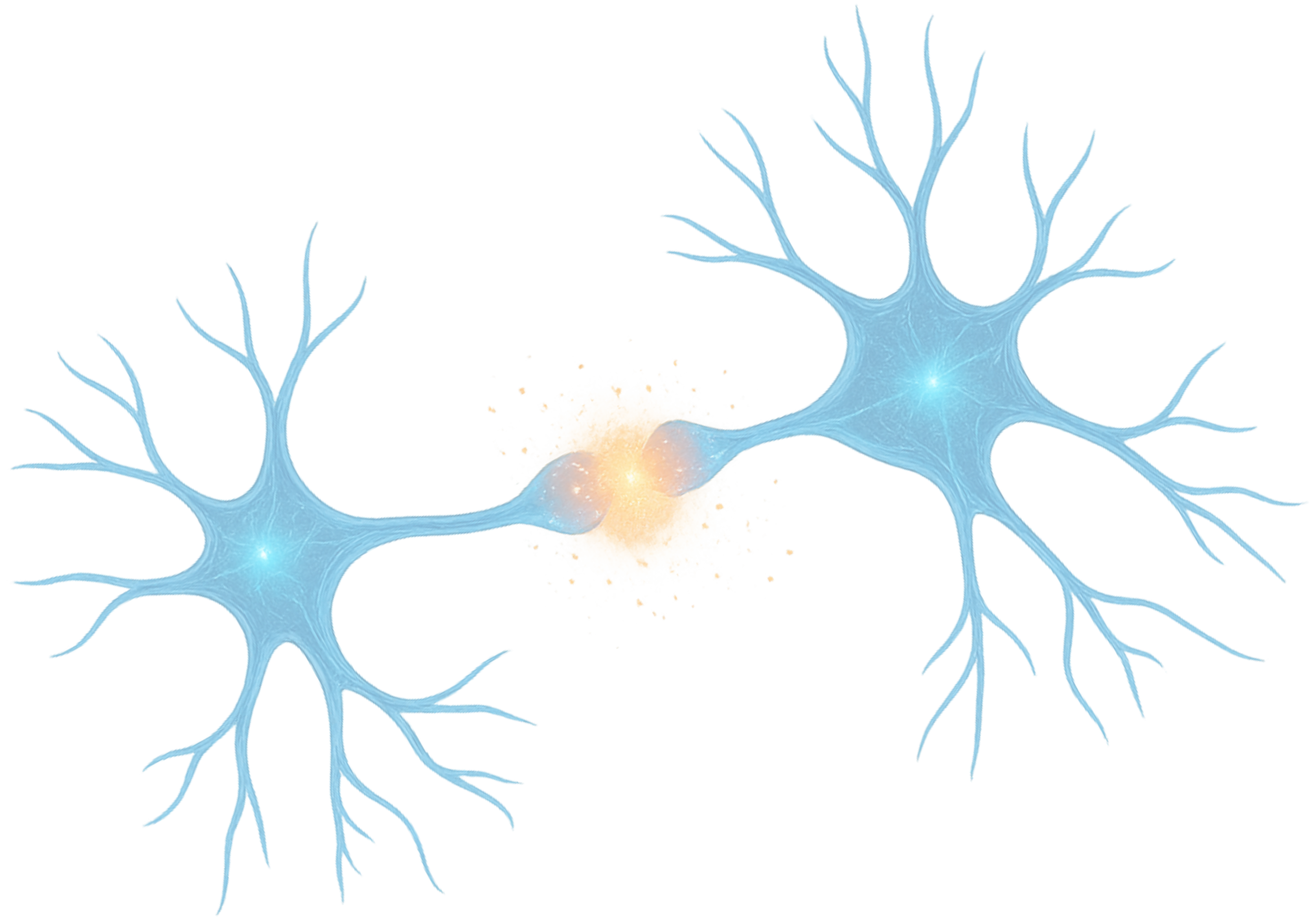
16:30 -17:00 **Coffee Break**

17:00 - 18:00 **Keynote Lecture:** Carmen Sandi

Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Lausanne, EPFL, Switzerland

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

18:00 - 20:00 **Poster Session**





February 13th, 2026

9:15 - 10:45

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

10:45 - 11:15

Coffee Break

11:15 - 12:45

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

12:45 - 14:00

Lunch

14:00 - 15:00

Data Blitz Presentations

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 and Closing Ceremony

