



1st Meeting of the Italian Stress Network

STRESS, BRAIN AND BEHAVIOR: ADVANCES IN TRANSLATIONAL NEUROSCIENCE

Rome – 12,13 February 2026

**Sapienza University of Rome
Dept. of Physiology and Pharmacology "V. Erspamer"
Room A Pharmacology Building CU024**

Organizers

Patrizia Campolongo
Sapienza University of Rome

Marco Andrea Riva
University of Milan

Scientific Secretary

Giulia Chiacchierini
Sapienza University of Rome

Simona Viscuso
Sapienza University of Rome

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First Meeting of the Italian Stress Network

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Rome - 12,13 February 2026

Sapienza University of Rome - Department of Physiology and Pharmacology "V. Erspamer"

Room A Pharmacology Building CU024

Program

February 12th, 2026

12:30 - 13:45

Registration

13:45 - 14:00

Opening and Welcome Remarks

14:00 - 15:30

Session 1 - *Stress Drives Aging*

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

- Fabrizio d'Adda di Fagagna (Istituto Fondazione di Oncologia Molecolare, Milan, Italy)
Telomere biology in aging and disease

- 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)
Social stress as an early driver of cardiovascular aging: a sex-specific perspective

15:30 - 16:15

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

Moderators: Marco Andrea Riva and Patrizia Campolongo

- 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

Moderators: Marco Andrea Riva and Patrizia Campolongo

- Lidia Diolosà (University of Catania, Italy)

Sex-dependent effects of NMDA receptor antagonism on stress-induced spatial memory deficits

- Giulia Chiacchierini (Sapienza University of Rome, Italy)

Trauma-evoked increased neural activity in the basolateral amygdala drives susceptibility to PTSD

- Giuseppe Costantino (IRCCS Oasi di Troina, Italy)

Identify new mechanisms underlying PTSD vulnerability and resilience in rats: the role of TGF- β 1 pathway

- Alessia Marchesin (University of Milan, Italy)

Sex-specific neuroprotective effects of ketogenic diet in a rodent model of early-life stress

- Jessica Mingardi (University of Milan, Italy)

Sex-dependent prosocial effects of psilocybin in mice exposed to early-life stress

- Valeria Buzzelli (Roma Tre University, Italy)

Early Life Social Isolation Dysregulates Social Reward Processing, BDNF Signaling, and Intracellular Vesicular Sorting in the Nucleus Accumbens of Male and Female Rats

- Vladyslav Sikora (University of Foggia, Italy)

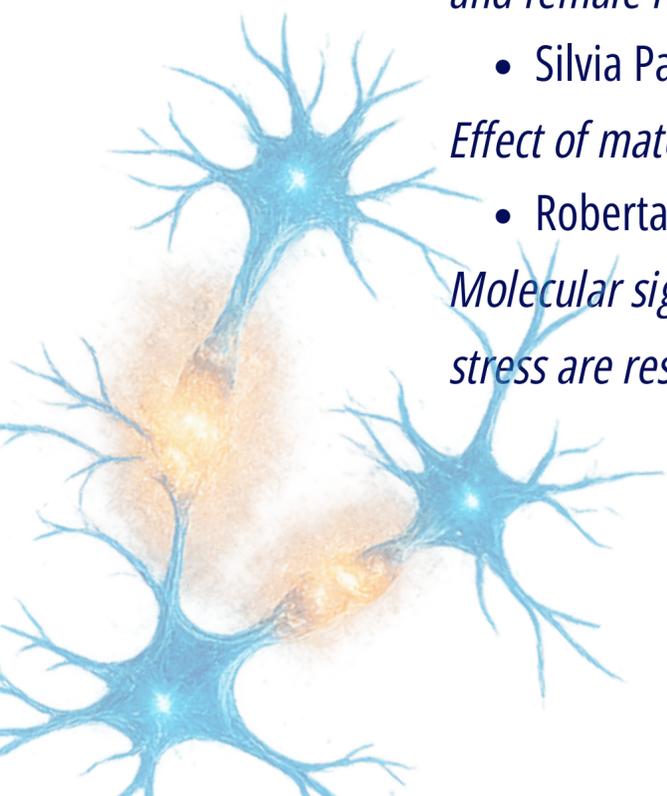
Impact of prenatal stress on emotional and cognitive behaviors in adolescent male and female rats

- Silvia Pascarella (University of Napoli Federico II, Italy)

Effect of maternal separation on the opioid response in mouse cerebellum

- Roberta Facchinetti (Sapienza University of Rome, Italy)

Molecular signatures of astrocytes and microglia maladaptive response to acute stress are rescued by a single administration of ketamine in a rodent model of PTSD



- Giovanni Signorini (Sapienza University of Rome, Italy)

Acute Immune Stress Modulates Hippocampal Plasticity and Kynurenine Pathway Metabolism in a Sex- and Region-Dependent Manner: The Role of CX3CL1–CX3CR1 Signaling

- Edoardo Pisa (Istituto Superiore di Sanità, Rome, Italy)

An antidote for chronic stress may root in chicory roots

- Roberta Lizio (Sapienza University of Rome, Italy)

Home telemonitoring SmartMe&You program reveals that heart rate 24-hour dynamics are associated with cognitive status, sedentariness, and vigilance regulation in older people

- Lluís Miquel Rio (IIBB – CSIC, Barcelona, Spain)

Epigenetic profile of stress-related disorders: sex-specific miRNAs in the MDD dlPFC and their modulation in plasma by psychotherapy

- Aurelia Viglione (Istituto Superiore di Sanità, Rome, Italy)

A Network-Based Approach to Anticipate Time to Recovery in Major Depression Reveals a Plasticity by Context Interplay

17:45 - 18:45

Keynote Lecture

Introduced by Patrizia Campolongo

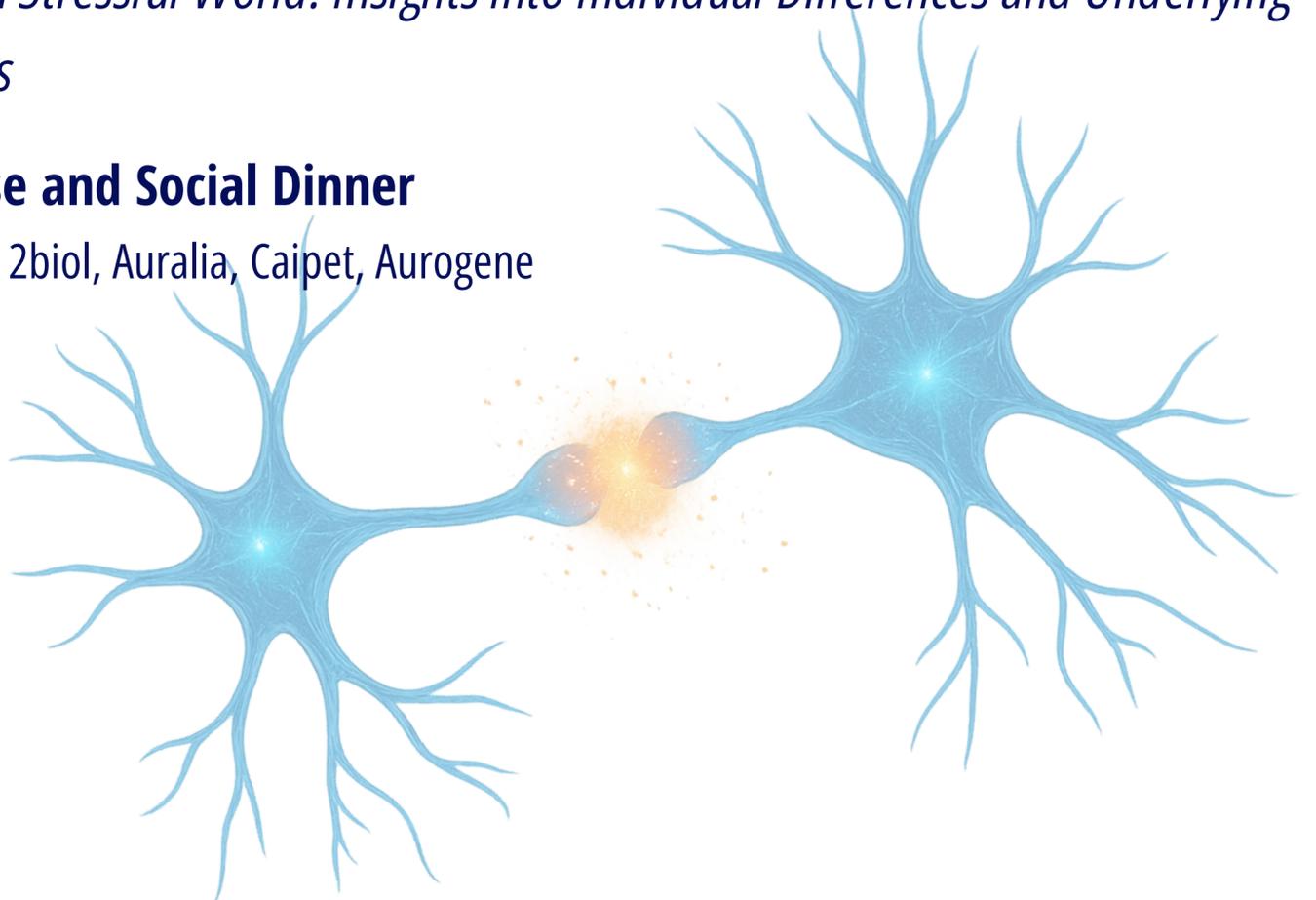
Carmen Sandi (Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Lausanne, EPFL, Switzerland)

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

19:45 - 00:00

Tiber Cruise and Social Dinner

sponsored by 2biol, Auralia, Caipet, Aurogene





February 13th, 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- α 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)

Unmasking the neurobiology of PTSD: How the AIS model predicts resilience and susceptibility across sexes

- 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 Session

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

Moderators: Marco Andrea Riva and Patrizia Campolongo

The two best poster presentations will receive prizes funded by Caipet and Associazione Valentina De Castro

The best U38 speaker will receive a prize funded by Caipet

