



Sex as a Biological Variable (SABV) - 3rd Symposium

From Discovery to Translation: Embedding Sex-Inclusive Frameworks
in Preclinical and Clinical Research

www.sabvsymposium.org

ABOUT

The SABV Symposium 2026 features **24 lectures** by internationally renowned experts **from 14 countries**, exploring the biological basis of sex differences, their underlying mechanisms, and their significance in health and disease. Particular attention will be given to practical strategies for incorporating biological sex into study design, with a special focus on hormone-sensitive stages of female reproductive life and their links to disease risk.

SYMPOSIUM VENUE

University Hospital Zurich
Large lecture hall
NORD 1 D 304
Frauenklinikstrasse 10
8091 Zurich



CONTINUING EDUCATION CERTIFICATE

The Symposium will be **accredited as continuing education for study directors and experimenters** by the Federation of Swiss Cantonal Veterinary Officers (VSKT).

REGISTRATION

Registration is open until 5 June 2026.

Register here: <https://ema.uzh.ch/RYPAX>

Registration fee

Students: CHF 129

Postdocs, Senior researchers, Professors: CHF 194

The registration fee covers participation in the event for both days and includes lunches, coffee breaks and a closing ceremony aperitif. 8.1 % Swiss VAT is included.



ABSTRACTS AND POSTERS

Abstract submission is now closed. Following abstract evaluation, **64 submissions** have been selected for poster presentation. Among these, 8 presenters have been invited to deliver a flash talk.

Poster presentation guidelines

All accepted abstracts will be presented as printed posters. Please arrange printing before traveling to the SABV Symposium. Posters should be printed in A0 portrait format 84.1 cm x 118.9 cm (or 33.1 inches x 46.8 inches).

PROGRAM

Day 1 • 23 June

Day 1 • 23 June 2026

8:00 – 8:50 Registration

8:50 – 9:00 Welcome address

Dr. Ivana Jaric, Symposium organizer - University of Zurich, Switzerland

Session 1: Sex-inclusive research - Bridging the 3Rs framework and study design

9:00 – 9:30 **Addressing cultural and knowledge barriers to enable preclinical sex-inclusive research**

Dr. Natasha Karp, AstraZeneca, UK

9:30 – 10:00 **Half the biology, half the insight: Accounting for sex in your experimental design**

Prof. Dr. Penny S. Reynolds, University of Florida, USA



PROGRAM

Day 1 • 23 June 2026

Session 1 - continued

- 10:00 – 10:20 **The 3R framework for sex-inclusive animal research**
Dr. Fernando Gonzalez Uarquin, University Medical Center Mainz, Germany
- 10:20 – 10:30 **Swiss 3RCC: A national platform for the promotion of the 3Rs**
Dr. Homare Yamahachi, Swiss 3R Competence Center

10:30 – 11:00 Coffee break

Session 2: Sex differences in brain structure, function and disease

- 11:00 – 11:25 **Sexual dimorphism in astrocyte-dependent synaptic pruning: implications for health and major depressive disorder**
Prof. Dr. Barbara Di Benedetto, University Hospital Regensburg, Germany
- 11:25 – 11:50 **Why should sex-dependent differences be considered for an optimized therapeutic approach of central nervous system demyelination?**
Dr. Elisabeth Traiffort, Inserm, Paris-Saclay University, France
- 11:50 – 12:15 **Addressing the sex differences in Alzheimer's disease**
Prof. Dr. Ivan Nalvarte, Karolinska Institutet, Sweden
- 12:15 – 12:40 **Different roles of brain uroguanylin and brown adipose tissue in males and females**
Prof. Dr. Aleksandra Dugandzic, University of Zagreb, Croatia

12:40 – 14:00 Lunch break

Session 3: Sex differences across organ systems

- 14:00 – 14:25 **Role of sex hormones in lung disease manifestation**
Dr. Valentina Biasin, Medical University of Graz, Austria
- 14:25 – 14:50 **Sex differences in kidney health and disease**
Prof. Dr. Stefanie Steiger, LMU Hospital Munich, Germany
- 14:50 – 15:15 **Role of sex differences in the cardiac proteome and early graft recovery in donation after circulatory death**
Prof. Dr. Sarah Longnus, University of Bern, Switzerland
- 15:15 – 15:40 **Sex differences in pharmacokinetics of anticancer drugs - why does that even matter?**
PD Dr. Berna Ozdemir, University Hospital Bern, Switzerland

15:40 – 16:00 Flash talks selected from the abstracts 1

16:00 – 17:00 Coffee break and poster session

Plenary talk 1

- 17:00 – 17:45 **Pain, sex, and death**
Prof. Dr. Jeffrey Mogil, McGill University, Canada



PROGRAM

Day 2 • 24 June

Day 2 • 24 June 2026

8:10 – 8:50 Registration

Session 4: From evidence to action - Economics, innovation, and preclinical research

8:50 – 9:10 **The economic consequences of systemic underinvestment in women's health**
Dr. Anouk Petersen, McKinsey Health Institute

9:10 – 9:20 **Accelerating innovation through sex-inclusive R&D**
Dr. Juliana Bessa, Roche Innovation Center Basel

9:20 – 9:50 **PAINDIFF recommendations for the study and inclusion of sex and gender in research**
Prof. Dr. Michelle Roche, University of Galway, Ireland

Plenary talk 2

9:50 – 10:30 **Sex, stress and high estrogen levels- a toxic hippocampal cocktail?**
Prof. Dr. Tallie Z. Baram, MD, University of California, Irvine, USA

10:30 – 11:00 Coffee break

Session 5: Sex, hormones, and brain function

11:00 – 11:30 **Sex- and oestrous-dependent plasticity in midbrain circuits controlling survival instincts**
Dr. Vanessa Stempel, Max Planck Institute for Brain Research, Germany

11:30 – 12:00 **SABV considerations in sleep loss-induced memory loss**
Prof. Dr. Nicole Gervais, Rijksuniversiteit Groningen, Netherlands

12:00 – 12:30 **Hormonal contributions to depression in women; implications for precision prevention and treatment**
Prof. Dr. Vibe G. Frokjaer, Copenhagen University, Denmark

12:30 – 13:00 **Regulatory effects of antidepressant exposure on maternal-fetal signaling**
Prof. Dr. Jocelien Olivier, Rijksuniversiteit Groningen, Netherlands

13:00 – 14:00 Lunch break

Session 6: Female hormones and disease susceptibility

14:00 – 14:30 **The estrous cycle stage affects mammary tumor sensitivity to chemotherapy**
Dr. Laura Bornes, Leiden University Medical Center, Netherlands

14:30 – 15:00 **The many faces of perimenopause: why are we still so bad at understanding the menopausal transition?**
Doc. Dr. Ljiljana Marina, University Clinical Centre of Serbia, Faculty of Medicine, University of Belgrade, Serbia

15:00 – 15:30 **Harnessing big data to study female brain and mental health**
Prof. Dr. Claudia Barth, Charité, Universitätsmedizin Berlin, Germany



PROGRAM

Day 2 • 24 June 2026

Session 6 - continued

15:30 – 16:00 **Adolescent exposure to contraceptive hormones alters biomarkers associated with depression in female rats**

Dr. Jesse Lacasse, Centre for Addiction and Mental Health, Canada

16:00 – 16:20 Flash talks selected from the abstracts 2

16:20 – 17:00 Coffee break and poster session

Plenary talk 3

17:00 – 17:45 **Unlocking the complexities of endometriosis**

Dr. Brett McKinnon, University of Queensland, Australia

17:45 – 18:00 Closing ceremony and poster awards

Dr. Ivana Jaric, University of Zurich, Switzerland

18:00 – 19:00 Aperitif & networking

For current information and registration, please visit the official website of the SABV Symposium 2026:
www.sabvsymposium.org

The SABV Symposium 2026, together with the EU-SABV Core Group meeting (June 25th, 2026), is co-organized by the EU-SABV COST Action (CA24168), the European Initiative to Enhance the Current SABV Policy in Preclinical Biomedical Research, funded by the European Cooperation in Science and Technology (COST).

Learn more about the EU-SABV COST Action at action webpage: www.sabv.eu



The SABV Symposium 2026 is supported by:

