



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 **23 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 SABV Symposium 2026 will be **accredited as continuing education for study directors and experimenters** by the Federation of Swiss Cantonal Veterinary Officers (VSKT).

REGISTRATION

Registration is now open! 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 and coffee breaks.

8.1 % Swiss VAT is included.



ABSTRACT SUBMISSION

Abstract submission is open until **May 15, 2026**. Please send your abstract as a Word document (.docx) to:

sabvsymposium2026@gmail.com

Abstracts should not exceed 250 words. Use Arial, 11 pt font with single line spacing. Include the full names of all authors, with the presenting author underlined. Provide affiliations for each author (institution, city, and country). The abstract should be structured as follows: Background, Methods, Results, and Conclusions. Figures and tables are not permitted. **Submissions of preliminary data are also welcome**, as this is a valuable opportunity to present your work and receive feedback from leading experts in the field.

Preliminary PROGRAM

Day 1 • 23 June

Day 1 • 23 June

8:00 – 8:45	Registration
8:45 – 9:00	Welcome address <i>Dr. Ivana Jaric, Symposium Organizer - University of Zurich, Switzerland</i>
9:00 – 9:40	Plenary talk 1 Addressing cultural and knowledge barriers to enable preclinical sex-inclusive research <i>Dr. Natasha Karp, AstraZeneca, UK</i>



Preliminary
PROGRAM

Day 1 • 23 June 2026

9:40 – 10:30 Session 1: Sex-Inclusive Research - Bridging the 3Rs Framework and Study Design

The 3R framework for sex-inclusive animal research

Dr. Fernando Gonzalez Uarquin, University Medical Center Mainz, Germany

Half the Biology, Half the Insight: Accounting for Sex In Your Experimental Design

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

10:30 – 10:50 Coffee Break

10:50 – 12:35 Session 2: Sex Differences in Brain Structure, Function and Disease

Sexual dimorphism in astrocyte-dependent synaptic pruning: implications for health and major depressive disorder

Prof. Dr. Barbara Di Benedetto, University Hospital Regensburg, Germany

Sex- and oestrous-dependent plasticity in midbrain circuits controlling survival instincts

Dr. Vanessa Stempel, Max Planck Institute for Brain Research, Germany

Addressing the sex differences in Alzheimer's disease

Prof. Dr. Ivan Nalvarte, Karolinska Institutet, Sweden

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

12:35 – 13:30 Lunch Break

13:30 – 15:00 Session 3: Sex Differences Across Physiological Systems

Role of sex hormones in lung disease manifestation

Dr. Valentina Biasin, Medical University of Graz, Austria

Sex differences in pharmacokinetics of anticancer drugs - why does that even matter?

PD Dr. Berna Ozdemir, University Hospital Bern, Switzerland

Sex differences in kidney health and disease

Prof. Dr. Stefanie Steiger, LMU Hospital Munich, Germany

15:00 – 16:00 Coffee Break and Poster Session

16:00 – 17:30 Plenary talks 2 & 3

Pain, Sex, and Death

Prof. Dr. Jeffrey Mogil, McGill University, Canada

PAINDIFF recommendations for the inclusion and study of sex in preclinical pain research

Prof. Dr. Michelle Roche, University of Galway, Ireland



Preliminary
PROGRAM

Day 2 • 24 June

Day 2 • 24 June 2026

8:30 – 9:00 Registration

9:00 – 9:20 Opening Talk

The Economic Consequences of Systemic Underinvestment in Women’s Health
Dr. Anouk Petersen or Dr. Valentina Sartori, McKinsey Health Institute

9:20 – 10:20 Session 4: Female Brain and Mental Health I

Hormonal contributions to depression in women; implications for precision prevention and treatment

Prof. Dr. Vibe G. Frokjaer, Copenhagen University, Denmark

Harnessing big data to study female brain and mental health

Prof. Dr. Claudia Barth, Charité, Universitätsmedizin Berlin, Germany

10:20 – 10:40 Coffee Break

10:40 – 11:40 Session 4: Female Brain and Mental Health II

SABV considerations in sleep loss-induced memory loss

Prof. Dr. Nicole Gervais, Rijksuniversiteit Groningen, Netherlands

Different roles of brain uroguanylin and brown adipose tissue in males and females

Prof. Dr. Aleksandra Dugandzic, University of Zagreb, Croatia

11:40 – 12:30 Plenary talk 4

Sex, stress and high estrogen levels- a toxic hippocampal cocktail?

Prof. Dr. Tallie Z. Baram, MD, University of California, Irvine, USA

12:30 – 13:30 Lunch Break

13:30 – 15:30 Session 5: Female Biology Across the Lifespan: Hormones and Unresolved Questions

The estrous cycle stage affects mammary tumor sensitivity to chemotherapy

Dr. Laura Bornes, Leiden University Medical Center, Netherlands

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

Regulatory Effects of Antidepressant Exposure on Maternal–Fetal Signaling

Prof. Dr. Jocelien Olivier, Rijksuniversiteit Groningen, Netherlands



Preliminary
PROGRAM

Day 2 • 24 June 2026

Session 5 - continued

Unlocking the complexities of endometriosis

Dr. Brett McKinnon, University of Queensland, Australia

15:30 – 16:15 Coffee Break and Poster Session

16:15 – 16:45 Flash Talks (Selected from submitted abstracts)

16:45 – 17:30 Plenary talk 5

Hormonal contraception and brain health

TBA

17:30 – 17:40 Closing Ceremony

Dr. Ivana Jaric, University of Zurich, Switzerland

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:

