

FINAL VERSION

WORLD HEALTH FORUM VENETO - THIRD EDITION

Padova Congress Centro Congressi Quartiere Fieristico | November 26, 27 and 28, 2026

PRELIMINARY PROGRAM

Conference title : Multiscale and Translational Neuroscience: From Molecules to Brain Networks to Society

INTRODUCTION

The idea that inspired the launch of the World Health Forum Veneto (WHFV) was to create and grow in Padua a permanent international event to forge and promote new knowledge in the life and health sciences. Indeed, the WHFV aims to be a meeting point where scientists, professionals, citizens, patients, industry and communication experts have the opportunity to study and share experiences, analysis and new perspectives on specific biomedical topics.

The Forum is patronized and sponsored by the Veneto Region (Venice is the capital) and also by: the City of Padua, the University of Padua, the Cassa di Risparmio Foundation of Padova and Rovigo and the Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Handcrafts and Agriculture of Padova.

The Forum has had two previous editions, in 2024 and 2025, dedicated to AI in Medicine and to Precision Medicine, respectively. The third edition of the WHFV will take place in Padua from 26 to 28 November 2026 and will be dedicated to Neuroscience. The choice of this subject was motivated by the high resonance and impact of Neuroscience in many areas of investigation such as biology, pathology, psychology, health care and treatment, physics and computational science, without neglecting the relevance of cognitive functions in philosophy and bioethics.

The 2026 Forum will include a series of sessions addressing several of the many possible scientific topics that are of interest to Neuroscience: **Padua 26 - 28 November 2026**



FIRST DAY | Padua, November 26

9.00 - 10.00 **Registration of participants**

10.00 - 10.05 **Introduction**

Giorgio Palù, University of Padova

10.05 - 10.30 **Opening lecture**

Ageing, Technological Innovation and Economical Sustainability: Current Challenges for a Regional Universal Public Health System

Gino Gerosa, Regional Councillor Healthcare – Health Planning – Veneto Region

10.30 - 11.00 **Welcome address**

Sergio Giordani, Mayor of the City of Padova

Daniela Mapelli, Rector of the University of Padova

Rosario Rizzuto, President of the Cassa di Risparmio Foundation of Padova and Rovigo

Antonio Santocono, President of the Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Handcrafts and Agriculture of Padova

Alberto Stefani, President of Veneto Region

Orazio Schillaci, Minister of Health

11.00 - 12.40 **SESSION 1: Artificial intelligence, computational neuroscience and quantum technologies**

Chairs: Gaudenzio Meneghesso, Mattia Veronese - University of Padova (*confirmed*)

Speakers:

11.00 - 11.20 Simone Montangero - University of Padova (*confirmed*)

Introduction to Quantum Computing

11.20 - 11.40 Fedor Jelezko - Ulm University (founder of NVision) (*confirmed*)

Metabolic magnetic resonance imaging

11.40 - 12.00 Sabrina Maniscalco - Algorithmiq srl, Italy (*confirmed*)

Quantum Computing for Life Sciences

12.00 - 12.20 Giovanni Volpe - University of Gothenburg (*confirmed*)

AI/Optics in Neuroscience domain

12.20 - 12.40 Alexander von Lühmann - Technische Universität Berlin (*confirmed*)

From lab to the everyday world with multimodal optical brain imaging and AI

12.40 - 13.00 *Discussion*

13.00 - 14.00 **Lunch**



14.00 - 15.20 SESSION 2: Neural basis of cognition and consciousness

Chairs: Maurizio Corbetta - University of Padova, Giulio Tononi - University of Wisconsin
(confirmed)

Speakers:

14.00 - 14.20 Giulio Tononi - University of Wisconsin (confirmed)

The neural substrate of consciousness: a phenomenology-first approach

14.20 - 14.40 Mathew Diamond - SISSA - Scuola Internazionale Superiore di Studi Avanzati (confirmed)

Perceptual memory

14.40 - 15.00 Marcello Massimini - University of Milano (confirmed)

The Search for Consciousness in Patients

15.00 - 16.20 SESSION 3. From Prevention to Public Health and Medical Care

Chairs: Stefano Campostrini - School of Public Health and Health Management, SSP
Foundation, Romina Cazzaro - Veneto Region

Speakers:

15.00 - 15.15 Francesca Russo - Veneto Region

Introduction

15.15 - 15.35 Cristiano Chiamulera - University of Verona (confirmed)

Smoking and neurodegeneration: from mechanism to modifiable risk

15.35 - 15.50 Patrizio Sarto, Laura Merlo - Azienda Unità Locale Socio Sanitaria n. 2

Marca Trevigiana (confirmed)

From risk reduction to care: physical activity across the cognitive continuum

15.50 - 16.05 Marco Milani - Veneto Region (confirmed)

Prevention strategies: health determinants and vaccinations for primary prevention and slowing disease progression

16.05 - 16.20 Cristina Basso - Veneto Region (confirmed)

The new paradigm for neurocognitive disorders: from early diagnosis and disclosure to post-diagnostic care



16.20 - 18.20 SESSION 4. Mechanisms of neurodegeneration across scales / Basic mechanisms

Chairs: Adriano Aguzzi - Universitäts Spital-Zürich, Paolo Simioni - University of Padova (*confirmed*)

Speakers:

16.20 - 16.40 Adriano Aguzzi - Universitäts Spital, Zürich (*confirmed*)

Prions, protein misfolding propagation mechanisms

16.40 - 17.00 Pierluigi Nicotera - Fondazione Mondino Istituto Neurologico Nazionale a Carattere Scientifico IRCSS (*confirmed*)

New perspective for treatment of neurodegenerative diseases

17.00 - 17.20 Maria Devita - University of Padova (*confirmed*)

Are we looking in the right place? The Cerebellum as early marker of neurodegenerative disorders

17.20 - 17.40 Christian Münz - University of Zurich (*confirmed*)

How a non-neurotropic virus might cause neuroinflammation

17.40 - 18.00 Alessandro Sette - La Jolla Institute for Immunology (*confirmed*)

Adaptive immune responses in neurodegeneration

18.00 - 18.20 Sara Tabrizi - UCL Institute of Neurology London (*confirmed*)

Huntington's disease genetics and disease-modifying therapies

18.20 - 18.40 *Discussion*

18.40 *Conclusion of the proceedings*

SECOND DAY | Padua, November 27

8.00 - 8.30 Registration of participants

8.30 - 11.10 SESSION 5: Clinical Neurodegeneration and Precision Therapeutics

Chairs: Carlo Caltagirone - IRCSS Fondazione Santa Lucia, Angelo Paolo Dei Tos - University of Padova (*confirmed*)

Speakers:

8.30 - 8.50 Gianluigi Zanusso - University of Verona (*confirmed*)

Olfaction and early neurodegenerative signatures

8.50 - 9.10 Howard Feldman - University of California, San Diego (*confirmed*)

Alzheimer's clinical trials and therapeutic pipelines

9.10 - 9.30 Alessandro Padovani - University of Brescia (*confirmed*)

Dementia phenotyping and translational neurology



- 9.30 - 9.50 Giacomo Kock - University of Ferrara (*confirmed*)
Non invasive brain modulation in AD
- 9.50 - 10.10 Angelo Antonini - University of Padova (*confirmed*)
Disease modification in Parkinson's disease
- 10.10 - 10.30 Fabrizio Piras - IRCSS Santa Lucia (*confirmed*)
Mapping the Middle-Earth: neuroimaging as an intermediate phenotype in neuropsychiatric diseases
- 10.30 - 10.50 Luca Battistini - IRCSS Santa Lucia (*confirmed*)
Deciphering Benefit-Risk: From MS Immunopathogenesis to Targeted Therapies
- 10.50 - 11.10 Federico Giove - IRCSS Santa Lucia (*confirmed*)
Functional Magnetic Resonance Spectroscopy: a window into the energetics of perception
- 11.10 - 12.40 SESSION 6. Neuro-immune and neuro-inflammatory interactions in health and disease**
Chairs: Alberto Mantovani - Humanitas Foundation for Research, Antonio Rosato - University of Padova, Veneto Institute of Oncology
- Speakers:**
- 11.10 - 11.20 Alberto Mantovani - Humanitas Foundation for Research (*confirmed*)
Hallmarks of inflammation, a metanarrative of medicine
- 11.20 - 11.40 Gabriela Constantin - University of Verona (*confirmed*)
Neutrophil-mediated neurotoxic inflammation in neurodegenerative diseases
- 11.40 - 12.00 Michela Matteoli - Humanitas Research Hospital (*confirmed*)
Microglial Reprogramming in Neuroinflammation and Neurodegeneration
- 12.00 - 12.20 Luisa Barzon - University of Padova (*confirmed*)
Innate immunity and viral neuroinvasion
- 12.20 - 12.40 Martina Absinta - Humanitas University (*confirmed*)
Multiscale mapping of chronic neuroinflammation
- 12.40 - 13.00 *Discussion*
- 13.00 - 14.00 Lunch**

14.00 - 15.20 SESSION 7. Neurovirology: The central nervous system as a viral reservoir and related latency mechanisms

Chairs: Giorgio Palù - University of Padova, Rosario Rizzuto - Cassa di Risparmio Foundation of Padova and Rovigo (*confirmed*)

Speakers:

14.00 - 14.20 Kamel Khalili - Temple University - Lewis Katz School of Medicine Philadelphia (*confirmed*)
Gene editing for HIV cure in the brain

14.20 - 14.40 Eduard Mocarski - Stanford University School of Medicine (*confirmed*)
Host versus viral control of neurotrophic herpesvirus latency and reactivation

14.40 -15.00 Mirko Cortese - University of Campania "Luigi Vanvitelli" (*confirmed*)
Molecular Mechanisms of Arboviral Replication and Their Implications for Neurotropism and Encephalitic Disease

15.00 - 15.20 Anna Teresa Palamara - Istituto Superiore di Sanità (*confirmed*)
Long-term effects of Neurotropic viruses: focus on HSV-1 and neurodegeneration

15.20 - 17.20 SESSION 8. Brain tumors as network diseases: Microenvironment, circuits and precision therapeutics

Chairs: D'Avella Domenico - University of Padova, Alfredo Guglielmi - University of Verona (*confirmed*)

Speakers:

15.20 - 15.40 Fabio Mammano - University of Padova (*confirmed*)
Connexin Hemichannels in Glioblastoma: From Microenvironmental Signal Amplifiers to Monoclonal Antibody Targeting

15.40 - 16.00 Stefano Piccolo - University of Padova (*confirmed*)
Shape and function of brain tumors

16.00 - 16.20 Fabrizio d'Adda Di Fagagna - IFOM (*confirmed*)
DNA Damage in Glioblastoma: Mechanisms and Therapeutic Opportunities

16.20 - 16.40 Stefano Ratti - University of Bologna (*confirmed*)
Patient-derived secretome profiling to assess nuclear lamina targeting in glioblastoma

16.40 - 17.00 Alessandro Salvalaggio - University of Padova (*confirmed*)
Connectome and brain tumors

17.00 - 17.20 Franco Chioffi - University of Padua (*confirmed*)
Decoding surgery success of brain tumors

17.20 - 17.40 *Discussion*

17.40 *Conclusion of the proceedings*



THIRD DAY | Padua, November 28

8.00 - 8.30 **Registration of participants**

8.30 - 10.30 **SESSION 9. Organoids, assembloids, and next-generation brain study models**

Chairs: Nicola Elvassore - VIMM Veneto Institute of Molecular Medicine VIMM, Stefano Piccolo - University of Padova (*confirmed*)

Speakers:

8.30 - 9.10 Massimo Marchiori - University of Padova (*confirmed*)

Vincenzo Tarzia - University of Padova (*confirmed*)

Paolo Zanatta – Treviso Hospital (*confirmed*)

The interplay between Brain and Heart: from research to clinical application

9.10 - 9.30 Marta Trevisan - University of Padova (*confirmed*)

Brain organoids at the Frontline: Modeling Neurotropic Viral Pathogenesis and Accelerating Antiviral Discovery

9.30 - 9.50 Arianna Calistri - University of Padova (*confirmed*)

Brain Organoids and Assembloids as Next-Generation Platforms for Evaluating the Safety and Efficacy of Oncolytic Viruses: Promise, Pitfalls, and Translational Perspectives

9.50 - 10.10 Persano Luca - University of Padova (*confirmed*)

Brain Tumoroids: from phenotypic and functional characterization to preclinical applications

10.10 - 10.30 *Discussion*

10.30 - 11.50 **SESSION 10. Neuroethics, regulatory aspects and health policy in brain science**

Chair: Gino Gerosa - Veneto Region, Paolo Bettio - University of Padova

Speakers:

10.30- 10.50 Marco Cavaleri - EMA, European Medicine Agency (*confirmed*)

Role of vaccines in preventing neurological disorders: state of play

10.50 - 11.10 Paolo Bettio - University of Padova (*confirmed*)

Matter-spirit; science-ethics-transcendence between Late Antiquity and the Twentieth Century

11.10 - 11.30 Alberto Carrara - Ateneo Pontificio Regina Apostolorum (*confirmed*)

Am I more than my brain? Towards an integral neuroethics

11.30 - 11.50 Giulio Tononi - University of Wisconsin (*confirmed*)

No consciousness for AI



11.50 - 13.00 Opening Table discussion

Comunicare la scienza globale: etica, complessità e linguaggi condivisi

Chairs: Daniela Boresi, Gino Gerosa

Session for journalists and scientific scientists

13.00 Concluding remarks - Gino Gerosa, Veneto Region

