



Psychiatric disorders and their modelling in animals: in search of symptoms or syndromes?

Animals have been invaluable tools to model human pathophysiology. Their validity as models in psychiatry and psychology, however, is often questioned because of intrinsic limitations. To what extent is it possible to model complex syndromes in animals? What is, on the other side, the heuristic value of modelling single symptoms? We intend to stimulate the debate around strategies to design animal models of mood and thought disorders, assessing advantages and limitations of approaches based on the quest for measurable invariants, or endophenotypes, of psychiatric disorders, as compared to more integrative attempts to model syndromes.

This symposium is addressed to young behavioural neuroscientist as well as to senior researchers in other neuroscience fields who are confronted with the challenge of setting out to test neurobiological hypotheses around aetiology and therapy of psychiatric disorders in the behaving animal. A limited number of young investigators will have the opportunity to present their work in a poster session, and to receive a short practical introduction to some techniques and methods in behavioural analysis.

