

PNIRS Ibero-America Annual Committee Report

June 1, 2023 to July, 1 2024

Committee members:

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The PNIRS Ibero-America initiative has made significant progress in the past year, expanding its reach, and fostering valuable collaborations across the region. We successfully organized its first symposium and have two more lined up for Fall 2024. The PNIRS Ibero-America initiative has engaged with leading researchers and initiated new projects that align with its mission to advance psychoneuroimmunology research. We thank the PNIRS leadership for their support, which has been instrumental in our progress.

Welcoming New Members

We are thrilled to announce the addition of two exceptional members to our committee. Their expertise is an invaluable asset that is significantly enhancing the development of our network. Their enthusiasm and dedication to advancing PNI research in Ibero-America are profoundly appreciated.



Dr. **Ruth Barrientos** is an esteemed expert in behavioral neuroimmunology, an Associate Professor at Ohio State University, and a member of the PNIRS board. Her research investigates the impact of neuro-inflammation on behavior and cognition, particularly in the contexts of aging and neurodegenerative diseases.



Dr. **Livia Carvalho** is a Senior Lecturer at Queen Mary University. Her research focuses on the molecular mechanisms underlying neuro-inflammation, aiming to develop therapeutic strategies for conditions.

First Symposium: Psychoneuroimmunology Expands to Ibero-America

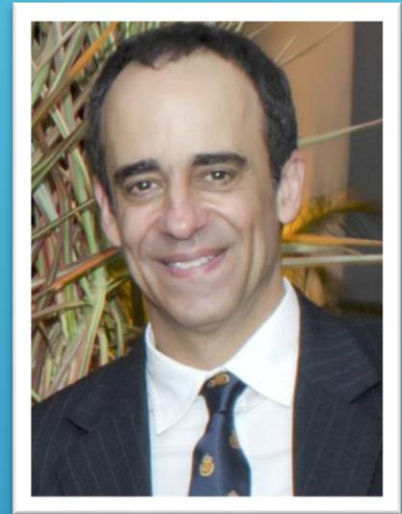
Event: FeSBE - Federação de Sociedades Brasileiras de Biologia Experimental Annual Meeting

Location: Buzios, Brazil

Date: August 27-30, 2023



Our first symposium, held during the FeSBE Annual Meeting, marked a significant milestone for PNIRS Ibero-America. This event was made possible through generous financing from a grant awarded to Dr. Lício Velloso from the University of Campinas (UNICAMP). Dr. Velloso is a renowned expert in metabolic diseases and their interactions with the immune system. His support has been crucial in establishing our initiative and fostering its growth.



Lício Velloso, PhD
University of Campinas
(UNICAMP), Brazil





The symposium provided a platform for distinguished speakers to share their groundbreaking research. Dr. Keith Kelley (University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign), who has been our mentor since the beginning, introduced the PNIRS Ibero-America initiative, emphasizing the importance of expanding PNI collaborations into the Ibero-America region and creating a global research network in the field. Dr. Ruth Barrientos presented her work on the mechanisms by which a Western diet induces memory deficits in the aging brain. Dr. Wilson Savino (Oswaldo Cruz Foundation), who is a member of our committee, highlighted his research on immuno-neuro-endocrine interactions in Chagas disease.

Additionally, Dr. Jacob Allen (University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign) explored how psychological stress-induced changes to intestinal epithelial cells can alter the microbiome and predispose individuals to disease. The symposium also featured Dr. Jonathan Kipnis (Washington University School of Medicine) as a keynote speaker in a separate conference, who discussed the role of brain borders in controlling brain function.

This symposium was a fantastic opportunity for the PNIRS Ibero-America team to connect with researchers in Brazil, fostering new collaborations and bringing PNIRS-affiliated scientists to the region. The partnership between the Brazilian Federation of Experimental Biology Societies and PNIRS Ibero-America promises to be mutually beneficial and highly productive.

Upcoming symposia

For 2024, we are organizing two symposia in Brazil, both of which are the fruits of collaborations and networks established during our first symposium. Our organization is growing, and these events reflect our expanding influence and reach.

Second Symposium

Event: Congress of the Brazilian Society of Immunology

Location: Fortaleza, Brazil

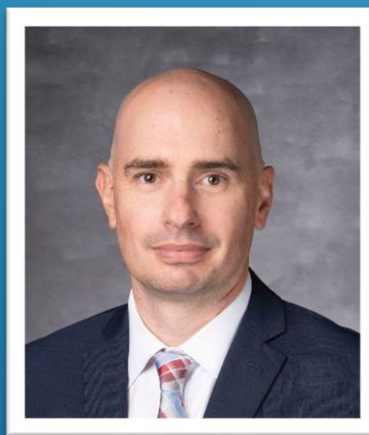
Date: September 26-28, 2024



Building on the success of our first symposium, we have organized a second symposium during the Congress of the Brazilian Society of Immunology (SBI). Dr. Ruth Barrientos was invited by Dr. Moises Bauer, the president of SBI, to speak at this conference, and we expanded her involvement into a full PNIRS Ibero-America symposium. Alongside Dr. Barrientos, the symposium will feature Dr. Peter Grace and Dr. Antoine Louveau, who will share their latest research findings and insights.



Ruth Barrientos, PhD
The Ohio State University,
OH, USA



Peter Grace, PhD
The University of Texas,
TX, USA



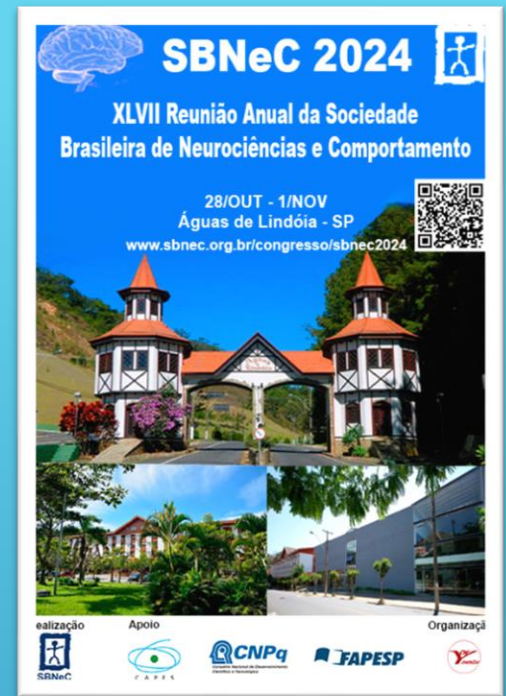
Antoine Louveau, PhD
Case Western Reserve
University, OH, USA

Third Symposium: Integrative Approaches in Psychoneuroimmunology (PNI)

Event: Congress of the Brazilian Society of Neuroscience and Behavior (SBNeC)

Location: Aguas de Lindoia, Brazil

Date: October 28 to November 1, 2024



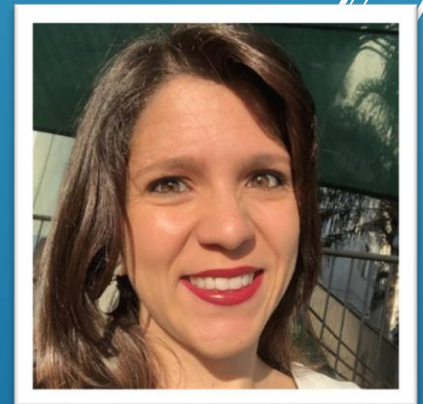
Our third symposium, invited by SBNeC former president Dr. Deborah Suchecki, will showcase a range of integrative approaches in PNI. Dr. Erica Glasper (The Ohio State University) will discuss her pioneering research on the interactions among sex, social behavior, and neuro-immune interactions following early-life loss. Dr. Aline Silva de Miranda (Federal University of Minas Gerais) will present her work on inflammatory biomarkers for traumatic brain injury, highlighting current knowledge and future directions. Dr. Maria Elisa Caetano-Silva (University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign) will share insights into how psychological stress disrupts the brain-gut axis, affecting intestinal mucosal compartments and the microbiome.



Erica Glasper, PhD
The Ohio State University,
OH, USA



Aline Silva de Miranda, PhD
Federal University of Minas
Gerais (UFMG), Brazil



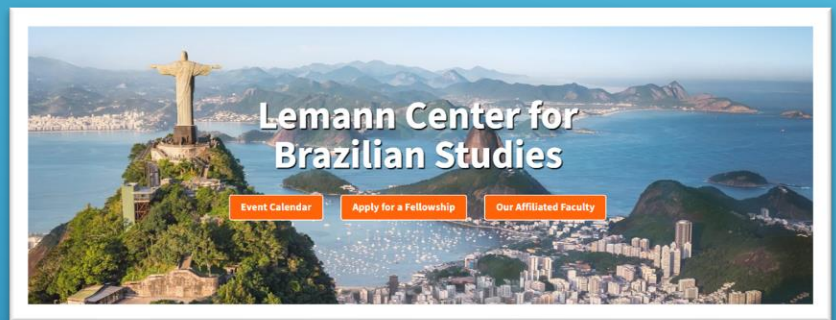
Elisa Caetano-Silva, PhD
University of Illinois at
Urbana-Champaign, IL, USA

Meeting with Fiocruz Delegation



In May 2024, we had a productive meeting with researchers from the renowned Fiocruz Foundation, a prominent Brazilian institution renowned for its cutting-edge research in public health and biomedical sciences. FIOCRUZ's extensive expertise in immunology, epidemiology, and healthcare innovation aligns perfectly with the aims of PNIRS Ibero-America. By collaborating with FIOCRUZ, we aim to foster a robust network of interdisciplinary research, leveraging their strengths to advance our understanding of psychoneuroimmunology. This partnership will not only enhance our scientific endeavors but also contribute significantly to improving public health outcomes across Ibero-America.

After this meeting, Dr. Maria Elisa Caetano-Silva has been formally invited by the director, Dr. Flavia Andrade, to affiliate with the Lemann Center for Brazilian Studies, which can open doors for applying for grants through this center.



Additional Developments

We have launched a newsletter to keep our database of researchers informed about opportunities for scholarships and research collaborations. The purpose of this newsletter is to facilitate communication with our network. Additionally, we are organizing virtual encounters with students from various institutions we have been in contact with to discuss pathways for applying for fellowships and research programs. This past year has been one of significant growth and progress for PNIRS Ibero-America. We are grateful for the support of the PNIRS leadership and the contributions of our dedicated committee members. We look forward to continuing our efforts to advance psychoneuroimmunology research and foster collaborations across the Ibero-America region.