

Press release

Swiss 3R Competence Centre Announces Annual 3Rs Awards

The Swiss 3R Competence Centre (3RCC) proudly announces the recipients of its prestigious annual awards: the Swiss 3RCC's **3Rs Award** goes to the STRIDE-Lab led by Benjamin Ineichen and the two **Young 3Rs Investigator Awards** go to Viola Bugada from the University of Zurich (UZH) and Duygu Yazici, the Swiss Institute of Allergy and Asthma Research, Davos, Associated Institute of UZH. These awards honor outstanding contributions to the Replacement, Reduction, and Refinement (3Rs) of animal experimentation conducted in Switzerland.

The primary 3Rs Award, accompanied by a prize of CHF 4,000, recognizes exceptional work that significantly advances the 3Rs principle. Additionally, the two Young 3Rs Investigator Awards, each worth CHF 2,500 (thanks to a generous contribution from the National Research Programme (NRP) 79 – Advancing 3R), are awarded to early-career researchers for their remarkable achievements in promoting the 3Rs principle.

3Rs Award

The 3Rs Award 2023 goes to the STRIDE-Lab led by Benjamin Ineichen, Research group leader, Center for Reproducible Science, University of Zurich) for its exceptional contributions to animal welfare in research.



(From left to right: Wolfgang Zürrer, David Brüsweiler, Bernard Hild, Julia Bugajska, Benjamin Ineichen, Amelia Cannon, Simona Doneva, Ingrid Berg, Marianna Rosso; missing from the picture: Hanna Hubarava, Vera Bernhard)

By promoting systematic reviews, the STRIDE-Lab aims to reduce unnecessary animal testing and encourage responsible research. The lab's key initiatives include creating a comprehensive [database](#) for neuroscientists, improving drug development processes, and supporting systematic reviews through CAMARADES Switzerland. The jurors appraise the initiative's multifaceted approach of the awarded initiative and recognize its potential significant impact on reducing animal use by better use of existing studies.

A recently published [study](#) of the STRIDE lab group leader, Benjamin Ineichen systematically investigated animal-to-human translation and subsequent market authorization of therapeutic interventions has received wide media attention and highlights the relevance of his work.

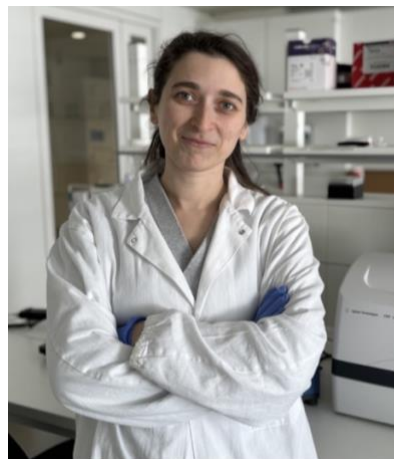
"We are very honored to receive the 3Rs Award," says Benjamin Ineichen. "Our mission is to enhance transparency and reproducibility in research, contributing to more evidence-based animal studies. We believe systematic review is an important approach to limit unnecessary animal experiments and reduce, replace, and refine the overall use of animals in scientific studies. This recognition motivates us to continue making a positive impact." For more information about the STRIDE-Lab and its initiatives, please visit <https://stride-lab.pages.uzh.ch/website/>.

Young 3Rs Investigator Awards

The Young 3Rs Investigator Awards for work completed in 2023 go to Viola Bugada from the University of Zurich and Duygu Yazici from the Swiss Institute of Allergy and Asthma Research, Davos, Associated Institute of the University of Zurich. The 3RCC recognizes their exceptional contribution to the 3Rs principle, emphasizing their commitment to improving both animal welfare and scientific outcomes.



Viola Bugada



Duygu Yazici

Viola Bugada (Institute of Experimental Immunology, UZH) receives the Young 3Rs Investigator Award for her contribution to refining oral drug administration to rodents. Bugada specifically applied her method to encourage voluntary consumption of tamoxifen, a medication frequently used in research involving mice. The awarded

approach is less stressful for animals compared to traditional methods like force-feeding. Her method improves the well-being of the animals, while ensuring accurate dosing and experimental outcomes. Additionally, the approach is cost-effective and easy for other research teams to adopt. Bugada's approach is awarded for exemplifying implementation of refinement that can significantly benefit preclinical research involving water-insoluble drugs. "This new tamoxifen administration method contributes to a growing number of applications aimed at replacing invasive procedures with more animal-friendly alternatives that are equally accurate," said Viola Bugada. "I hope our method will inspire other research teams to adopt similar approaches, further advancing the principles of the 3Rs and improving the quality of preclinical studies."

Duygu Yazici (Swiss Institute of Allergy and Asthma Research, UZH) has received the Young 3Rs Investigator Award for creating advanced lab models that mimic human organs using stem cell technology and organ-on-a-chip devices. These innovative models provide an ethical alternative to animal testing for studying the hazards of environmental toxicants. The methods have contributed to advancing the field of New Approach Methodologies reducing future reliance on animal testing in toxicology. The findings are published in high-impact journals of the field, and collaborative studies with institutions within Switzerland and internationally, highlight the ambition to broadly disseminate the approach in the scientific community and beyond. "Our innovative model not only adheres to the 3R principle but also provides critical insights into the molecular and cellular toxicity and regulation of environmental chemicals" said Duygu Yazici "This research is pivotal in developing less toxic products and exploring new therapeutic approaches to combat related diseases." For additional details about their work, please visit <https://epithelialbarriertheory.com/>.

About the Swiss 3R Competence Centre (3RCC) and Annual 3R Awards

The Swiss 3R Competence Centre (3RCC) is dedicated to promoting the 3Rs principle of Replacement, Reduction, and Refinement of animal experimentation, fostering advancements in 3Rs research and development that benefit both science and animal welfare.

Award recipients are selected based on the quality and impact of their contributions to the 3Rs in various contexts, including scientific, regulatory, industrial, and educational fields. Nominations pass an initial screening and shortlisting, followed by the appraisal of a jury composed of five international and national 3Rs experts.

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