

Media invitation, 9 September 2022

Hans Sigrist Symposium: Maternal-Fetal Communication during Pregnancy

The Hans Sigrist Symposium, which will take place on September 13, 2022, focuses on the topic of maternal-fetal communication during pregnancy. The event brings together experts in this field from around the world and provides the foundation with the opportunity to honor its 2020 Hans Sigrist Prize Winner, Prof. Amanda Sferruzzi-Perri from the University of Cambridge.

The groundbreaking work of Amanda Sferruzzi-Perri is helping to take some major strides forward in this area of research. The 42-year-old scientist's research is dedicated to the unravelling of the epigenetic and genetic regulation of the placenta and the in utero programming of adult diseases. She has elucidated fundamental concepts of maternal-fetal communication and the fetal origins of health and adult diseases. Her innovative and distinguished work has motivated further scientific study on the placenta and the design of placenta-targeted strategies to prevent pregnancy complications and to improve the life-long health of mothers and their offspring. The keynote speech presented by Amanda Sferruzzi-Perri is entitled "The role of the placenta in materno-fetal nutrient allocation; vital for pregnancy and life-long health".

Prof. Christiane Albrecht of the Institute of Biochemistry and Molecular Medicine chaired the 2020 Hans Sigrist Prize search committee. She is also a member of the National Center of Competence in Research (NCCR) TransCure. "It is amazing to see the influence which these processes, that occur so early in pregnancy, have on the later life of the mother and her offspring," says Albrecht. For example, problems with the formation or functionality of the placenta increase the risk of miscarriages or developmental disorders in the child. Both of these factors are devastating for parents. In addition, complications during pregnancy lead to health problems for the child as well as for the mother, which also puts a strain on the healthcare system. "The work of researchers in this field has far-reaching implications on our well-being and on society - so it is important that this research has received recognition and greater visibility through the 2020 Hans Sigrist Prize," Albrecht explains.

"The Foundation is excited about the upcoming Hans Sigrist Symposium. This year, top international scientists from abroad and from Switzerland will join us to discuss their research on maternal-fetal communication during pregnancy and how one might be able to improve life-long

health by implementing adequate approaches in treating mothers and their offspring" says Prof. Dr. Norbert Trautmann, President of the Hans Sigrist Foundation.

Hans Sigrist Prize winners receive 100,000 CHF to help further their research and are invited to receive the prize at the University of Bern and to speak at the annual Hans Sigrist Symposium. This year's symposium takes place in September 2022 instead of December 2020, because the 2020 symposium had to be delayed due to the pandemic.

The 2020 Hans Sigrist Prize winner, Amanda Sferruzzi-Perri, and the 2020 Hans Sigrist Prize Committee Chair, Christiane Albrecht, comment on the subject matter of this September 2022 symposium in an interview published by the online-magazine "uniaktuell" in both [German](#) and [English](#).

Personal details: Amanda Sferruzzi-Perri

Born 1980 in Melbourne, Australia

2001 Bachelor of Science, University of Adelaide, Australia

2007 PhD, Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Adelaide

2008-2010 Overseas Biomedical CJ Martin Research Fellow, University of Cambridge, UK

2011-2014 Next Generation Fellow, Centre for Trophoblast Research, Cambridge, UK

2015-2019 Royal Society Dorothy Hodgkin Research Fellow, Department of Physiology, Development and Neuroscience, Cambridge, UK

Since 2019 Honorary Associate Professor of Maternal and Fetal Medicine, Women's Health Institute, University College of London, UK

Since 2019 University Lecturer in Reproductive Physiology, Department of Physiology, Development and Neuroscience, University of Cambridge, UK

Since 2022, University Professor in Fetal and Placental Physiology

Media professionals are kindly invited to the Hans Sigrist Symposium:

Date: Tuesday, September 13, 2022, 2:00 p.m. – 6:15 p.m.

Location: UniS, Schanzeneckstrasse 1, Lecture Hall S 003, 3012 Bern

Program: Please find the program attached or go to www.sigrist.unibe.ch/symposium

Free admission; the conference will be conducted in English

Speakers:

Prof. Dr. Amanda Sferruzzi-Perri, University of Cambridge, England

Prof. Dr. Christiane Albrecht, Institute of Biochemistry and Molecular Medicine, University of Bern

Prof. Dr. Claudia Buss, Charité Universität Berlin

Prof. Dr. Deborah M. Sloboda, McMaster University, Canada

Dr. Mariana Schröder, Institute of Biochemistry and Molecular Medicine, University of Bern

Prof. Dr. Norbert Trautmann, Hans Sigrist Foundation, University of Bern

Prof. Dr. Susanne Ulbrich, ETH Zurich

Prof. Dr. Mark Vickers, University of Auckland, New Zealand

Please register by September 13 at medien@unibe.ch / Phone +41 31 631 41 42.
Interview requests can be sent to the same address.

Hans Sigrist Prize

Each year, the Hans Sigrist Foundation Board decides the field of the prize from a selection of proposals made by faculties of the University of Bern, from which the prize committee nominates candidates worldwide. The 2020 prize committee was led by Prof. Dr. Christiane Albrecht from the Institute of Biochemistry and Molecular Medicine. The Hans Sigrist Foundation Board makes the final decision regarding the award. Prize winners can use the prize money (100,000 CHF) to further fund their research.

[More information about Hans-Sigrist-Stiftung](#)

Further Information about the Hans Sigrist Foundation:

Hans-Sigrist-Stiftung

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Yours sincerely
Media Relations
University of Bern