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umcg:

BCN

The Research School of Behavioural and Cognitive Neurosciences (BCN) is a research and training center for the study of normal and pathological processes of the nervous system at the University of Groningen, the Netherlands.

Our main objectives are twofold:

- to initiate, stimulate and integrate scientific research on the biological bases of behavioural and cognitive processes
- to provide our Research Master and PhD students with an integrated training program consisting of courses, lectures, master classes, workshops, seminars, symposia and multidisciplinary research

Some 300 senior researchers, 50 postdoctoral researchers and about 220 PhD students from five faculties within the University of Groningen participate in BCN. Research ranges from molecular processes to the whole organism and from yeast to humans.

BCN Cross-Disciplinary Symposia

BCN organizes special symposia which are part of the obligatory education program of our PhD students and appreciated meeting platforms for our senior scientists.

With these symposia we aim to:

- demonstrate the value of interdisciplinary research by approaching a single theme, central to BCN, from different angles
- encourage discussion of members of different research faculties, particularly graduate students
- inform BCN members about the state of their relevant research topics

Organization

Research School of Behavioural and Cognitive Neurosciences (BCN)

FA30

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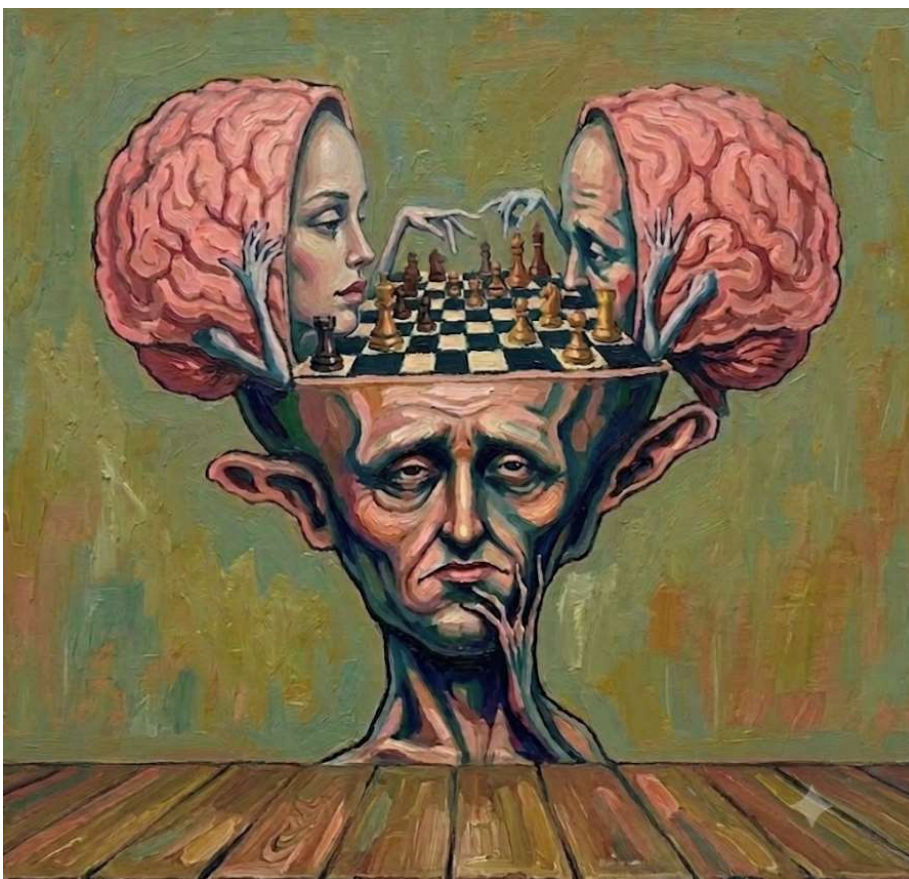
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website: www.rug.nl/bcn

BCN & CAD Symposium

Lateralization of brain, cognition and behaviour

From evolution to clinical relevance



October 30, 2026

Groningen

Theme

We invite you to the BCN & CAD* Symposium "Lateralization of brain, cognition and behaviour".

Lateralisation of the brain has intrigued people since its discovery in the 19th century. Being originally the research field of mainly neurology and psychologists, the study of laterality became really interdisciplinary over the last decades, adding disciplines such as molecular genetics and physiology, cognitive neurosciences, and theoretical, behavioural and evolutionary biology. This revealed that lateralization is not a typical human trait, as originally claimed, but a fundamental principle of the organization of the neural system in the entire animal kingdom. It induced not only a search for which hemisphere is doing what, but also for its underlying genetics and ontogenetic development and plasticity, its functional consequences for both perception, cognition and social and non-behaviour, its relationship with pathology, as well as its Darwinian function and evolution, both in humans and non-human animals. In this full day symposium we will provide the current status of this interdisciplinary research field, address all these aspects in presentations by 6 internationally well recognized speakers. The morning session will be devoted to more fundamental principles and the afternoon session focusing on more clinical aspects, followed by a general forum discussion.

On behalf of the BCN Symposium
organizing committee,

Ton Groothuis
Joke Spikman
Sanne Brederoo
Anne Buunk
Floor Gelmers
Marie-Christine van de Glind
Femke Siebenga
Diana Koopmans
Evelyn Kuiper

Scan for more information and
registration



*UMCG research program Cognition Ageing and Disease

Program

9:00 – 9:30	Registration with coffee/tea
9:30 – 10:00	Prof. dr. Ton Groothuis – chair BCN board <i>Lateralization of brain, cognition and behaviour: an introduction into its four why's</i>
10:00 – 10:45	Prof. dr. Chris McManus – University College London, United Kingdom (Department of Psychology and Medical Education) <i>Cutting handedness at nature's joints, rather than wielding the butcher's axe</i>
10:45 – 11:15	Coffee break
11:15 – 12:00	Prof. dr. Elisa Frasnelli – University of Lincoln, United Kingdom (School of Life Sciences) <i>The Asymmetric Advantage: Evolutionary evidence and functional significance of lateralization in non-human animals</i>
12:00 – 12:30	Something special
12:30 – 13:30	Lunch break
13:30 – 14:15	Prof. dr. Guy Vingerhoets – Ghent University, Belgium (Department of Experimental Clinical and Health Psychology) <i>Beyond the textbook brain: Individual differences in brain organization and their functional implications</i>
14:15 – 15:00	Prof. dr. Sebastian Ocklenburg – Medical School Hamburg (MSH), Germany (Department of Psychology) <i>Clinical Relevance of Lateralization</i>
15:00 – 15:30	Coffee break
15:30 – 16:15	Prof. dr. Linda Douw – Associate Professor at Amsterdam UMC <i>Clinical network neuroscience: from localization to lateralization to distributed networks</i>
16:15 – 16:45	Debate
16:45 – 17:30	Drinks