

# Molecular imaging and brain connectomics: time for a molecular imaging perspective?

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OPINION | [VOLUME 27, ISSUE 4, P353-366, APRIL 2023](#)

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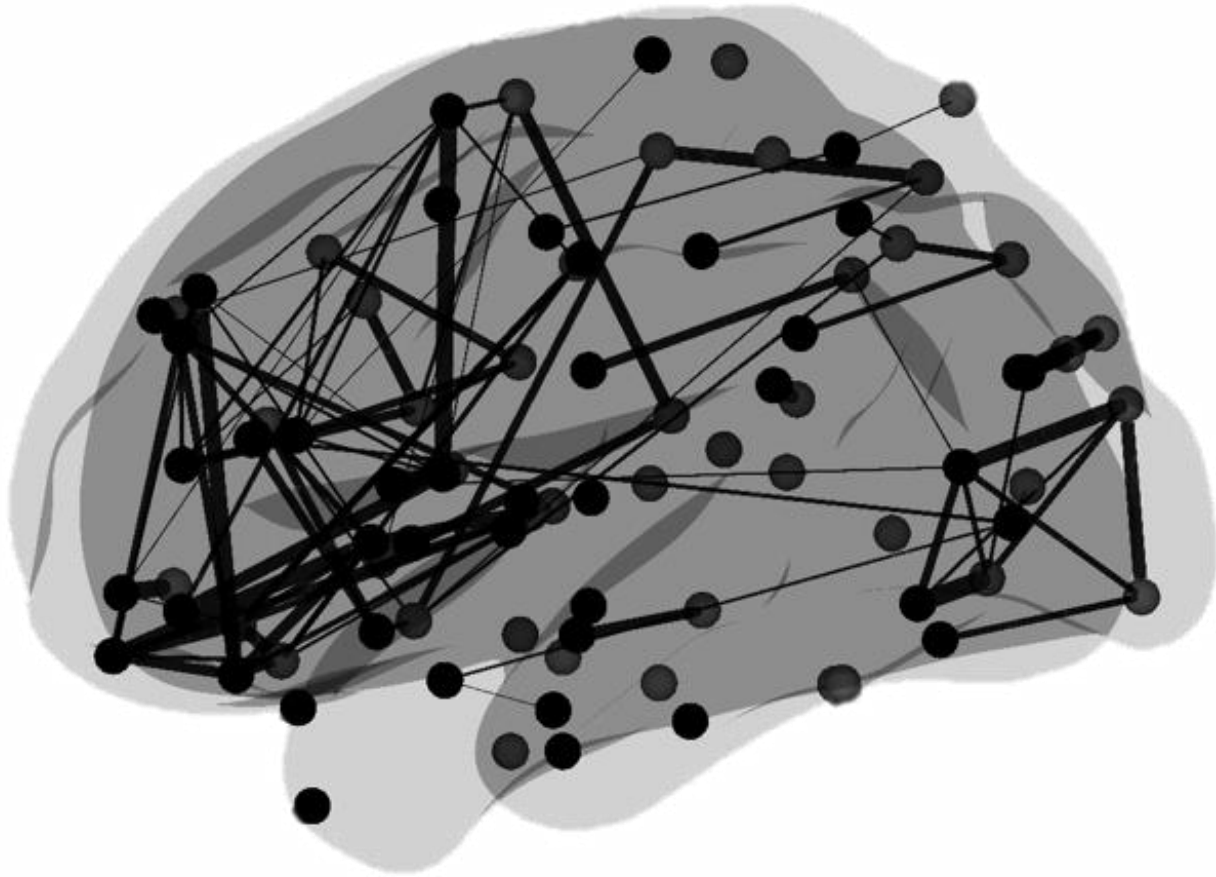
## Brain connectomics: time for a molecular imaging perspective?

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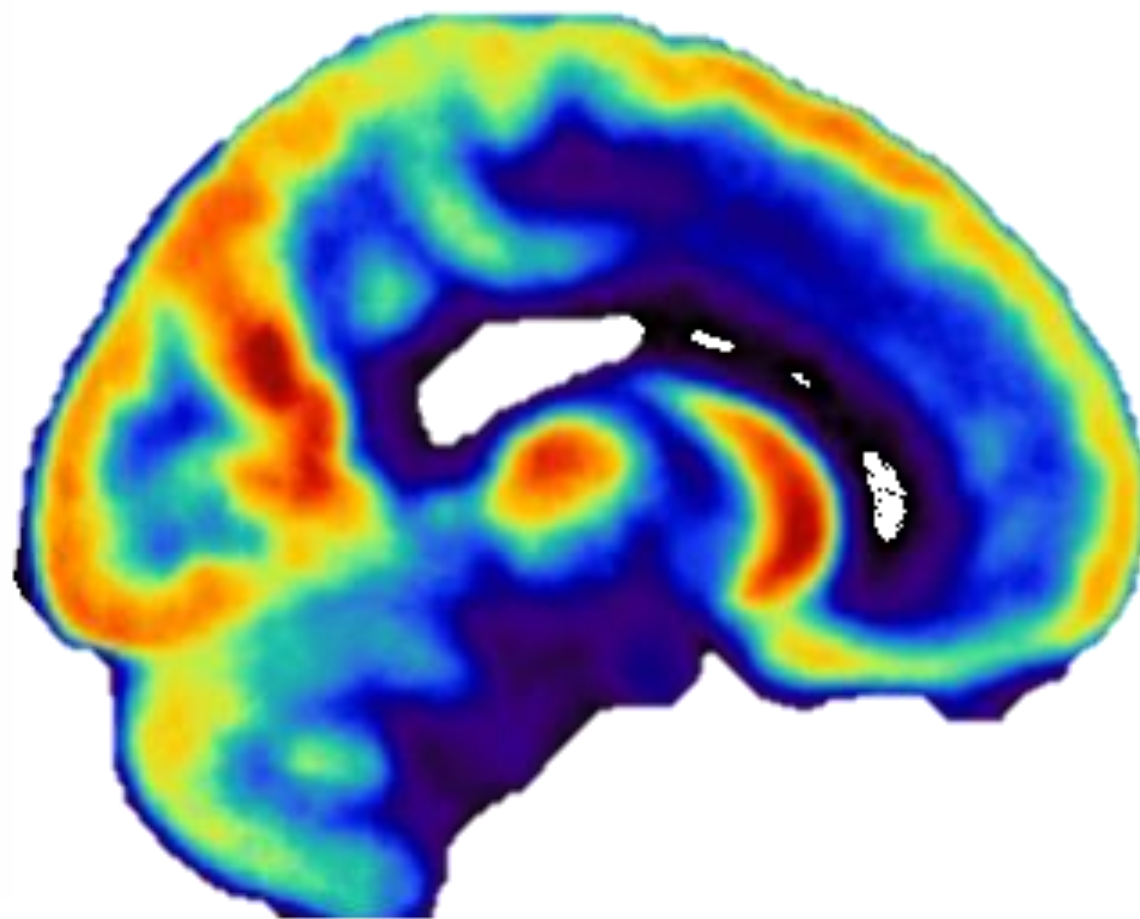
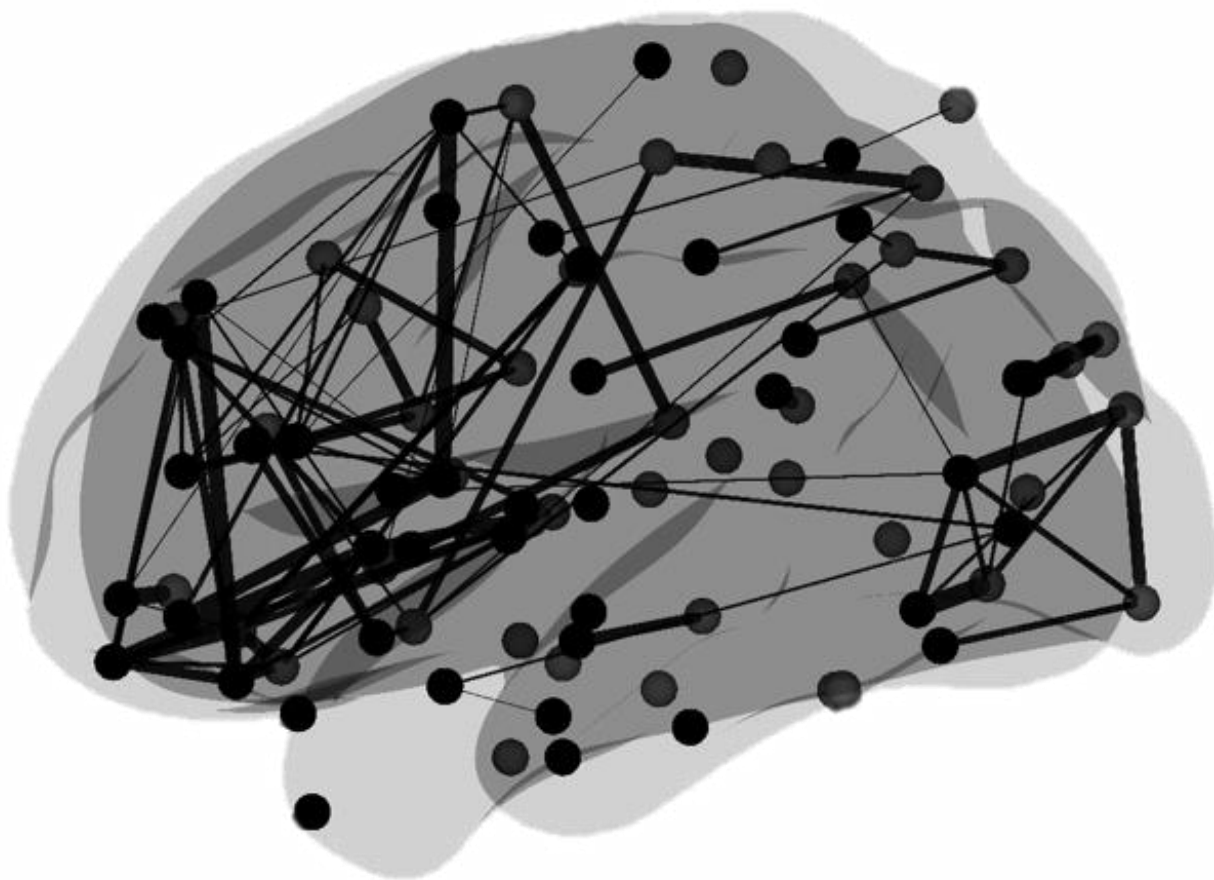
Published: January 06, 2023 • DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tics.2022.11.015> •

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# Connectivity

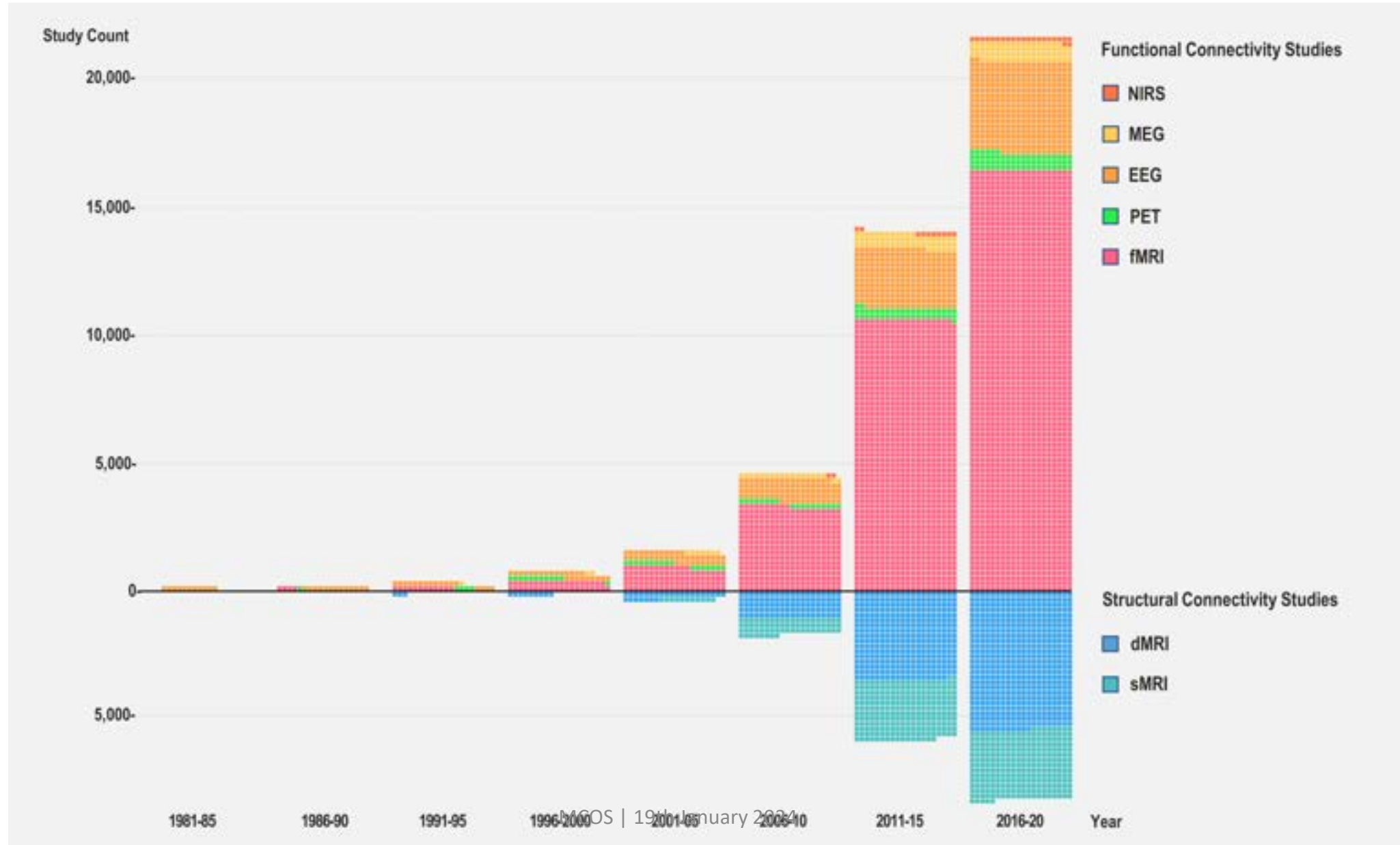


# Molecular Connectivity

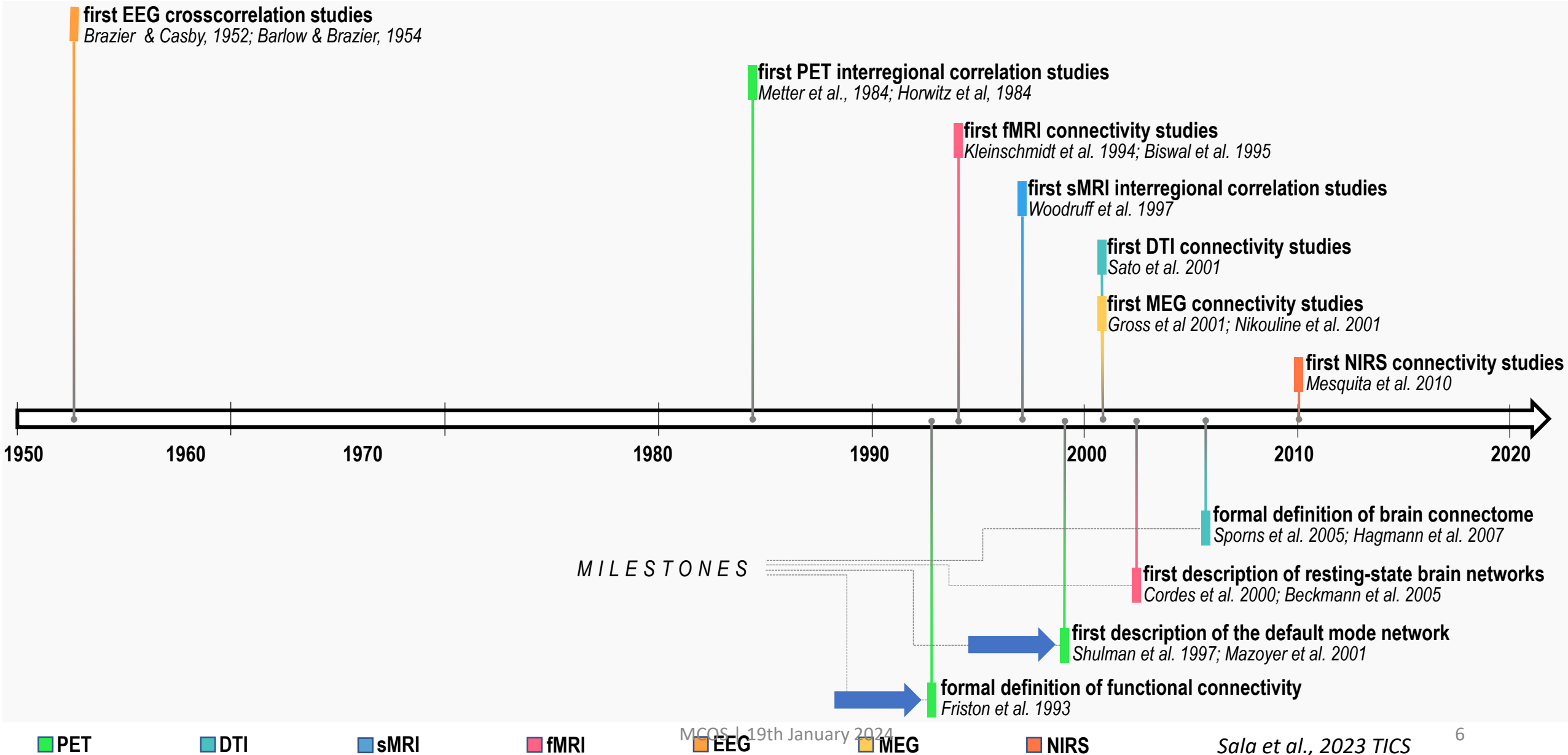




# PET in current brain connectivity



# PET in the history of brain connectivity



# Outline



Why

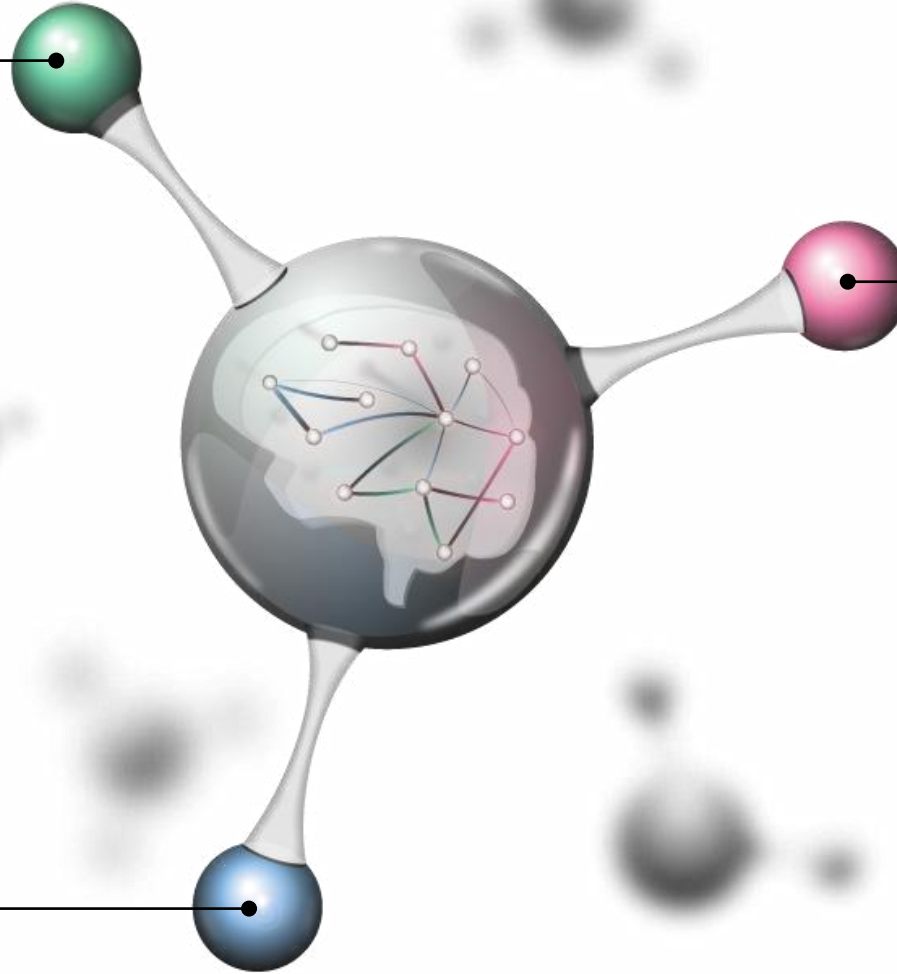
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What

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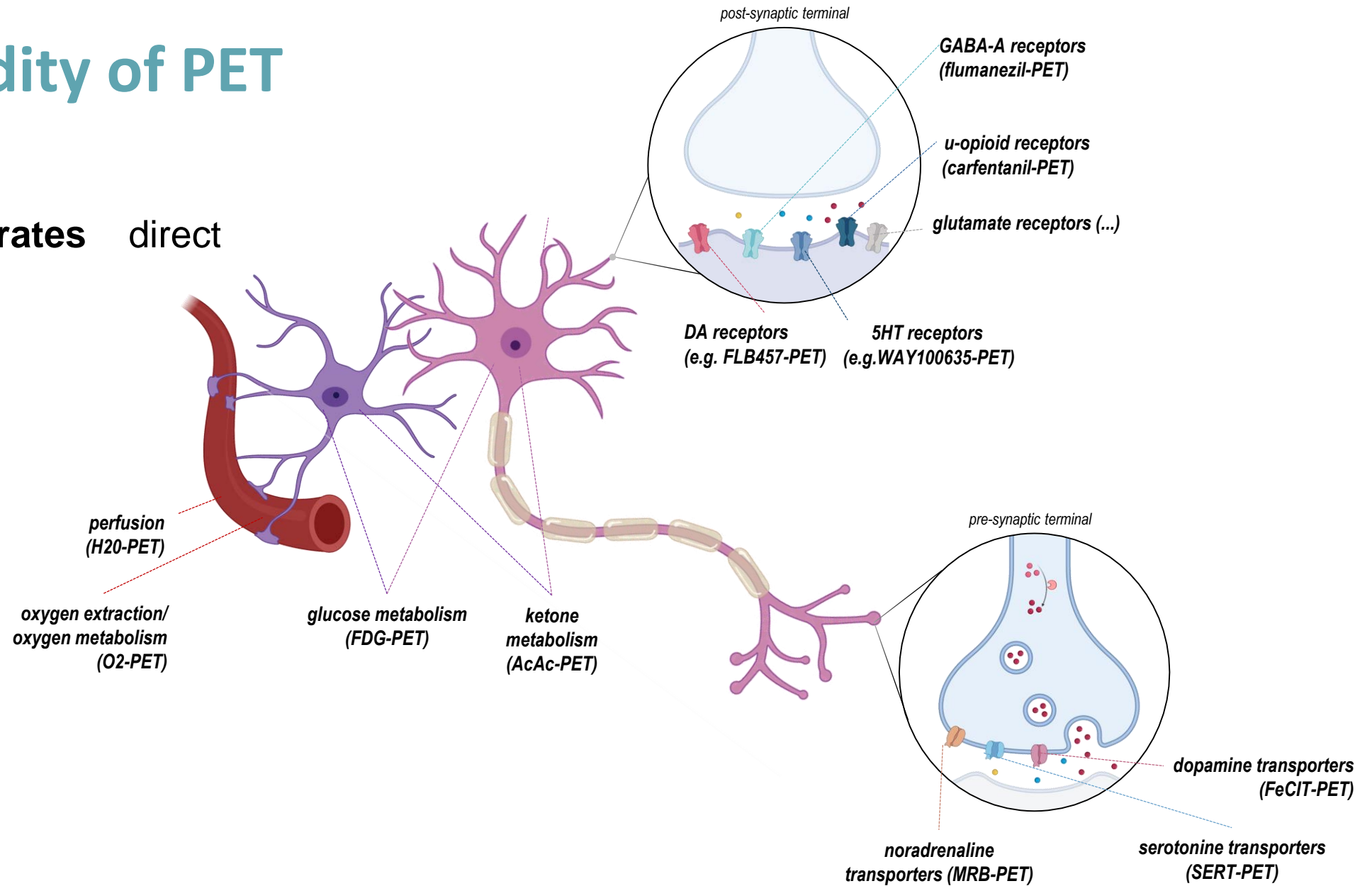
How

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# Why: validity of PET

## Neuronal substrates direct





# Why: validity of PET

**Neuronal substrates**    direct

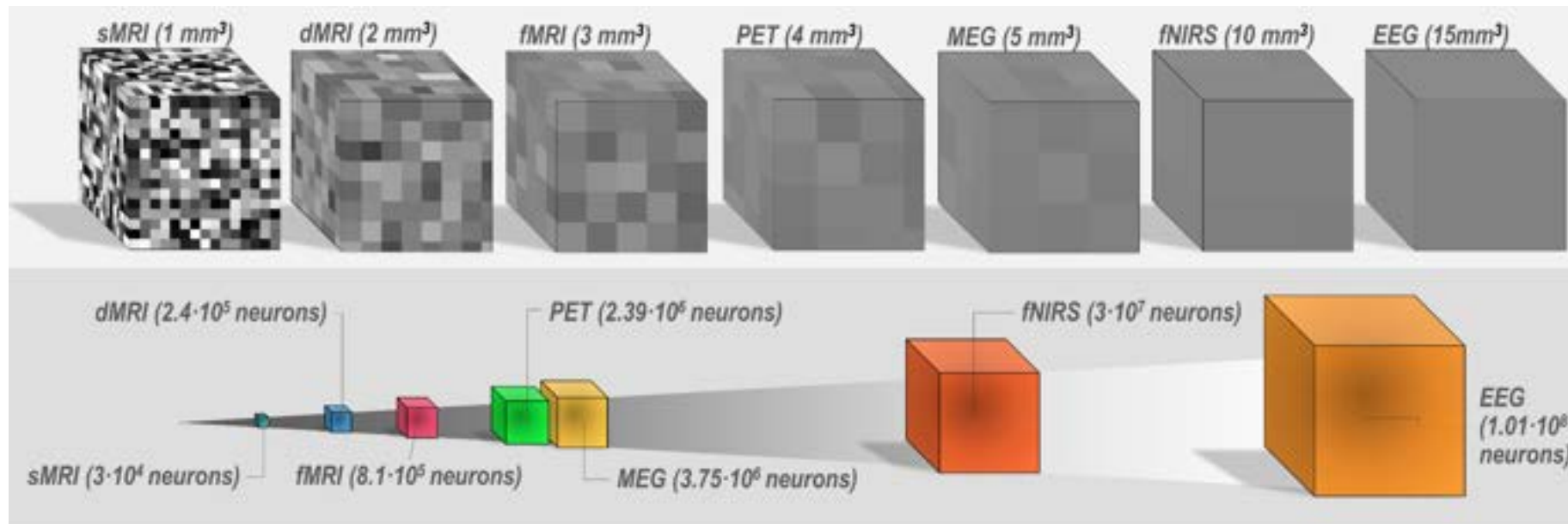




# Why: validity of PET

**Neuronal substrates** direct  
**Reproducibility** high

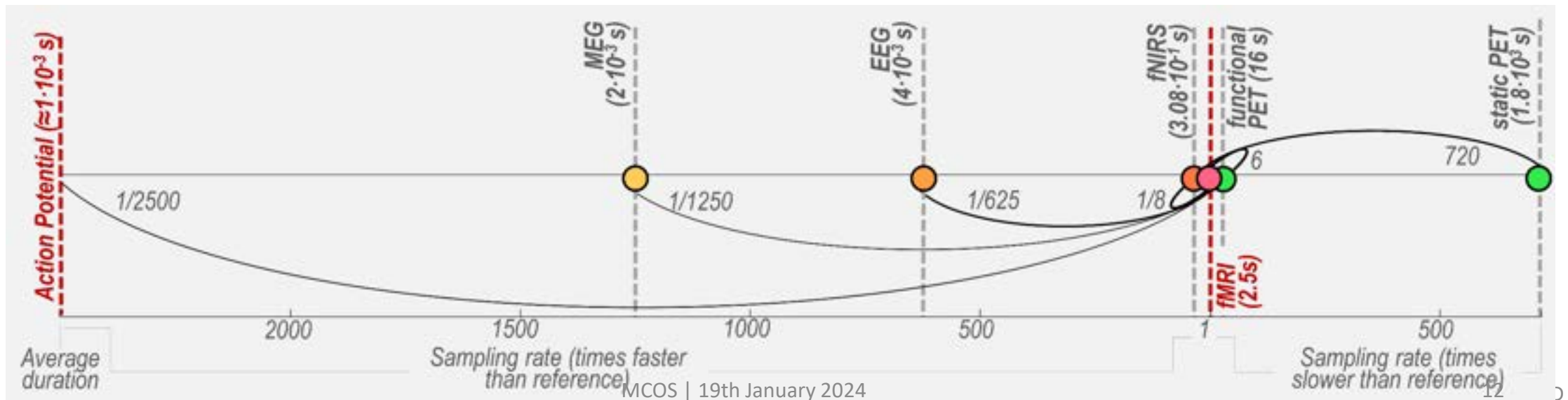
**Spatial resolution** 4.3 mm



# Why: validity of PET

Neuronal substrates    direct  
Reproducibility                      high

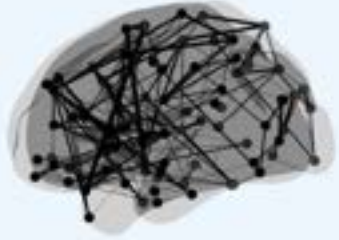
Spatial resolution            4.3 mm  
Temporal resolution          seconds to minutes



# Why: accurate models of brain function

## STRUCTURAL FINGERPRINTS

tractography dMRI



T1 sMRI



BOLD fMRI



## FUNCTIONAL FINGERPRINTS

EEG : alpha band



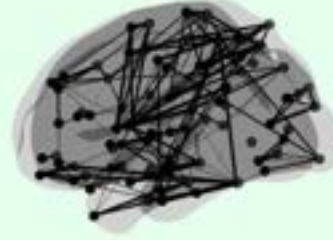
MEG : alpha band



fNIRS



PET : glucose metabolism



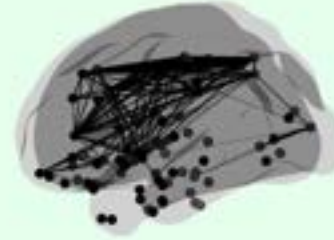
PET : oxygen metabolism



PET : cerebral blood flow



PET : dopamine synthesis



PET : cannabinoid receptors 1

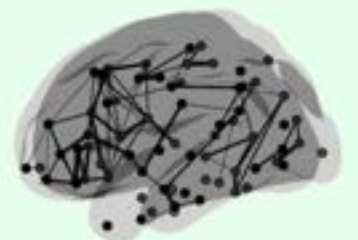


PET : serotonin transporter



## MOLECULAR FINGERPRINTS

PET : amyloid-beta



PET : tau

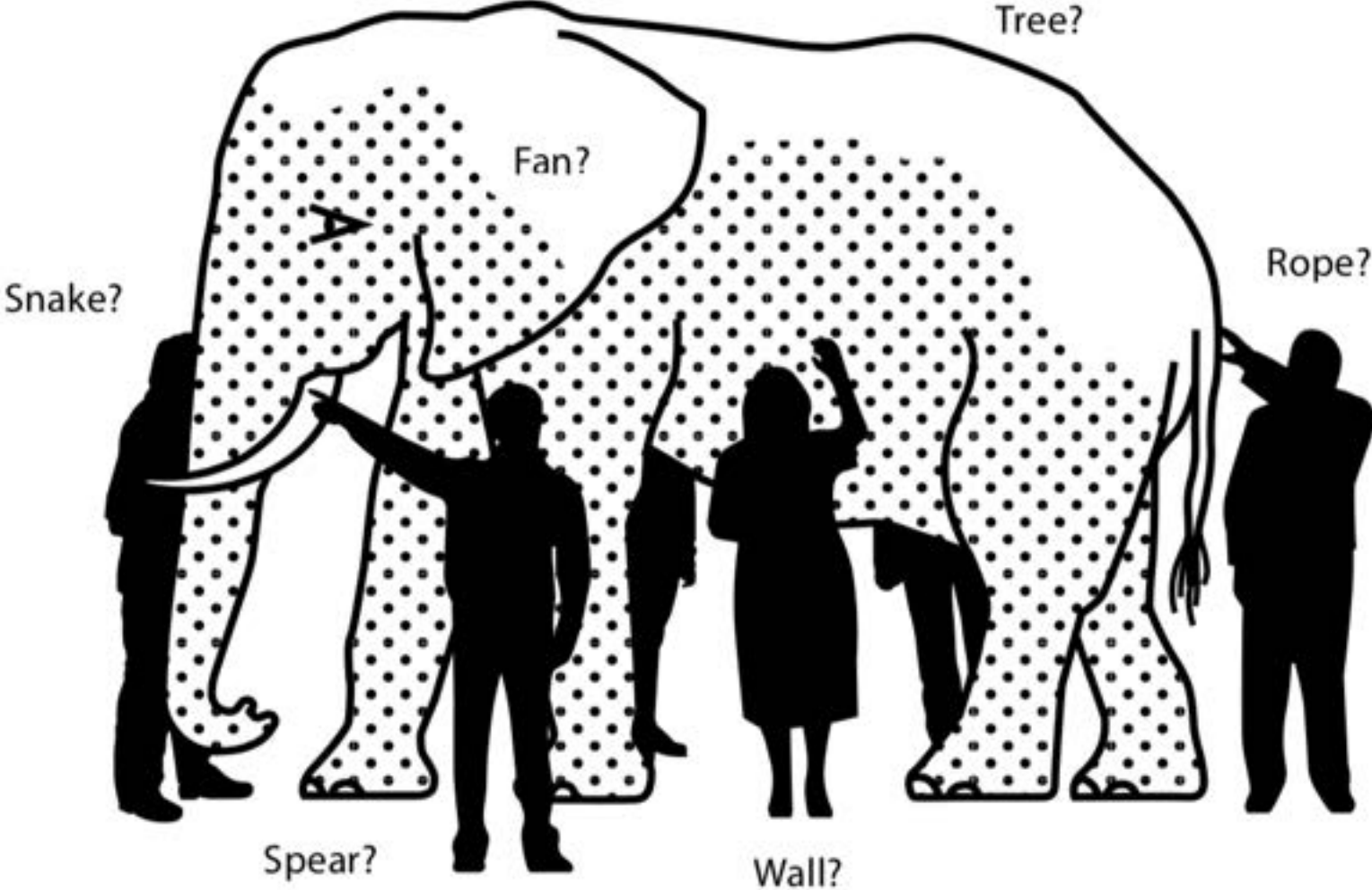


PET : pathology





# Why: accurate models of brain function



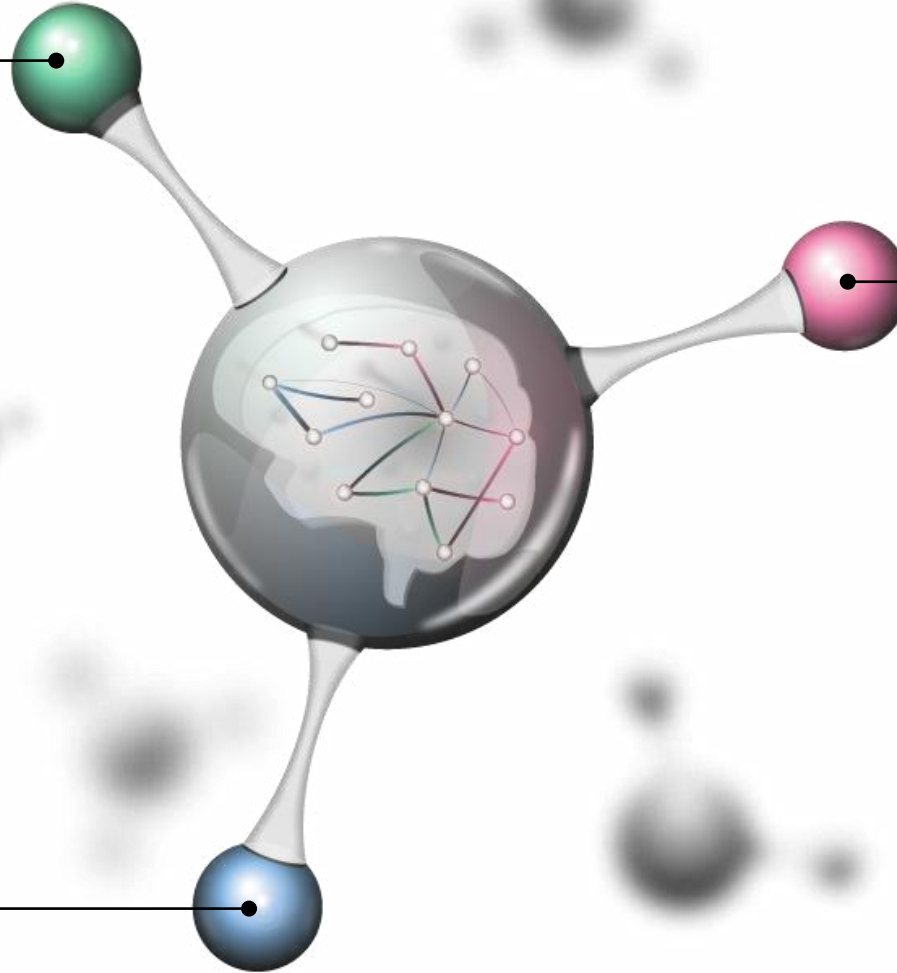
# Outline



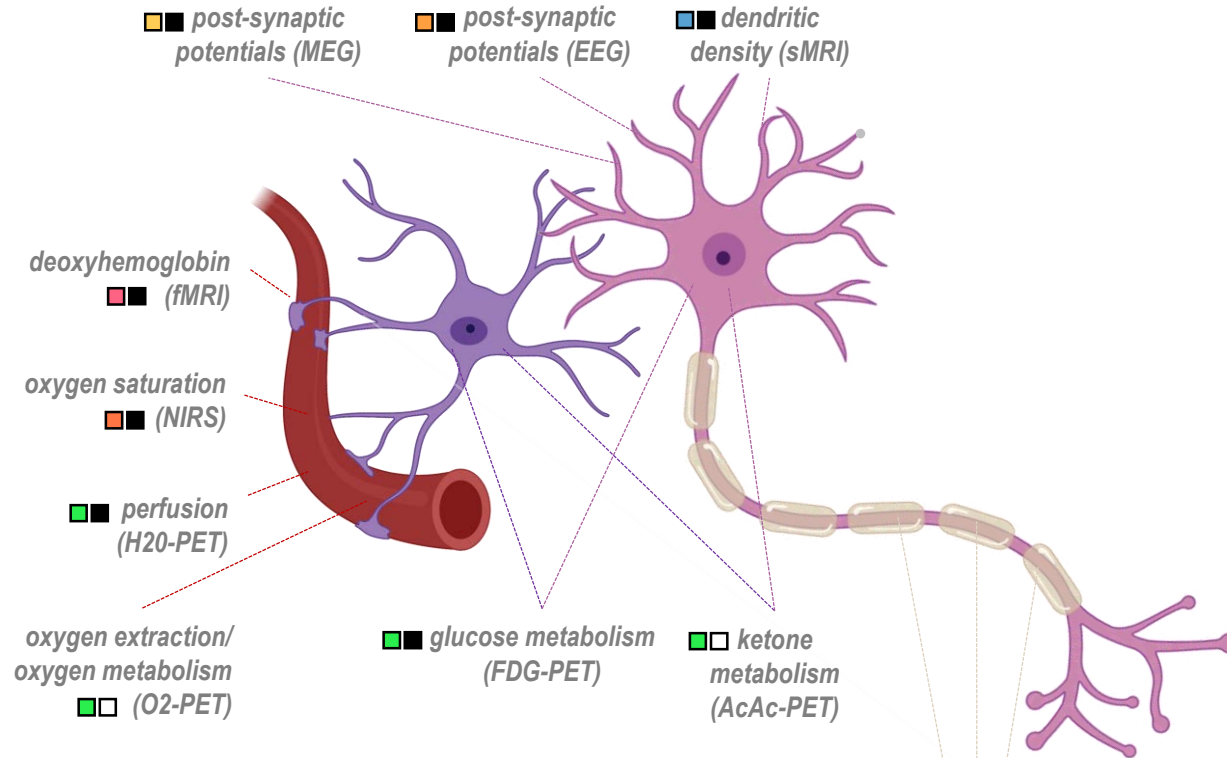
**Why**

**What**

**How**



# Types of PET connectivity: neural activity



- molecular connectivity (PET)
- structural connectivity (DTI)
- structural connectivity (sMRI)
- functional connectivity (fMRI)
- functional connectivity (EEG)
- functional connectivity (MEG)
- functional connectivity (NIRS)

- connectivity estimate available
- connectivity estimate possible
- radiopharmaceutical advancements needed

■ **white matter tracts (DTI)**

# Types of PET connectivity: neural activity - basics



*Journal of Cerebral Blood Flow and Metabolism*  
13:5-14 © 1993 The International Society of Cerebral Blood Flow and Metabolism  
Published by Raven Press, Ltd., New York

## Functional Connectivity: The Principal-Component Analysis of Large (PET) Data Sets

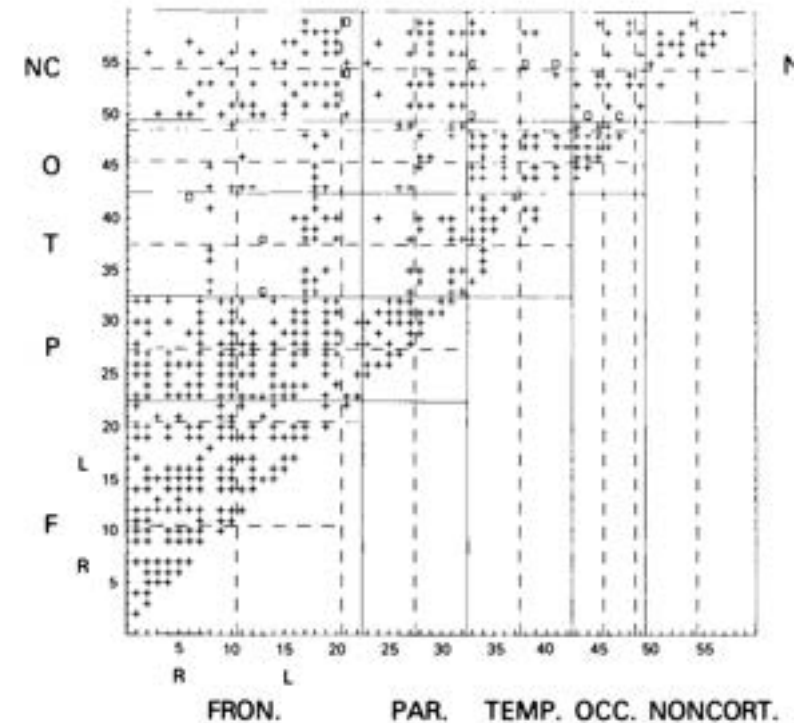
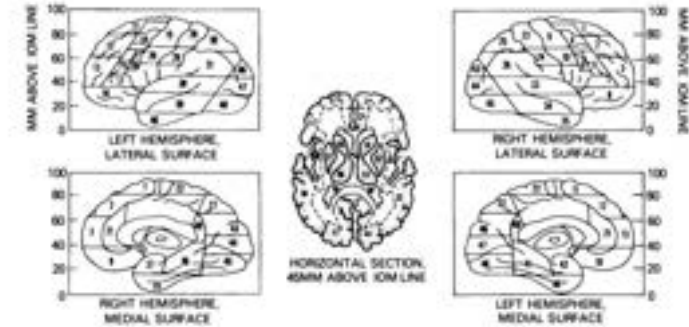
K. J. Friston, C. D. Frith, P. F. Liddle, and R. S. J. Frackowiak

however, can be linked at two levels: (i) A unifying concept is provided by coherence  $[\sigma(w)]$ . Coherence is a measure of the correlation at a particular frequency  $(w)$  (Cox and Miller, 1980). Consequently, coherence and functional connectivity at a frequency  $w$   $[fc(w)]$  are directly related:

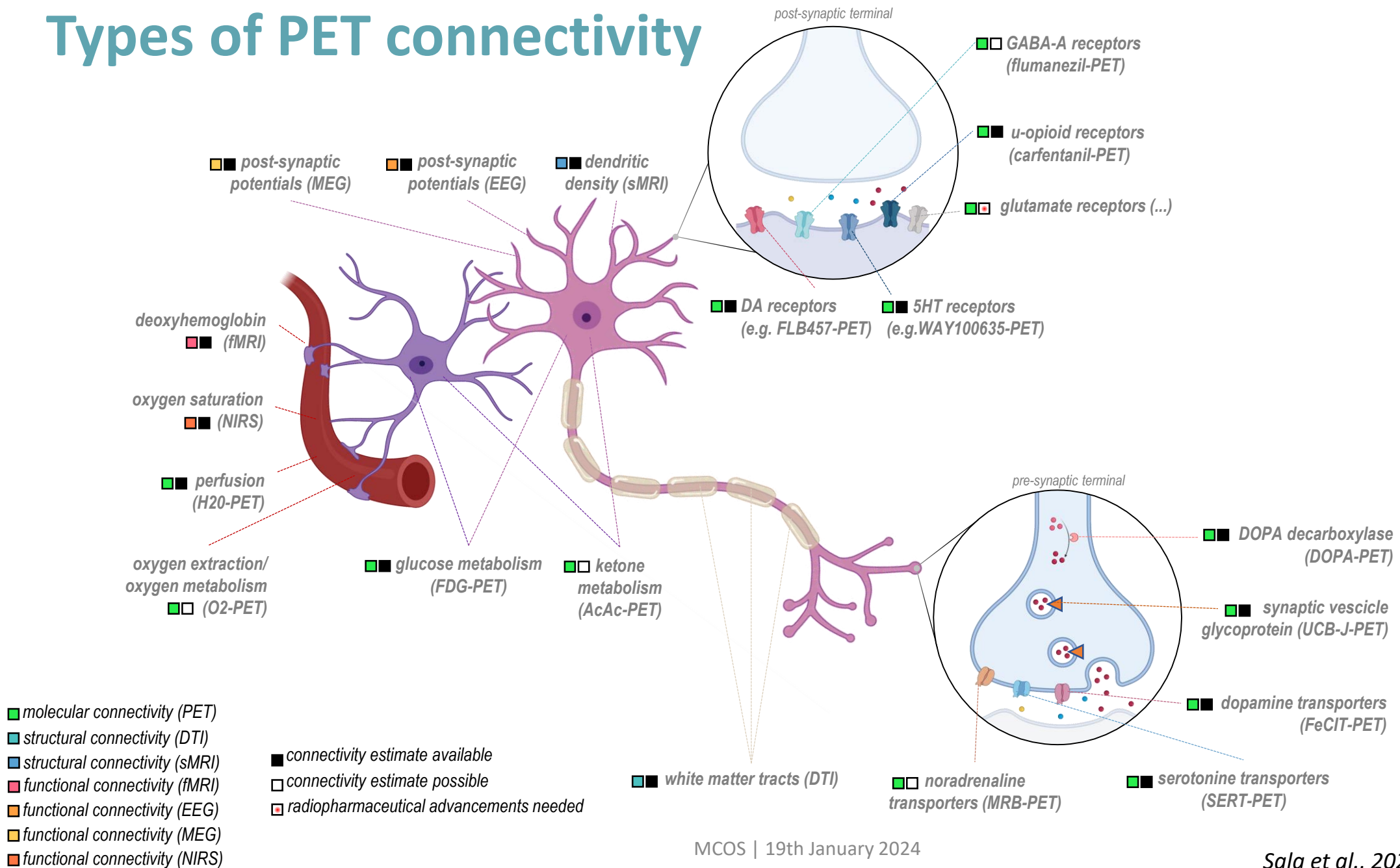
$$fc_{ij}(w) = \sigma_{ij}(w) = |g_{ij}(w)|^2 / g_{ii}(w) \cdot g_{jj}(w)$$

where  $g_{ij}(w)$  is the cross-spectral density and  $g_{ii}(w)$  and  $g_{jj}(w)$  are the autospectral densities of the neurophysiological processes in question. Equation (4)

PET connectivity  $\approx$  functional connectivity

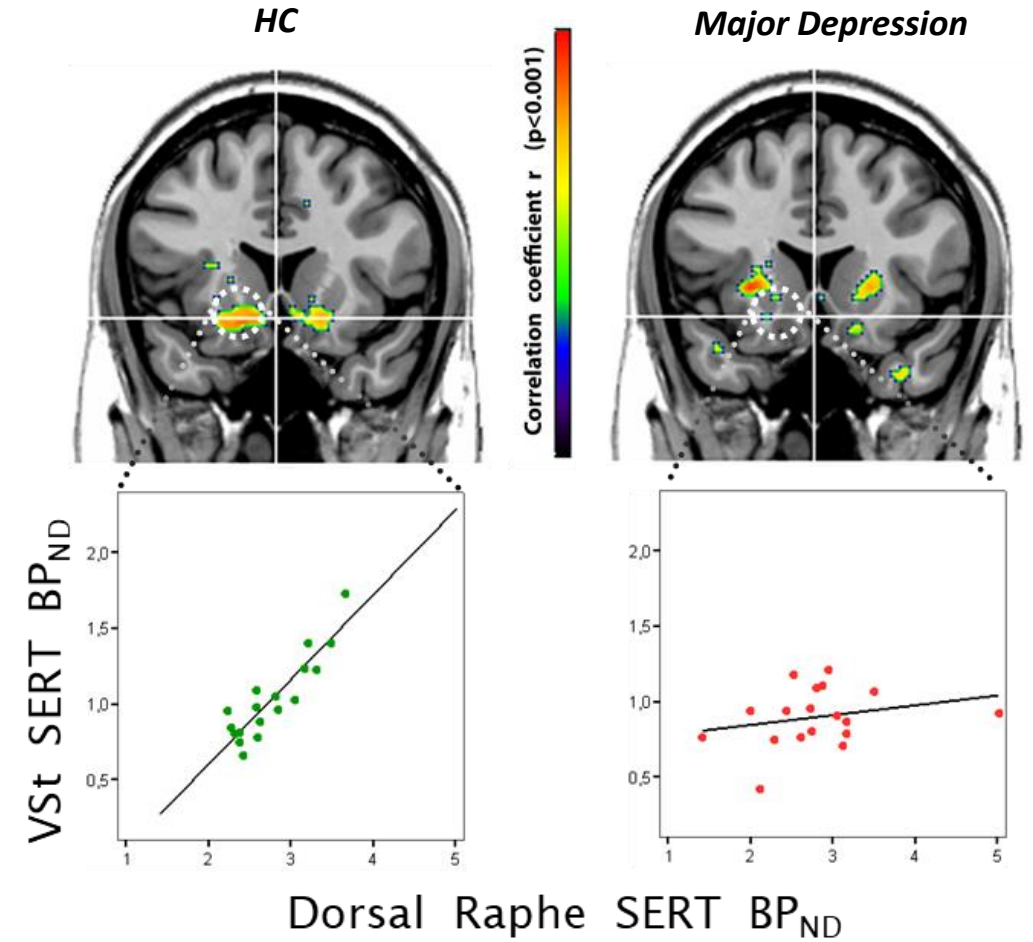
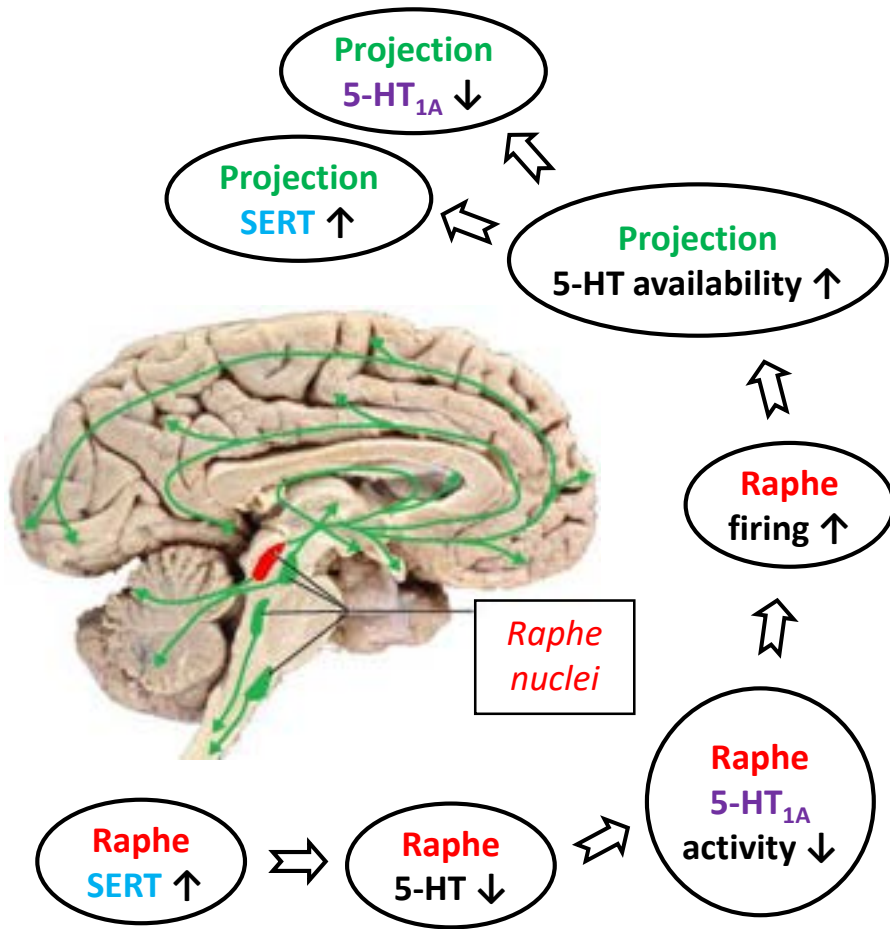


# Types of PET connectivity





# Types of PET connectivity: neurotransmission - basics

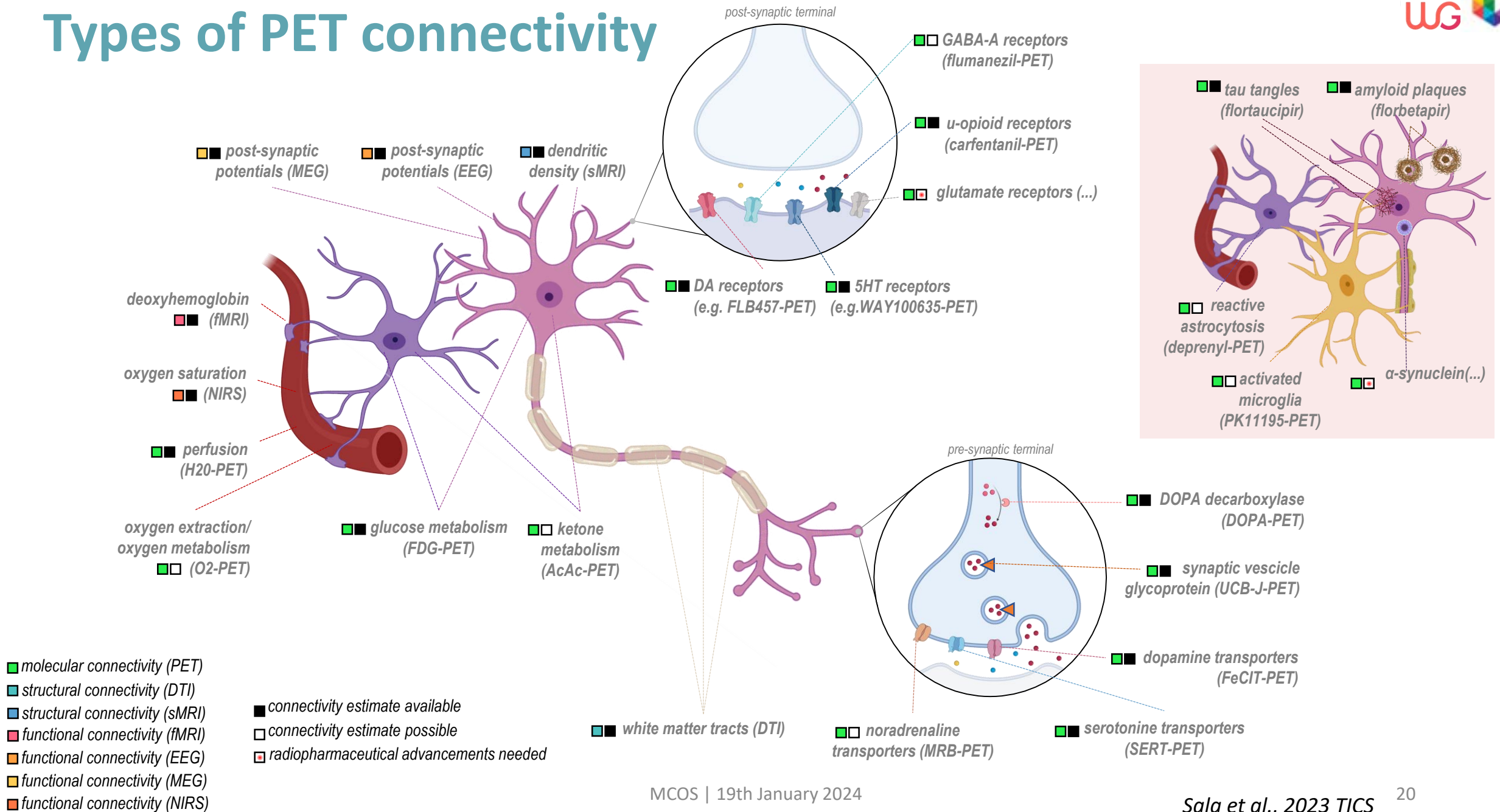


Courtesy of Andreas Hahn

More on [humanbrainmapping.org](http://humanbrainmapping.org) - OHBM 2021 Meeting  
Symposium: PET Imaging of Brain Connectivity: Hype or Future?

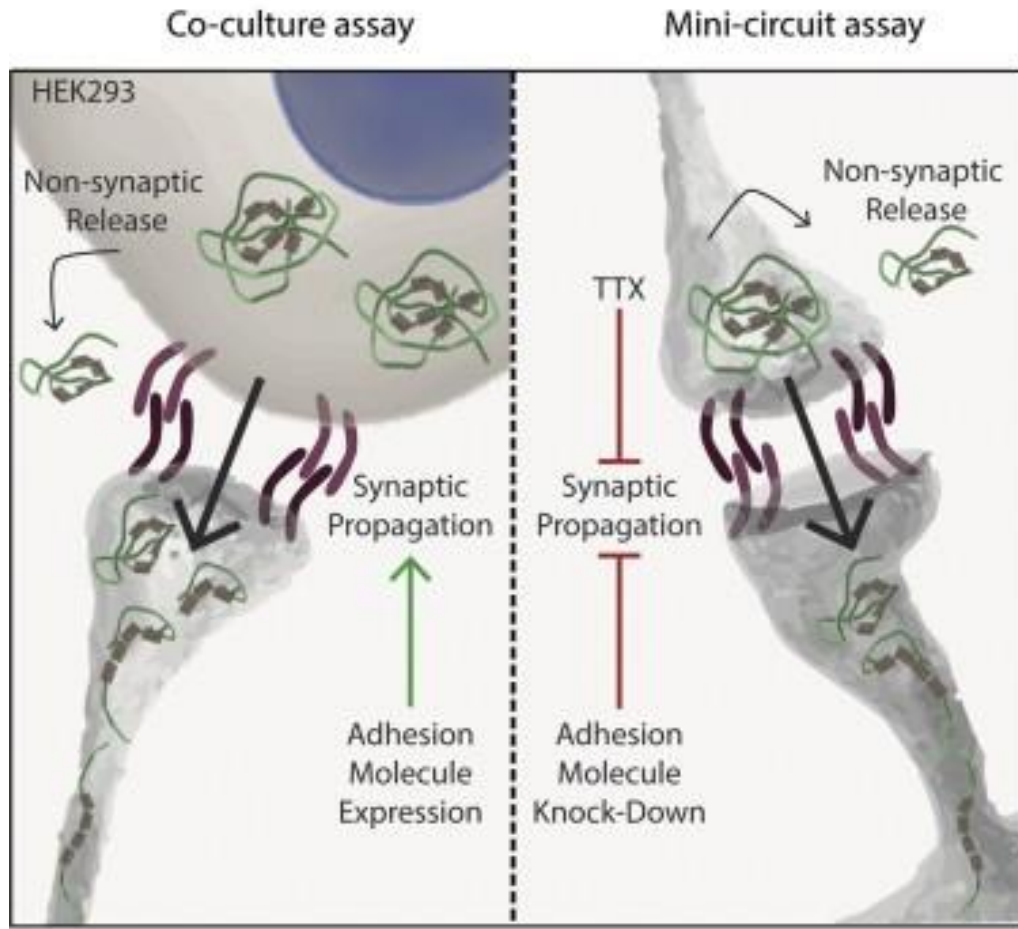
Hahn et al 2014, Hum Brain Mapp

# Types of PET connectivity

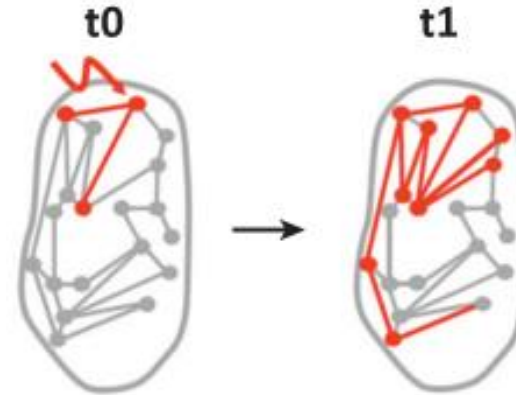


# Types of PET connectivity: proteinopathies - basics

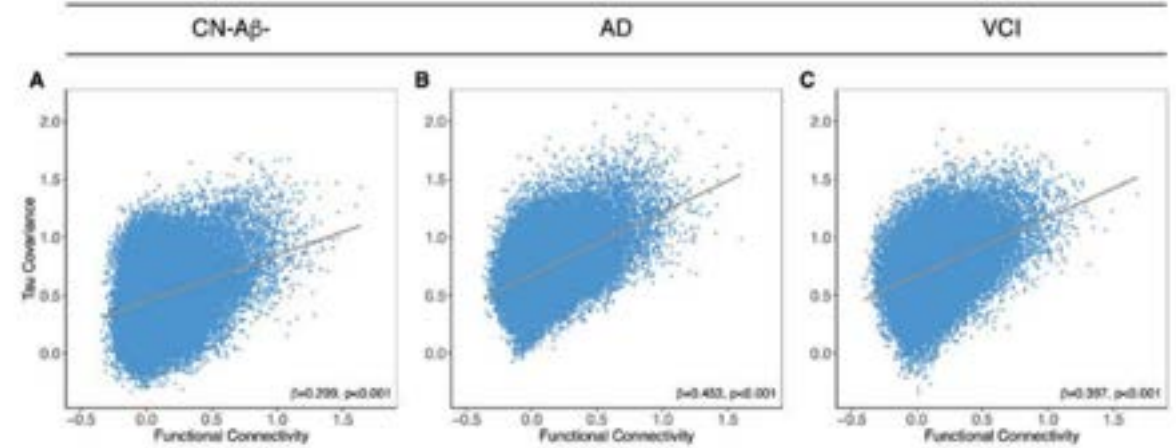
## Synaptic-Modulation of Tau Pathology Propagation



Calafate et al 2015, Cell Reports



## Functional connectivity associated with tau covariance



Franzmeier et al., 2019 Brain

# Outline



**Why**

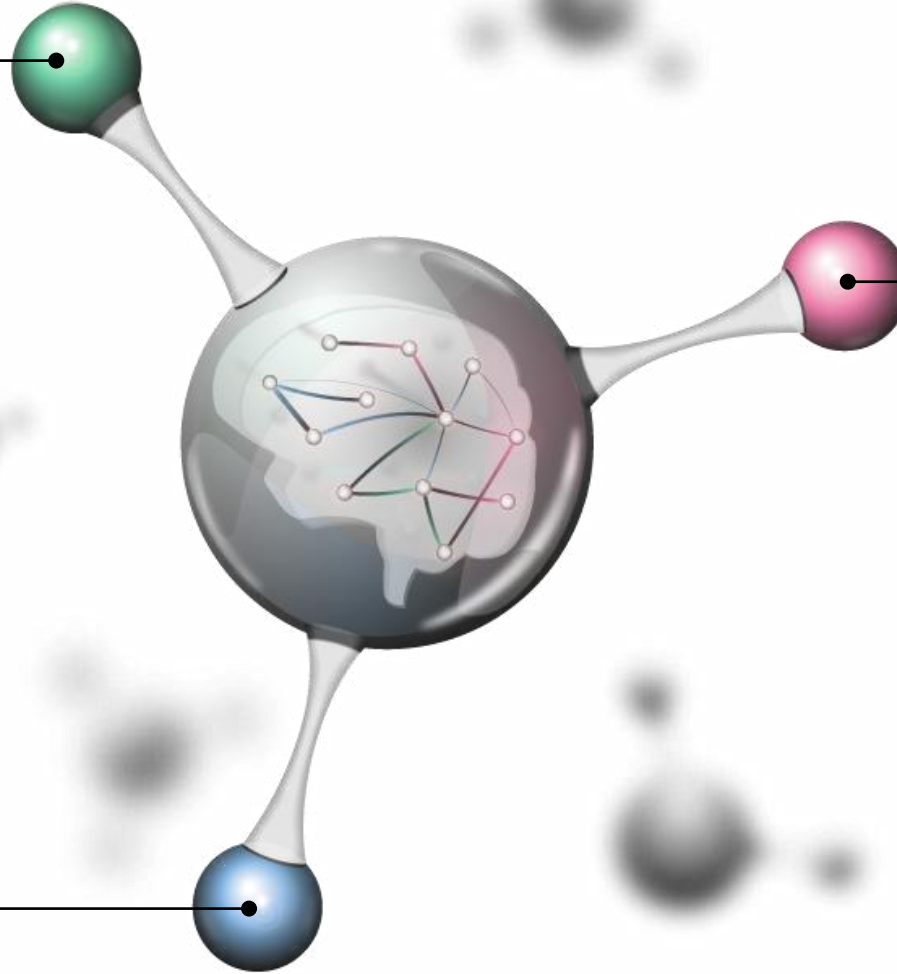
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**What**

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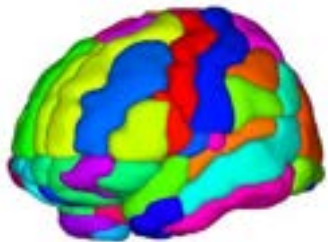
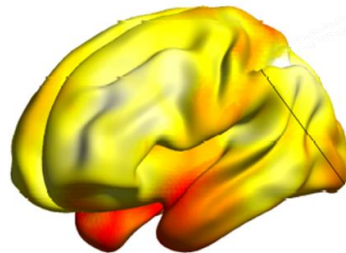
**How**

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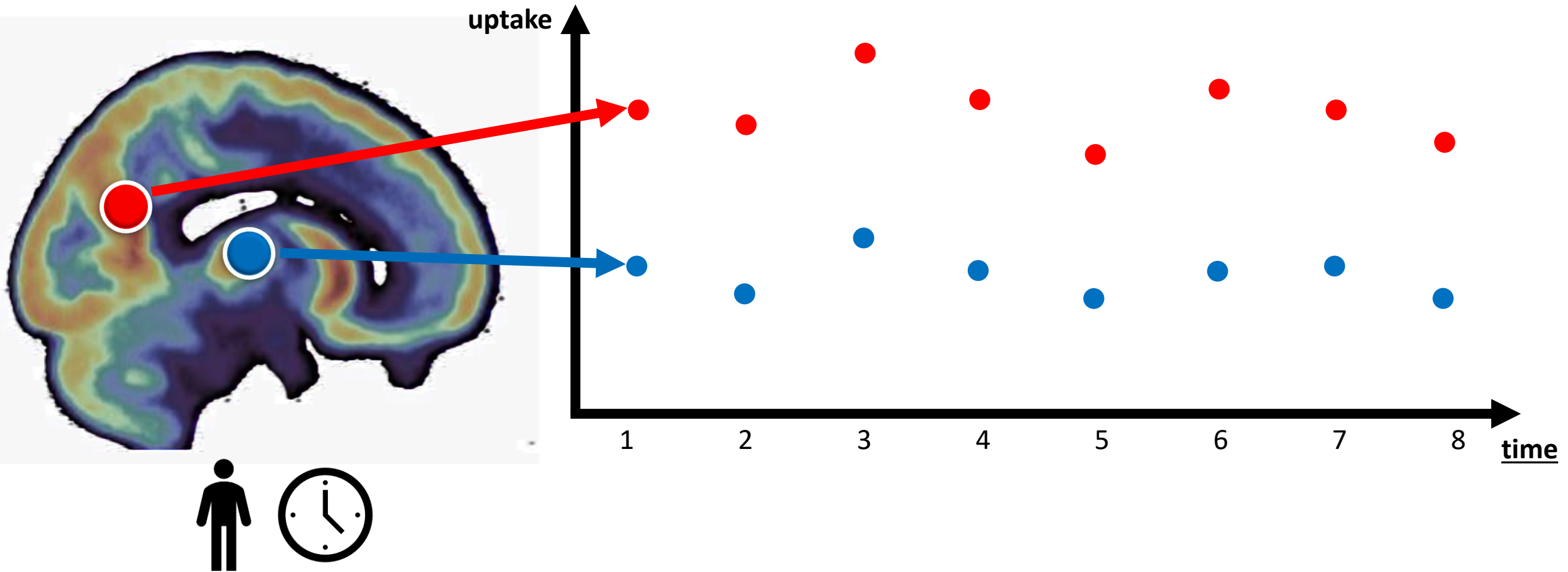
# Summary: Methods



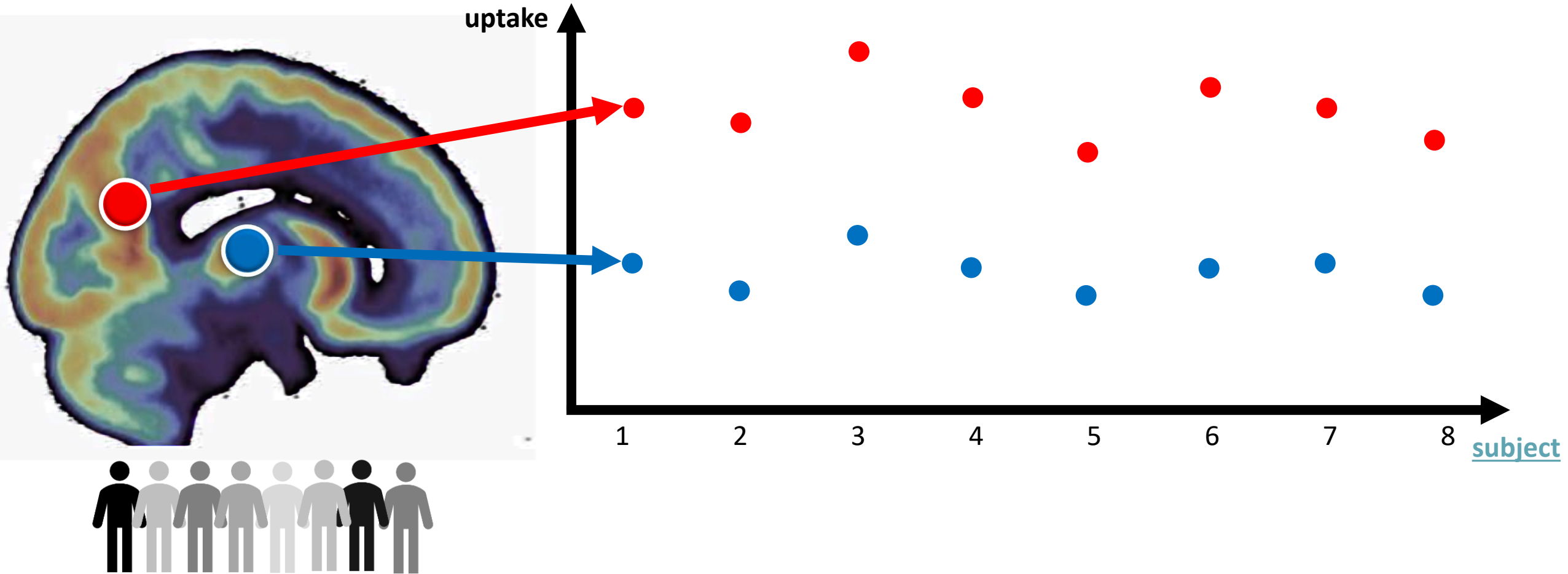
Method	Starting point	Endpoint	Unit	User Intervention
Seed-based inter-regional correlation	ROI (Seed)	Connectivity map of the seed	ROI -> voxel	Seed (atlas, granularity), Metrics
Independent Component Analysis	Whole-brain	Components (Resting-State Networks)	voxel -> voxel	Algorithm, Number & Selection of Components
Principal Component Analysis	Whole-brain	Components (Patterns)	voxel -> voxel	Algorithm, Number & Selection of Components
ROI-to-ROI Correlation	ROIs (Circuit to whole-brain)	Graph / Connectome	ROI -> ROI	ROIs (coverage, atlas, granularity), Metrics



# Approaches: intra-subject

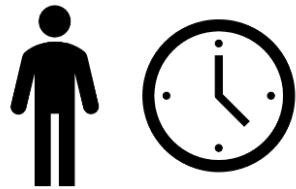
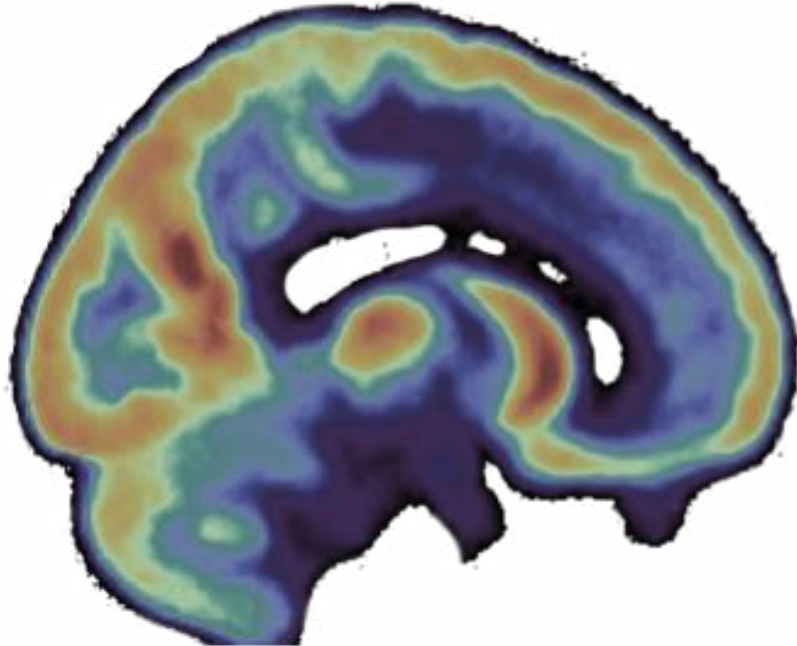


# Approaches: inter-subject

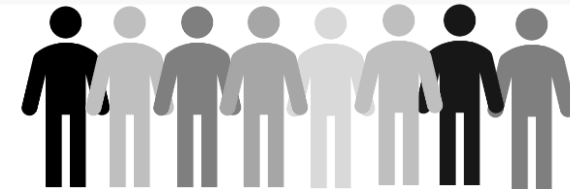
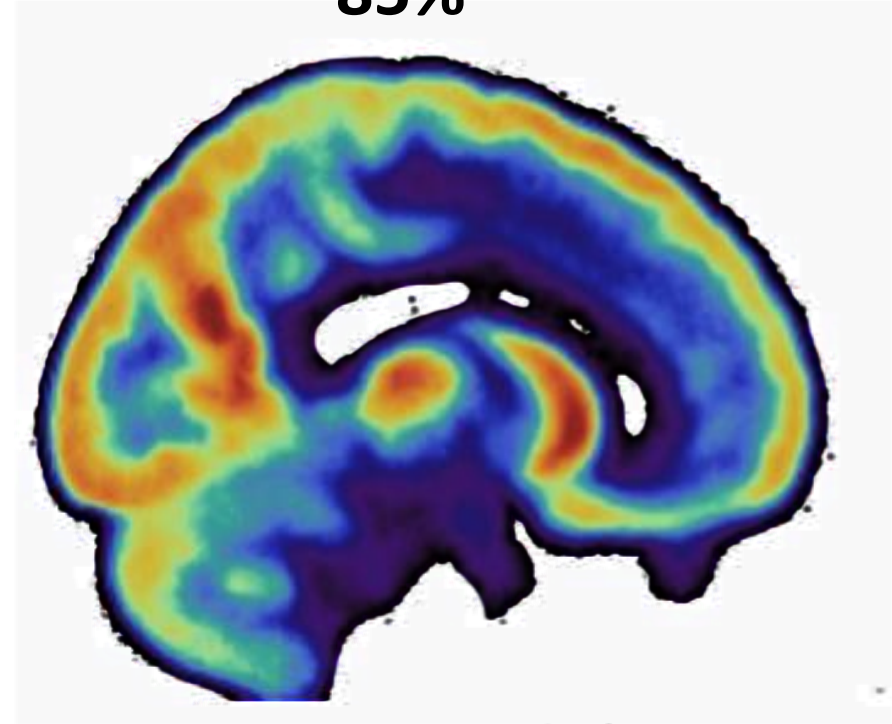


# Approaches: equivalent?

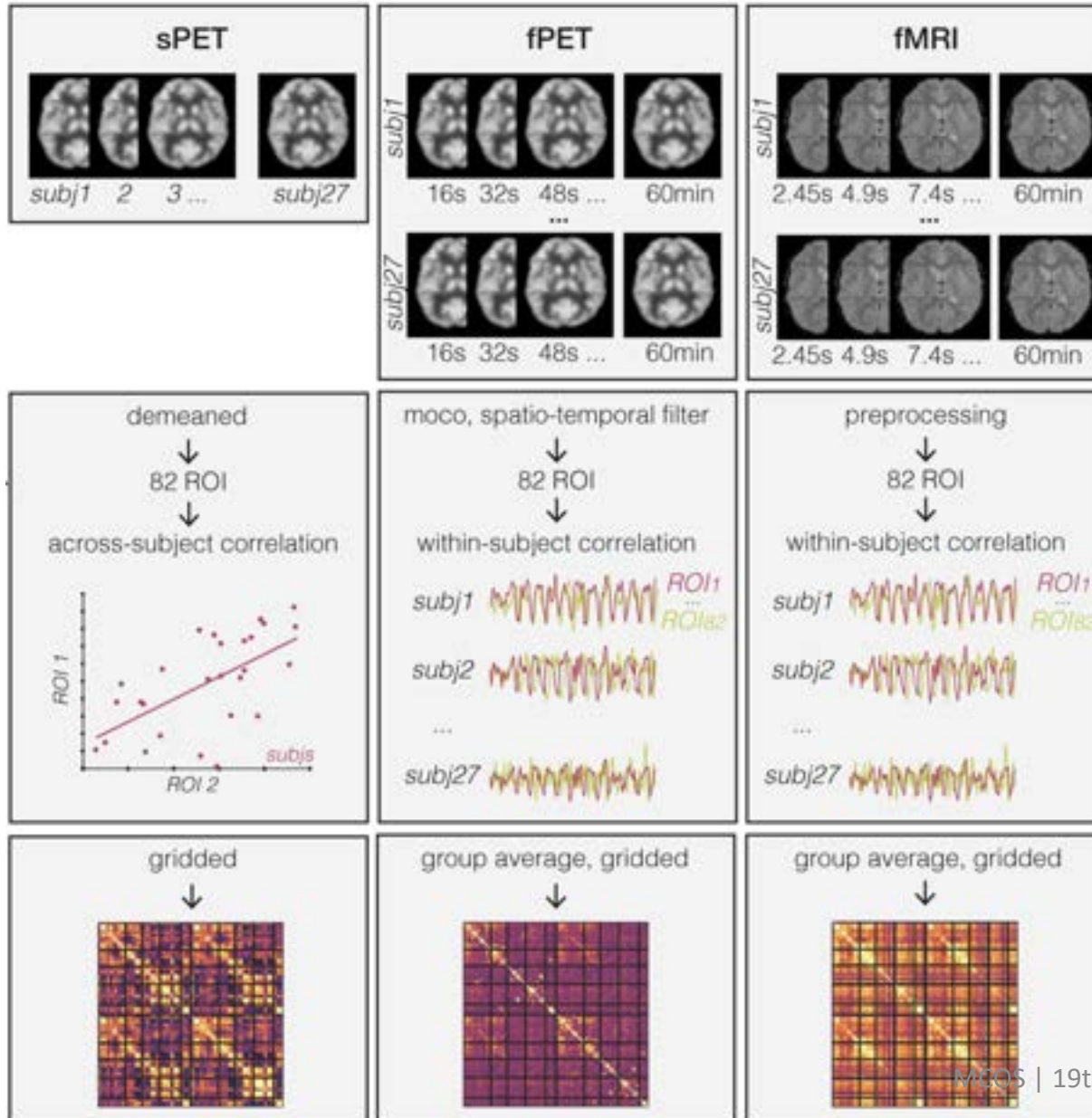
10%



85%



# Approaches: equivalent?



## Metabolic and Hemodynamic Resting-State Connectivity of the Human Brain: A High-Temporal Resolution Simultaneous BOLD-fMRI and FDG-fPET Multimodality Study

Sharna D Jamadar ✉, Phillip G D Ward, Emma X Liang, Edwina R Orchard, Zhaolin Chen, Gary F Egan

*Cerebral Cortex*, Volume 31, Issue 6, June 2021, Pages 2855–2867, <https://doi.org/10.1093/cercor/bhaa393>

## Static versus Functional PET: Making Sense of Metabolic Connectivity

Arianna Sala ✉, Aldana Lizarraga, Isabelle Ripp, Paul Cumming, Igor Yakushev

*Cerebral Cortex*, bhab271, <https://doi.org/10.1093/cercor/bhab271>

## Resting-State FDG-PET Connectivity: Covariance, Ergodicity, and Biomarkers. Response to Commentary by Sala et al.; Static versus Functional PET: Making Sense of Metabolic Connectivity [Get access >](#)

Sharna D Jamadar ✉, Gary F Egan

*Cerebral Cortex*, Volume 32, Issue 9, 1 May 2022, Pages 2054–2055, <https://doi.org/10.1093/cercor/bhab316>



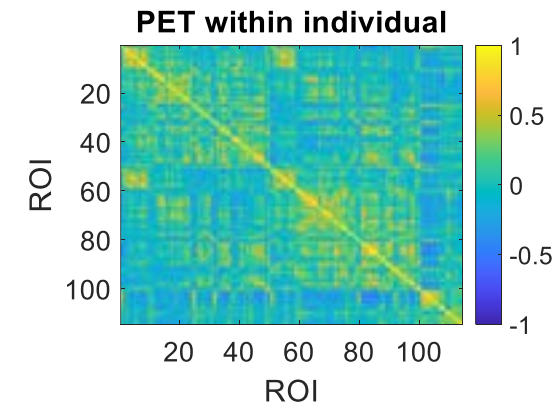
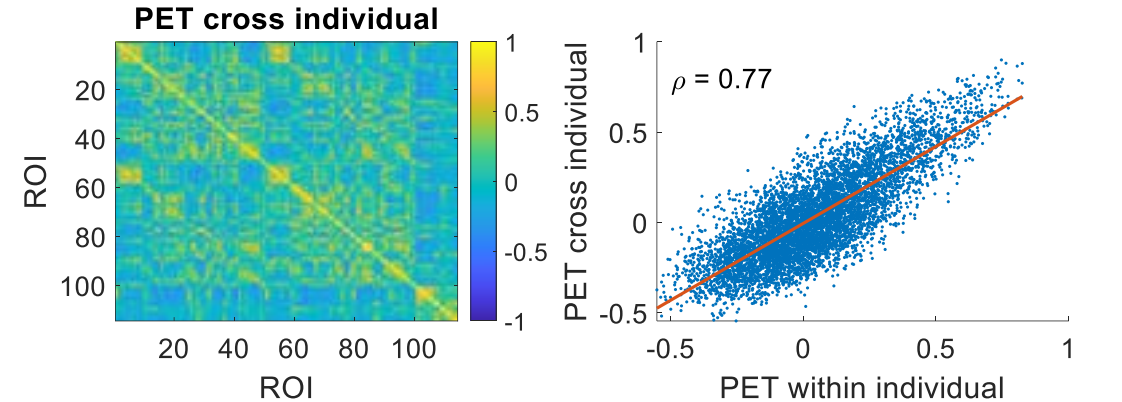
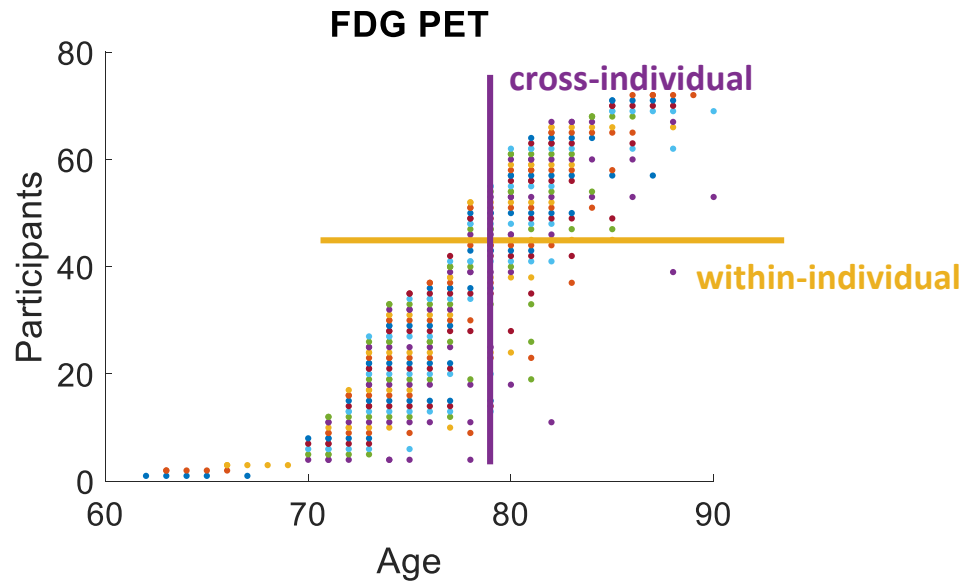
# Approaches: equivalent?



Xin Di

## ADNI dataset

**FDG-PET: n= 72 healthy controls  
(5-9 scans available)**





# Molecular connectivity: what is left to do?

**Nomenclature**

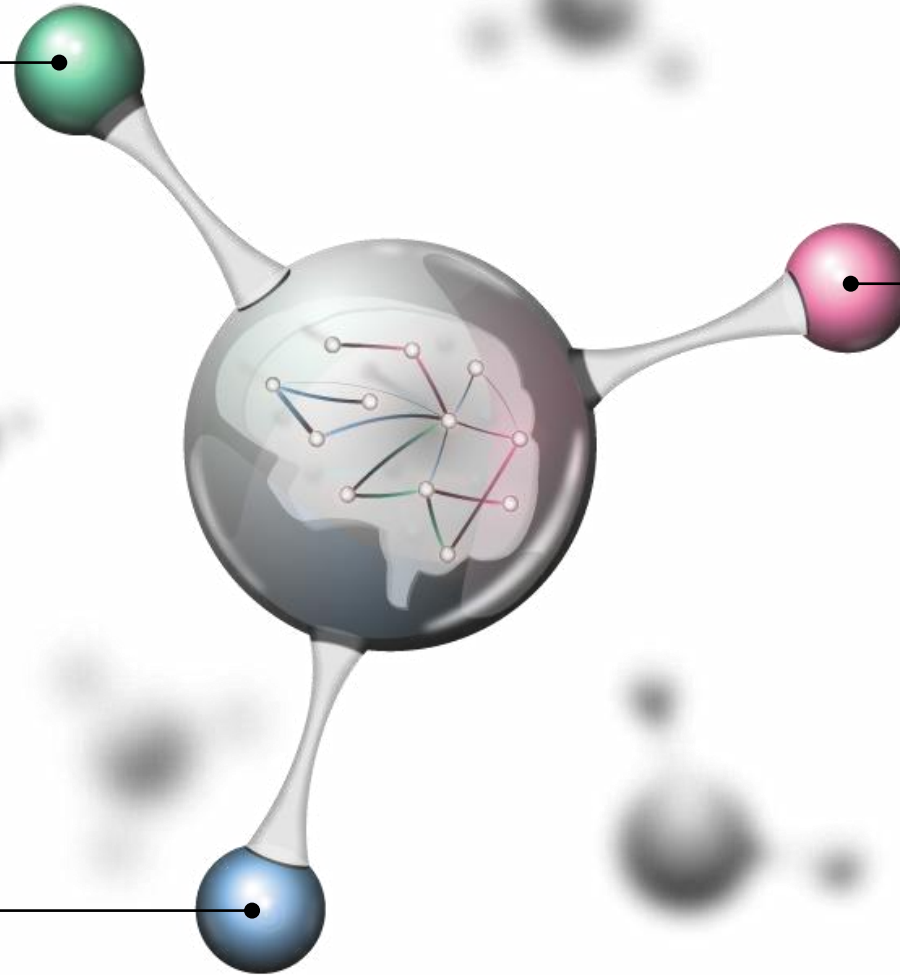
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**Validation**

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**Cross-modal  
integration**

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# Molecular connectivity: what is left to do?

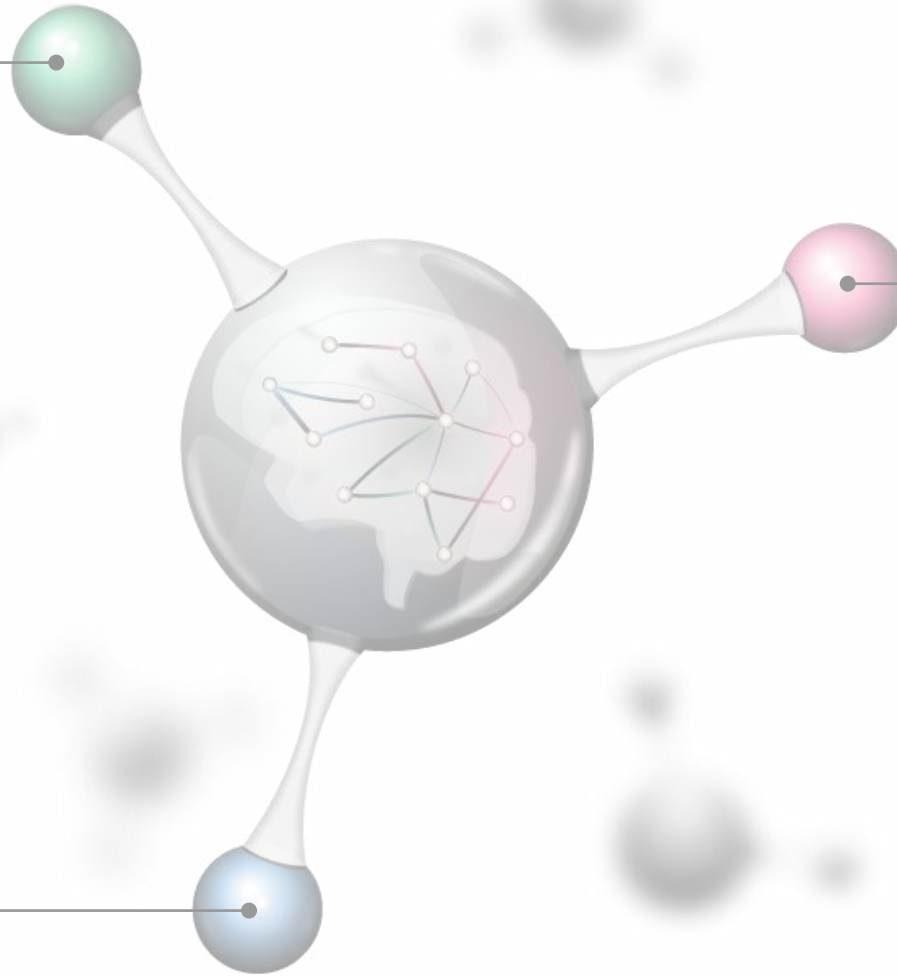
Nomenclature



Consensus meeting



Global  
integration



Validation

# Molecular connectivity: what is left to do?

**Nomenclature**

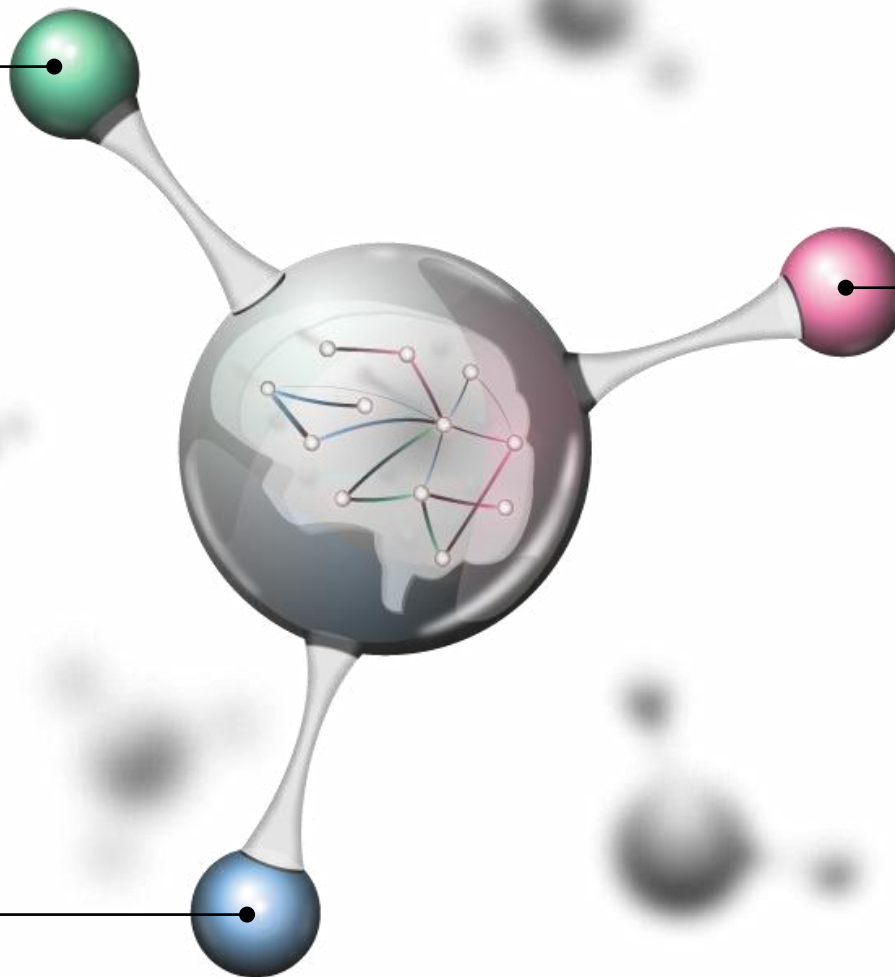
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**Validation**

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**Cross-modal  
integration**

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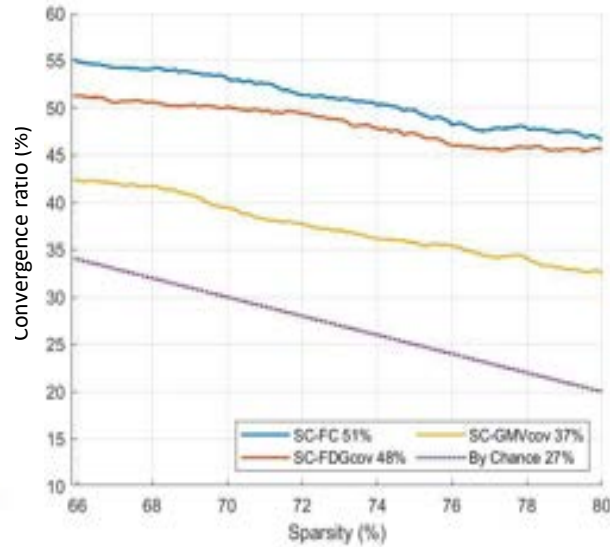
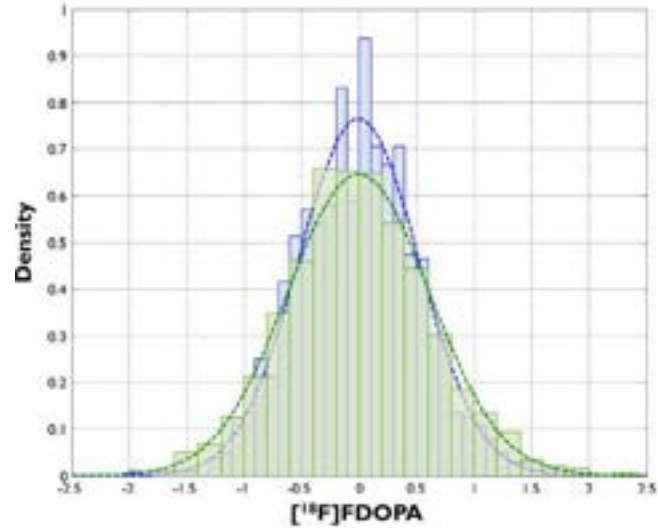


# Validation

Robust, precise and reproducible



Matches gold-standard



Veronese et al., 2019, *Sci Rep*

Mattia Veronese



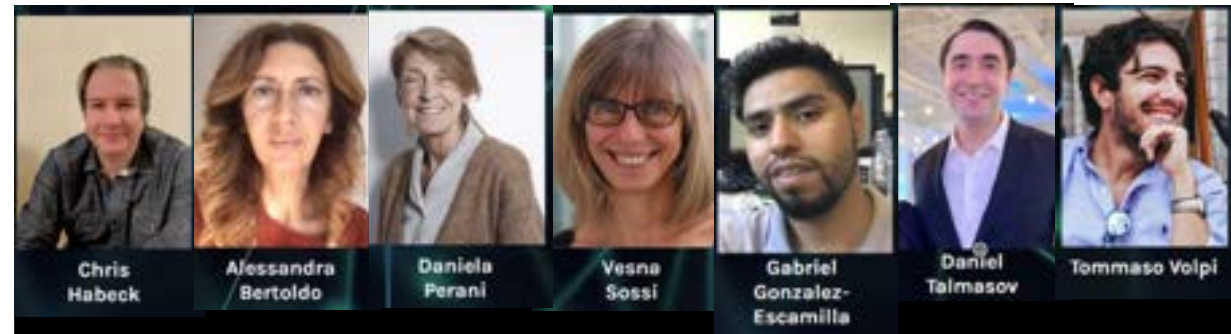
Lizarraga et al., 2023, *J Cereb Blood Flow Metab*

Igor Yakushev

Systematic review & gap analysis



Design of validation studies



Best methodological practices

# Molecular connectivity: what is left to do?

**Nomenclature**

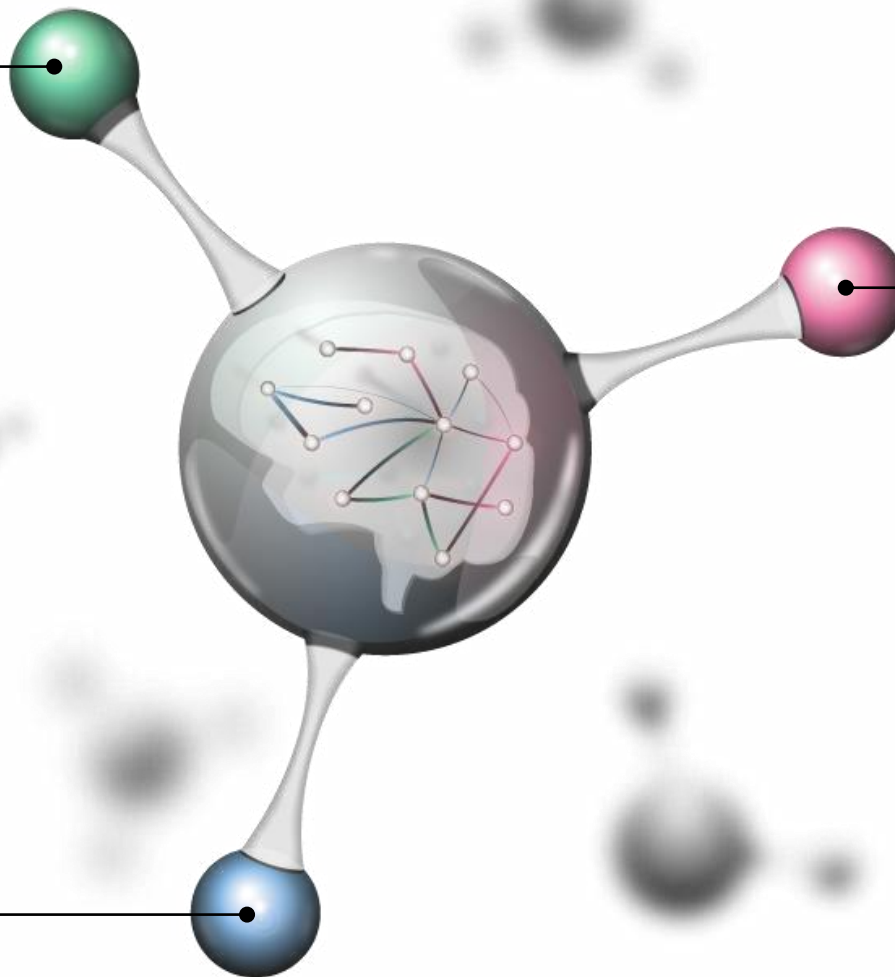
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**Validation**

---

**Cross-modal  
integration**

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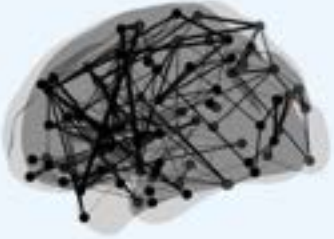


# Cross-modal integration



## STRUCTURAL FINGERPRINTS

tractography dMRI



T1 sMRI



BOLD fMRI



## FUNCTIONAL FINGERPRINTS

EEG : alpha band



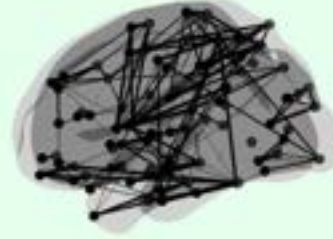
MEG : alpha band



fNIRS



PET : glucose metabolism



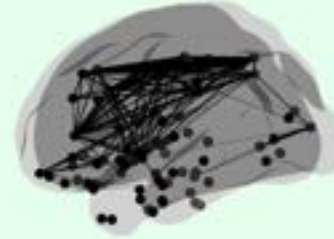
PET : oxygen metabolism



PET : cerebral blood flow



PET : dopamine synthesis



PET : cannabinoid receptors 1

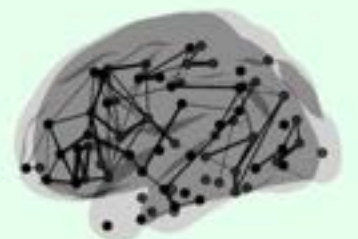


PET : serotonin transporter

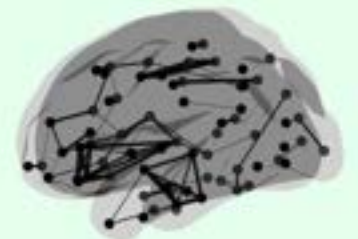


## MOLECULAR FINGERPRINTS

PET : amyloid-beta



PET : tau



PET : pathology

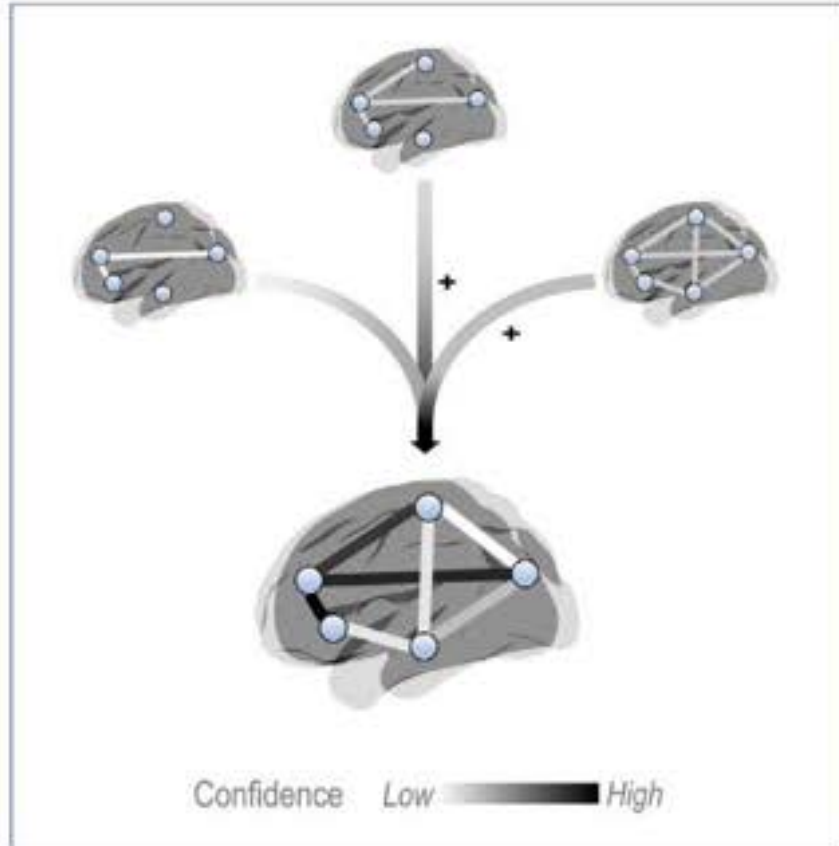




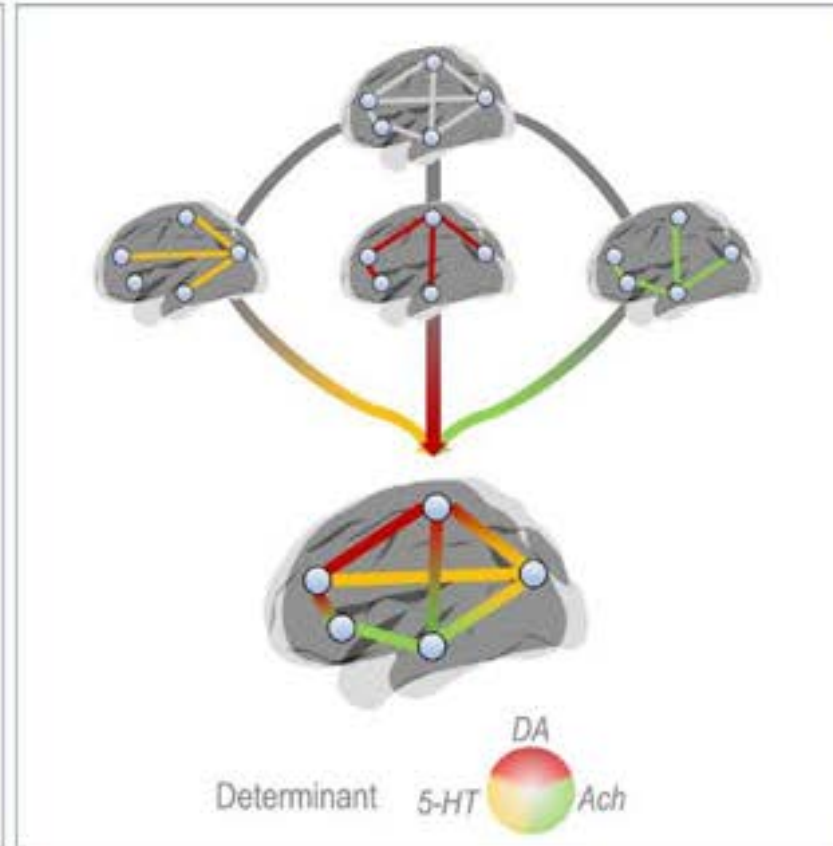
# Cross-modal integration



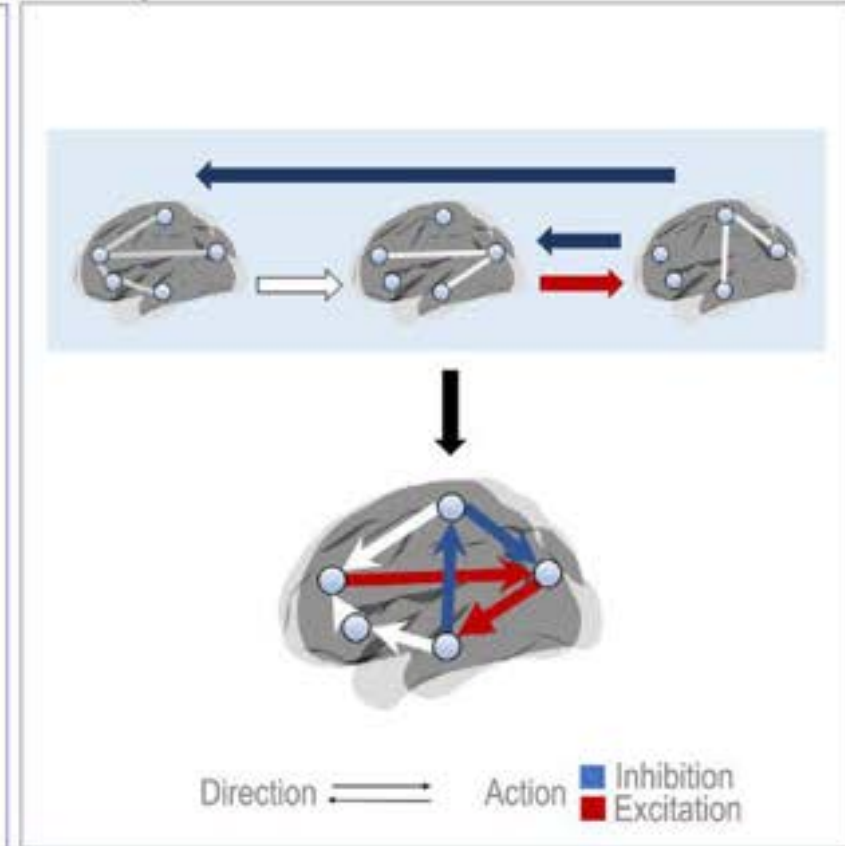
Robustness



Biochemical substrate



Causality





# Molecular Imaging of Brain Connectivity

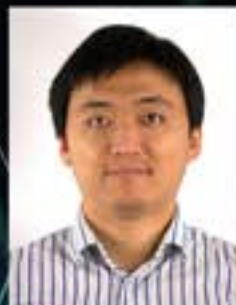
Molecular Connectivity Working Group



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Joana  
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Arianna  
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Vince  
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<https://molecularconnectivity.com>

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