

# The Synapse Symposium 2025

Four Decades of Synapse Biology: From Molecules to Memory

November 19-22, 2025, San Diego, CA

Hilton La Jolla Torrey Pines

## Keynote Speakers:

Thomas Südhof, M.D. (Stanford University)  
Randy Schekman, Ph.D. (University of California, Berkeley)  
Xiaowei Zhuang, Ph.D. (Harvard University)  
James Rothman, Ph.D. (Yale School of Medicine)  
Nieng Yan, Ph.D. (Tsinghua University)  
Ardem Patapoutian, Ph.D. (Scripps Research)  
Stephen Quake, Ph.D. (Stanford University)

## Organizers:

Angela Ho, Ph.D. (Boston University)  
Anton Maximov, Ph.D. (Scripps Research)  
Zhiping Pang, Ph.D. (Rutgers University)  
Matthijs Verhage, Ph.D. (VU Amsterdam)

## Co-Organizers:



## Sponsors:



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**WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 2025**

4:30 - 6:00 PM **Registration Check-in – Grand Ballroom Foyer**  
*Dinner on your own – explore local options at your leisure*

**THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 20, 2025**

**7:00 - 8:30 AM Breakfast (included) – Grand Terrace**

8:35 - 8:45 AM Welcome & Opening Remarks from the Organizers – Grand Ballroom

**8:45 - 12:00 PM Session I – Molecular Mechanisms of Presynaptic Release and Assembly**  
**Discussion Leaders:** Mikhail Khvotchev, Ph.D. and David Martinelli, Ph.D.

**8:45 – 9:15 AM Keynote Speaker – Thomas Südhof, M.D. (Stanford University)**

9:15 – 9:30 AM **Jose Rizo-Rey, Ph.D.** (University of Texas at Southwestern)  
*“How is Neurotransmitter Release Triggered in Microseconds”*

9:30 – 9:45 AM **Susanne Schoch, Ph.D.** (University of Bonn)  
*“Active Zone Nanostructure: About Protein Assemblies and Single Molecules”*

9:45 – 10:00 AM **Ege Kavalali, Ph.D.** (Vanderbilt University)  
*“Insights into Synapse Nanostructure from Analysis of SNARE Disease Variants”*

**10:00 – 10:30 AM Coffee Break (included) – Grande Foyer and Terrace**

10:30 – 10:45 AM **Nils Brose, Ph.D.** (Max-Planck Institute, Germany)  
*“Molecular Mechanisms of Synaptic Short-Term Plasticity”*

10:45 – 11:00 AM **Fredrik Sterky, Ph.D.** (University of Gothenburg)  
*“Pathways to Presynapse Assembly – Lessons from iN Cells”*

11:00 – 11:15 AM **Anton Maximov, Ph.D.** (Scripps Institute)  
*“The Structural Organization of Multi-synaptic Boutons”*

11:15 – 11:30 AM **Csaba Földy, Ph.D.** (University of Zürich)  
*“Molecular Programs for Adult Brain Wiring”*

11:30 – 11:45 AM **Pablo Castillo, M.D., Ph.D.** (Albert Einstein College of Medicine)

**11:45 – 12:00 PM Selected Power Talks – 5 min each**

11:45 – 11:50 AM **Min Huang, Ph.D.** (Stanford University)  
*“Activity-Based CRISPR Screening Reveals Synaptic Organizers”*

11:50 – 11:55 AM **Chang-Lu Tao, Ph.D.** (University of Science and Technology of China)  
*“Kiss-shrink-run Unifies Mechanisms for Synaptic Vesicle Exocytosis and Hyperfast Recycling”*

11:55 – 12:00 PM **Ke Yang, Ph.D.** (Harvard Medical School)  
*“Polarized Trafficking and Axonal Targeting Mechanism of Voltage-Gated Calcium Channel”*

**12:00 – 1:00 PM Lunch (included) – Grand Terrace**

## THE SYNAPSE SYMPOSIUM PROGRAM 2025

- 1:00 – 2:00 PM**      **“Promoting Better Utilization of Existing Data” Including SynGO Demo Workshop**  
**Workshop Leaders:** Guus Smit, Ph.D. (VU Amsterdam), and Matthijs Verhage, Ph.D. (VU Amsterdam)  
**Panel members:** Joachim Herz, Ph.D. (University of Texas Southwestern), Kif Laikath-Ali Ph.D. (University of Southampton), Susanne Schoch, Ph.D. (University of Bonn)
- 2:00 – 5:30 PM**      **Session II – Molecular Architecture and Assembly of the Synapse**  
**Discussion Leaders:** Deniz Atasoy, Ph.D. and Oliver Schlüter, Ph.D.
- 2:00 – 2:30 PM**      **Keynote Speaker – Randy Schekman, Ph.D.** (University of California, Berkeley)  
*“Extracellular Vesicle Biogenesis and Plasma Membrane Repair”*
- 2:30 – 2:45 PM      **Jaewon Ko, Ph.D.** (Daegu Gyeongbuk Institute of Science and Technology)  
*“Multipartite Molecular Complexes Shaping Synaptic Inhibition”*
- 2:45 – 3:00 PM      **Richard Sando, Ph.D.** (Vanderbilt University)  
*“Trans-Synaptic Signaling Mechanisms Underlying Synapse Formation and Circuit Assembly”*
- 3:00 – 3:15 PM      **Xudong Chen, Ph.D.** (Stanford University)  
*“Neuronal Pentraxins Organize Synaptic Structure via Phase Separation”*
- 3:15 – 3:30 PM      **Antony Boucard, Ph.D.** (CINVESTAV-IPN, Mexico)  
*“Metabotropic Conversion of Synaptic Adhesion Cues”*
- 3:30 – 4:00 PM**      **Coffee Break (included) – Grande Foyer and Terrace**
- 4:00 – 4:30 PM**      **Keynote Speaker – Xiaowei Zhuang, Ph.D.** (Harvard University)  
*“Spatially Resolved Single-Cell Genomics, Functional Genomics, & Cell Atlas of the Brain”*
- 4:30 – 4:45 PM      **Markus Missler, Ph.D.** (University of Munster)  
*“Functional and Physical Interactions of Neurexins and Synaptic Ca<sup>2+</sup> Channel Complexes”*
- 4:45 – 5:00 PM      **Kif Liakath-Ali, Ph.D.** (University of Southampton)  
*“Isoform Architects of the Brain: Mapping Neuronal Alternative Splicing Regulators”*
- 5:00 – 5:15 PM      **Justin Trotter, Ph.D.** (University of California, San Diego)  
*“The Neurexin Code Beyond Neurons”*
- 5:15 – 5:30 PM      **Hamidreza Shaye, Ph.D.** (Stanford University)  
*“Functional Dissection of the Interactome of the Adhesion GPCR Latrophilins”*
- 5:30 – 7:00 PM**      **Poster Session & Mixer – Light beverages provided**  
*Dinner on your own – explore local options at your leisure*

**FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 21, 2025**

- 7:00 - 8:30 AM**      **Breakfast (included) – Grand Terrace**
- 8:30 - 12:00 PM**      **Session III – Synaptic Modulation and Circuit Dynamics:  
From Molecules to Behavior**  
**Discussion Leaders:** Alex Chubykin, Ph.D. and Jinye Dai, Ph.D.
- 8:30 – 9:00 AM**      **Keynote Speaker – James Rothman, Ph.D.** (Yale School of Medicine)  
*“Molecular Mechanisms of Synaptic Vesicle Priming for Explosive Release”*
- 9:00 – 9:15 AM      **Pascal Kaeser, M.D.** (Harvard Medical School)  
*“Mechanisms and Roles of Neuromodulatory Transmission”*
- 9:15 – 9:30 AM      **Soham Chanda, Ph.D.** (Colorado State University)  
*“Human iPSC Models for GABAergic Synapse Assembly”*
- 9:30 – 9:45 AM      **Wei Xu, Ph.D.** (University of Texas at Southwestern)  
*“Wired and Volume GABAergic Transmission by Neurogliaform Cells in the Hippocampal Circuits”*
- 9:45 – 10:00 AM      **Jai Polepalli, Ph.D.** (National University of Singapore)  
*“Circuit-Specific Roles of Cerebellin-4 in Shaping Synaptic Activity”*
- 10:00 – 10:30 AM**      **Group Photo and Coffee Break (included) – Grand Terrace**
- 10:30 – 11:00 AM**      **Keynote Speaker – Nieng Yan, Ph.D.** (Tsinghua University)  
*“CryoSeek: An Unconventional Strategy for Structural Biology”*
- 11:00 – 11:15 AM      **Bo Zhang, Ph.D.** (Shenzhen Bay Laboratory & Peking University)  
*“Orphan Chemokine and Its Cognate Receptor Shape Synaptic Plasticity and Recognition Memory”*
- 11:15 – 11:30 AM      **Mu Zhou, Ph.D.** (Tsinghua University)  
*“Cerebellum and Online Movement Corrections”*
- 11:30 – 11:45 AM      **Claudio Acuna, Ph.D.** (University of Heidelberg)  
*“Presynaptic Properties and Behavior”*
- 11:45 – 12:00 PM**      **Selected Power Talks – 5 min each**
- 11:45 – 11:50 AM      **Sol Diaz de Leon-Guerrero, Ph.D.** (Rutgers University)  
*“Neurodevelopmental Risk Genes and Synaptic Dysfunction in Human Neurons”*
- 11:50 – 11:55 AM      **Jacob Miller, Ph.D.** (Augusta University)  
*“Upregulation of Synaptobrevin-2 to Delay Age-Related Cognitive Impairment”*
- 12:00 – 1:00 PM**      **Lunch (included) – Grand Terrace**
- 1:00 – 2:00 PM**      **“Academia-Industry Collaborations for Synaptopathy Therapeutics”**  
Grand Ballroom  
**Workshop Moderator:** Claudia Persoon, Ph.D. (CEO & Co-Founder, Neurospector)  
**Introduction:** Hugh Rosen, Ph.D. (Scripps Research Institute),  
**Panel Members:** Jan Lui, Ph.D. (BioMarin Pharmaceutical), Charlene Son Rigby (STXBP1/Munc18-1 Foundation), Sarah Waters (BAGOS Foundation)

## THE SYNAPSE SYMPOSIUM PROGRAM 2025

- 1:00 – 2:00 PM** ***“Mentoring the Next Generation of Scientists”*** – Scripps Ballroom  
**Panel Leaders:** Tom Südhof, M.D. (Stanford University), Angela Ho, Ph.D. (Boston University), Pascal Kaeser, M.D. (Harvard Medical School), and Nieng Yan, Ph.D. (Tsinghua University)
- 2:00 – 5:30 PM** **Session IV – Synaptic Vulnerability and Cellular Stress in Neurodegeneration and Disease**  
**Discussion Leaders:** Alvin Huang, Ph.D. and Marieke Meijer, Ph.D.
- 2:00 – 2:30 PM** **Keynote Speaker – Ardem Patapoutian, Ph.D.** (Scripps Institute)  
*“May the Force Be with You! Piezo Channels in Mechanosensory Biology”*
- 2:30 – 2:45 PM **Ozgun Gokce, Ph.D.** (University of Bonn)  
*“Navigating the Aging and Neurodegenerative Brain”*
- 2:45 – 3:00 PM **Thomas Biederer, Ph.D.** (Yale School of Medicine)  
*“Vulnerability of Cortical Synapses in  $\alpha$ -Synucleinopathy and Roles of Neurexins”*
- 3:00 – 3:15 PM **Gilbert Gallardo, Ph.D.** (Washington University, St. Louis)  
*“Glutamine Anaplerosis Fuels Reactive Astrocytes in Alzheimer’s Disease”*
- 3:15 – 3:30 PM **Christopher Patzke, Ph.D.** (University of Notre Dame)  
*“Modulation of Inhibitory Signaling: A Novel Disease Mechanism in Autism-Linked Kabuki and Fragile X Syndromes”*
- 3:30 – 4:00 PM** **Coffee Break (included) – Grand Foyer and Terrace**
- 4:00 – 4:30PM** **Keynote Speaker – Stephen Quake, Ph.D.** (Stanford University)  
*“Memory and Single Cell Genomics”*
- 4:30 – 4:45 PM **Changhui Pak, Ph.D.** (University of Massachusetts, Amherst)  
*“Human iPSC Models of Synapse Disorders”*
- 4:45 – 5:00 PM **Sreganga Chandra, Ph.D.** (Yale School of Medicine)  
*“Presynaptic Proteostasis”*
- 5:00 – 5:15 PM **Rafael Fernández-Chacón, Ph.D.** (University of Seville)  
*“Molecular Pathophysiology of a Synaptic Co-Chaperone”*
- 5:15 – 5:30 PM **Lu Chen, Ph.D.** (Stanford University)  
*“Homeostatic Regulation of the Inhibitory Gate in Neuropathic Pain”*
- 5:30 – 7:00 PM** **Poster Session & Mixer – Light beverages**
- 7:00 – 11:00 PM** **CELEBRATION DINNER – GRANDE BALLROOM (included)**

## SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 22, 2025

- 7:00 - 8:30 AM** **Breakfast (included) – Grand Terrace**

OVERVIEW OF POSTER SESSIONS AND PRESENTERS

SESSION I – MOLECULAR MECHANISMS & ARCHITECTURE – [NOVEMBER 20, 2025](#)

Theme A: Synaptic Adhesion & Engineered Connectivity

Poster #	Presenter	Title
1	Chao Lin	Teneurin–Latrophilin –FLRT–UNC5: A Candidate Trans-synaptic Megacomplex in Synapse Assembly
2	Dong IL Choi	Designing Synaptic Connectivity with Engineered Adhesion Molecules
3	David Reiner Link	Deciphering Isoform-Specific Signaling of the Dopamine D2 Receptor in Neurons
4	Daniel Matus	Untangling the specification of excitatory versus inhibitory synapses by Latrophilin Adhesion GPCRS
5	Jaybree Lopez	CELSR adhesion GPCRs support hippocampal circuit wiring
6	Kelly Honkanen	The precise assembly of neural circuits depends on accurate formation, maturation, and modulation of synaptic connections.
7	Leyi Huang	Uncovering a Non-canonical Role of Unc5A in Synaptogenesis
8	Margarita Artiukhova	Brain-Wide Synaptic Alterations Induced by Deletion of Presynaptic Neurexins and LAR-PTPRS
9	Rob Meijerts	Developing an antibody panel for cell surface receptors at the synaptic cleft
10	Shaoyuan Zhu	Roles of Latrophilins in early neurodevelopmental stages
11	Shuai Wang	Alternative Splicing of Adhesion-GPCR Latrophilin-3 Controls Synapse Formation
12	Xiankun Wang	Orphan cytokines regulate synapse function and social behavior via activate orphan GPCR
13	Xuchen Zhang	Reconstitution of synaptic junctions orchestrated by teneurin-latrophilin complexes
14	Xuzhong Yang	Mapping the Synaptic Interactome of the RTN4R-BAI1 Complex
15	Yang Li	Combinatorial Requirement of Neurexins and LAR-PTPRS in Synapse Formation

**Theme B: Core Synaptic Machinery & Release Dynamics**

Poster #	Presenter	Title
16	Anna Brennan	Identification of NMDA receptor binding peptides derived from the neuronal membrane proteasome
17	Astghik Abrahamyan	Chemical Potentiation Normalizes Presynaptic Nanotopology at Central Synapses
18	Carmela Vitale	Defining the Role of Neuronal Pentraxin Receptor in Hippocampal Synaptic Transmission and Plasticity
19	<i>Christian Rosenmund</i>	<i>On the mechanism of Synaptotagmin1 mediated Ca<sup>2+</sup> triggered release - cancelled</i>
20	<i>Jian Dong</i>	<i>EHBP1-CR16-WAFL regulates synaptic proteostasis and neuronal function - cancelled</i>
21	Ke Yang	A mechanism for polarized trafficking of voltage-gated Ca <sup>2+</sup> channels in neurons
22	Marieke Meijer	Tomosyns attenuate presynaptic strength and short-term depression
23	Malgorzata Lubas	RIM-Binding Protein regulates P/Q-Ca <sup>2+</sup> -channel coupling at central synapses
24	Morven Chin	Constructing artificial proteins for secretion at the active zone
25	Rebecca Stark	Rim selectively promotes transmission and plasticity at high release synapses
26	Taylor Church	NMDA receptors and CaMKII regulate the activity and membrane expression of the neuronal membrane proteasome
27	Ying Han	Structural basis of calcium-dependent C1q/BA1 assemblies in synaptic connectivity

**Theme C: Advanced Imaging, Sensors & Architecture**

Poster #	Presenter	Title
28	Chang-Lu Tao	“Kiss-shrink-run” unifies mechanisms for synaptic vesicle exocytosis and hyperfast recycling
29	Connie Wong	Developing a tool to track synapses
30	Cosmos Wang	Cell type-specific 3D-genome organization and transcription regulation in the brain
31	Clara McCarthy	Nanoscale Analysis of Evoked and Spontaneous NMDAR-Mediated Calcium Signals at Individual Hippocampal Synapses
32	<i>Maksim Galkov</i>	<i>The absence of uniformly oriented molecular populations in central mammalian synapses revealed by two-photon polarization microscopy - cancelled</i>
33	Min Huang	Investigating the Molecular Basis of Synapse Formation through High-Throughput Functional CRISPR Screening
34	Paulina Nemcova	Resolving the total protein distribution in the synapse
35	Qiangjun Zhou	Genetically encoded V-tag for protein localization at molecular resolution in 3D cellular imaging

SESSION II – DISEASE, CIRCUITS & TRANSLATIONAL MODELS – [NOVEMBER 21, 2025](#)

Theme A: Neurodevelopmental & Genetic Synaptopathies

Poster #	Presenter	Title
36	Bowen Jia	Shank3 oligomerization governs material properties of the postsynaptic density condensate and synaptic plasticity
37	Changliang Liu	Systematic functional dissection of the presynaptic regulation network
38	Deepa Anjan Kumar	Assessing synaptic activity in human stem cell-derived neurons
39	Claudia Persoon	Human iPSC-Derived Neuron Models for Translational Research in Neurodevelopmental Disorders
40	Chris Patzke	Human and Mouse Models for Studying Disease Mechanisms in Neurodevelopmental and Neurodegenerative Disorders
41	Elise Lorena Sedlacek	Discerning the effects of miR-29 on brain maturation
42	Estefania Yoceli Ojeda Muniz	Exome Profiling Identifies Rare <i>Adgrl3</i> Variants with Synapse-Relevant Defects linked to ADHD Susceptibility
43	Khushi Talajia	Defects in the subcortical visual pathway in Down syndrome model mice
44	Lydia Proskauer	Characterizing the cellular and molecular basis of CASK-mediated cerebellar hypoplasia using human iPSC-derived cerebellar organoids
45	Marc Fuccillo	Mapping the connections between epigenetic and synaptic dysregulation: lessons from studies of neurodevelopment disorder-associated genes
46	Lennart Niels Cornelisse	Positional effects of SYT1 missense variants on neurotransmitter and neuropeptide release in SYT1-associated neurodevelopmental disorder
47	Mingqi Sha	Clasp2-Mediated Cytoskeletal Control of Oligodendrocyte Biology in Myelination
48	Myra Nett	Uncovering molecular mechanisms underlying a rare pediatric neurodegenerative disease using patient-derived in vitro neuronal models
49	Sol Diaz de Leon-Guerrero	Loss of function mutations in neurodevelopmental and psychiatric risk genes alter neuronal morphology and synaptic transmission in human neurons
50	Romina Ambrosini Defendi	Mapping Excitatory and Inhibitory Synaptic Deficits in STXBP1 Haploinsufficiency Human Neuron Models

**Theme B: Neurodegeneration & Disease Mechanisms**

Poster #	Presenter	Title
51	Alberto Siddu	A $\beta$ peptides: Synaptogens or Synaptotoxins?
52	Jacob Miller	Up-regulation of Synaptobrevin-2 to delay age-related cognitive impairment
53	Kevin Cragg	Visual familiarity induced oscillations are altered in 5xFAD modeled Alzheimer's disease
54	Mengyang Zhang	The role of APOE in cholesterol transport and its implications in Alzheimer's Disease
55	Nicole Hall	It's About Time: Examining Acute and Long-term Behavioral and Pathological Outcomes Following Repetitive Mild Traumatic Brain Injury During Chronic Methamphetamine Exposure
56	Negar Rahmani	Mapping Reelin-Expressing and Engram Neurons in the Entorhinal Cortex and Hippocampus
57	Prarthana Gowda	Characterizing schizophrenia-associated loss-of-function TRIO mutation in human neurons
58	Sabrina Kistler	Apoer2 splicing and APOE isoforms drive distinct gene expression in the brain: understanding mechanisms underlying Alzheimer's disease risk
59	Shreedarshane Devi	Glutamine Anaplerosis Fuels Astrocytic Reactivity in Amyloidosis
60	Mowen Yin	Impaired visual discrimination learning and altered oscillations in the primary visual cortex of 5xFAD mouse model of Alzheimer's Disease
61	Silvia Natale	Apolipoprotein E (ApoE) is a major risk factor for Alzheimer's disease.

**Theme C: E/I Balance, Circuits & Systems Homeostasis**

Poster #	Presenter	Title
62	Aisan Farhadi Gharegheshlaghi	Lysosomal degradation of the extracellular proteins by using a chimeric receptor
63	Jingchu Zhao	Zona Incerta Modulates Motor Learning by Influencing the Preparatory State
64	Kat Kozyrystka	The Neuroscience of AI Safety: Mind, Manipulation and Morality
65	Sanghamitra Nareddula	Visual learning and memory are encoded through a multiplexed circuit in mouse V1
66	Sonata Suk-yuYau	Single-bout exercise enhances spinogenesis in the anterior cingulate cortex via adiponectin-APPL1 Pathway
67	Torben Van Voorst	Human iPSC-derived networks adapt to major shifts in excitation/inhibition balance by tuning synaptic connectivity
68	Tija Jacob	Benzodiazepine remodeling of excitatory/inhibitory balance
69	Tsz Ching Ma	Harnessing nuclear repressor for rapid access to cellular substrates of memory
70	Wenfei Sun	Spatial transcriptomics reveal neuron-astrocyte synergy in long-term memory
71	Yihan Jin	Monitoring Neuronal Activity Across Timescales with Genetically Encoded Indicators

**RESTAURANTS SUGGESTIONS NEAR HILTON TORREY PINES**

1. A.R. Valentien - <https://www.lodgetorреypines.com>
2. The Grill at Torrey Pines - <https://www.lodgetorреypines.com>
3. Pacifica Del Mar - <https://www.pacificadelmar.com>
4. Jake's Del Mar - <https://www.jakesdelmar.com>
5. Poseidon Del Mar - <https://www.poseidonrestaurant.com>
6. Davanti Enoteca Del Mar - <https://davantienotecadelmar.com>
7. Tamarindo Del Mar - <https://www.tamarindodelmar.com>
8. En Fuego Cantina & Grill - <https://enfuegocantina.com>
9. Torreyana - <https://www.hilton.com/en/hotels/santpjh-hilton-la-jolla-torrey-pines/dining/torreyana/>
10. Farmer & The Seahorse - <https://www.farmerandtheseahorse.com>
11. Bella Vista Social Club & Caffé - <https://the-bella.com>
12. Caroline's Seaside Café - <https://carolinesseasidecafe.com>
13. The Marine Room - <https://www.marineroom.com>
14. Piatti – La Jolla - <https://lajolla.piatti.com>
15. Cliffhanger Café (Torrey Pines Gliderport) - <https://www.flytorrey.com>
16. Din Tai Fung (UTC) - <https://dtf.com/en-us/locations/san-diego>
17. Javier's (UTC) - <https://www.javiersfinestfoods.com>
18. Duke's La Jolla - <https://www.dukeslajolla.com>
19. George's at the Cove - <https://www.georgesatthecove.com>
20. West End Bar & Kitchen - <https://www.westenddelmar.com>
21. Aqua Mare Cucina Italiana - <https://aquamaredelmar.com>