

Alexa H. Veenema

Associate Professor at Michigan State University

East Lansing, MI, US

Alexa Veenema's research focuses on understanding the roles of the neuropeptides vasopressin and oxytocin in regulating social behavior.

Biography

Dr. Veenema's research uses mice and rats to examine the roles of vasopressin and oxytocin in regulating social behavior (social play, social recognition, social novelty, social reward) and how sex, age, and early life stress modulate social behavior. The Veenema lab employs a combination of behavioral, molecular, biochemical, and pharmacological techniques to shed light on normal and abnormal human social functioning as observed in autism spectrum disorder, borderline personality disorder, antisocial personality disorder, and schizophrenia.

Veenema is a referee of more than 25 international journals and a member of the Society for Neuroscience, the Federation of European Neuroscience Societies, Society for Behavioral Neuroendocrinology, the Society for Social Neuroscience, the Organization for the Study of Sex Differences, and the International Behavioral Neuroscience Society. She serves on the editorial board of the journals *Hormones and Behavior* and *Social Neuroscience*, is a review editor for the journals *Frontiers in Behavioral Neuroscience* and *Frontiers in Endocrinology*, and serves as secretary and treasurer for the Society for Social Neuroscience.

Veenema is Associate Professor in Behavioral Neuroscience in the Department of Psychology & Neuroscience at Michigan State University. She studied Biology (specialization in Neuroscience) at the University of Groningen, the Netherlands. In 2003 she received her PhD in Neuroscience at the University of Groningen, The Netherlands with Dr. Jaap M. Koolhaas and Dr. E. Ron de Kloet as her advisors. She did post-doctoral work in the labs of Dr. Inga D. Neumann at the University of Regensburg in Germany and Dr. Geert de Vries at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst. In 2010, she was appointed Assistant Professor in the Department of Psychology at Boston College and received tenure and was promoted to Associate Professor in 2016. Dr. Veenema was recruited by Michigan State University in 2017.

During her PhD, Alexa was supported by a stipend from the Netherlands Organization for Scientific Research. She received two postdoctoral stipends from the Bavarian Research Foundation (Bayerische Forschungsstiftung) and an international research fellowship from the German Research Foundation (Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft), and was awarded a NARSAD 2010 Young Investigator Grant from the Brain and Behavior Research Foundation and an NSF Career Award in 2013. Her lab is currently funded by NSF and NIMH.

Industry Expertise

Education/Learning

Areas of Expertise

sex differences, Oxytocin, Behavioral Neuroscience, Social Behavior, vasopressin, Autism

Education

University of Groningen, the Netherlands
MSc Biology (Neuroscience concentration)

University of Groningen, the Netherlands
PhD Behavioral Neuroscience

University of Regensburg, Germany
postdoctoral fellow

University of Massachusetts, Amherst
postdoctoral fellow

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