American Society For Chinese Neuroscientists Symposium 2026

January 28-30, 2026

Houston, TX

Organized by

American Society For Chinese Neuroscientists (ASCN)

https://www.sfnchinese.org/

Welcome Message

On behalf of the ASCN Organizing Committee, we are delighted to welcome you to Houston, Texas**,** for the 3rd American Society for Chinese Neuroscientists (ASCN) symposium**,** held from January 28–30, 2026**.**

The ASCN is a global non-profit organization of neuroscientists from academia and industry dedicated to advancing neuroscience research and developing therapeutic solutions for nervous system disorders. Our mission is to foster collaboration among neuroscientists across disciplines, promote scientific exchange, and support the professional growth of neuroscientists worldwide.

This year's symposium features an exciting and diverse scientific program spanning the full spectrum of neuroscience research—from neural injury and systems neuroscience to molecular, developmental, and neuroimmune mechanisms. We are honored to welcome Dr. Hongkui Zeng, Executive Vice President at the Allen Institute, as the Ray Wu Lectureship keynote speaker. In addition to scientific sessions, the symposium will host a career development workshop**,** poster presentations, and an award ceremony recognizing ASCN trainee awardees in honor of Professor Jane Wu.

We hope the symposium will provide you with stimulating discussions, new collaborations, and meaningful connections. Whether you are reconnecting with colleagues or meeting new friends, we wish you a rewarding and memorable experience at the 3rd ASCN Symposium 2026 in Houston!

The ASCN Organizing Committee

Long-Jun Wu (*UTHealth Houston*) | Zhiping Pang (*Rutgers University*) | Yang Yang (*Purdue University*)

Xinyun Lu (*Augusta University*) | Junfang Wu (*University of Maryland*) | Yongjie Yang (*Tufts University*)

Fuzheng Guo (*UC Davis*) | Ru-Rong Ji (*Duke University*) | Qingchun Tong (*UTHealth Houston*)

Yulan Xiong (*University of Connecticut*) | Zhen Yan (*SUNY-Buffalo*) | Hui Zheng (*Baylor College of Medicine)*

KEYNOTE & RAY WU LECTURESHIP

Hongkui Zeng, Ph.D

Executive Vice President and Director,
Allen Institute for Brain Science

Hongkui Zeng, Ph.D., is Executive Vice President at Allen Institute and Director of Allen Institute for Brain Science. She studies neuronal diversity and connectivity in the mammalian brain-wide circuits in the context of development, function and disease. Through her leadership of multidisciplinary teams, she has built research programs using transcriptomic, connectomic and multimodal approaches to characterize and classify the wide variety of cell types that constitute the mammalian brain, laying the foundation for unraveling the cell type basis of brain function. Her work has led to widely adopted community resources and standards, including transgenic mouse lines, Allen Mouse Brain Connectivity Atlas, the Common Coordinate Framework (CCF), and the brain-wide transcriptomic cell type taxonomy and atlas. Zeng received her Ph.D. in molecular and cell biology from Brandeis University and postdoctoral training in neuroscience at Massachusetts Institute of Technology. She is an elected member of the National Academy of Sciences and the National Academy of Medicine.

American Society for Chinese Neuroscientists 3rd Symposium
January 28 - 30, 2026
The Brown Foundation Institute of Molecular Medicine
SRB 104 Beth Robertson Auditorium
1825 Pressler Street, Houston, TX 77030

DAY1, January 28th, 2026 (Wed.) InterContinental Houston, 6750 Main St. Houston, TX 77030	
4:00-5:30 pm	**Career development workshop** (Red Maple Room)
	Panelist: Xinyun Lu, Zhiping Pang and Long-Jun Wu
6:00-10:00 pm	**Registration and Welcome Reception** (Live Oak Ballroom)
	Sponsored by Transvista; Light dinner and drinks will be provided

DAY 2, January 29th, 2026 (Thur.) SRB 104 Beth Robertson Auditorium. 1825 Pressler Street, Houston, TX 77030		
8:00 am	**Registration Starts**	
8:25-8:30 am	**Opening Remarks**	
	Dr. John Hancock, Senior Vice President, UTHealth Houston	
8:30-10:00 am	**Session 1: Sensory and Systems Neuroscience**	
(15min/talk)	**Chair: Rurong Ji (Duke U.)**	
8:30-8:45 am	**Weizhe Hong** UCLA	*The Neuroscience of Social Behavior: From Prosociality to Social AI*
8:45-9:00 am	**Xin Ge** UTHealth Houston	*Discovery and Engineering MMP-9 Inhibitory mAbs for Modifying Diabetic Peripheral Neuropathy*
9:00-9:15 am	**Nuo Li** Duke U.	*Brainstem coordination of drinking with respiration*
9:15-9:30 am	**Chen Ran** Scripps Institute	*The coding and circuitry of interoception*
9:30-9:45 am	**Xiaoke Chen** Stanford U.	*A closed-loop circuit for chronic mechanical pain*
9:45-10:00 am	**Shinghua Ding** U. Missouri	*A novel sensory and motor neuropathy caused by a SNP in NAMPT*
10:00-10:30 am	**Break**	
10:30-12:00 pm	**Session 2: Neuroendocrine and Stem Cells**	
(15min/talk)	**Chair: Zhiping Pang (Rutgers U.) / Qingchun Tong (UTHealth Houston)**	
10:30-10:45 am	**Jian Feng** SUNY-Buffalo	*Decoding Parkinson's Disease in Patient-derived Neurons*
10:45-11:00 am	**Nan Yang** Mount Sinai	*Investigating Non-Coding Autism De Novo Variants in Human Stem Cell-derived Neurons*
11:00-11:15 am	**Xiaoai Zhao** Yale U.	*Lipidomic profiling reveals age-dependent changes in complex plasma membrane lipids that regulate neural stem cell aging*
11:15-11:30 am	**Haijiang Cai** U. Arizona	*Dynamic and ensemble encoding of eating behaviors by central amygdala neurons*
11:30-11:45 pm	**Edward Nieh** U. Virginia	*Hippocampal population neural dynamics in decision-making and behavior*
11:45-12:00 pm	**Qiang Chang** UW-Madison	*Regulation of homeostatic synaptic plasticity by MeCP2 phosphorylation*

American Society for Chinese Neuroscientists 3rd Symposium
January 28 - 30, 2026
The Brown Foundation Institute of Molecular Medicine
SRB 104 Beth Robertson Auditorium
1825 Pressler Street, Houston, TX 77030

12:00-12:10 pm	**Platinum Vendor Presentations**	
	BIOCYTOGEN, RWD	
12:15-1:00 pm	**Lunch** (box lunch will be provided)	
1:00-1:45 pm	**Keynote speaker: Hongkui Zeng**	
	Ray Wu Lectureship sponsored by CBIS	
2:00-3:30 pm	**Session 3: Molecular Therapy / Neurogenetics**	
(18min/talk)	**Chair: Mingshan Xue (Baylor)**	
2:00-2:18 pm	**Lei Stanley Qi** Stanford U.	*Causal RNA Relocalization in Neurons: From Local Translation to Circuit Function*
2:18-2:36 pm	**Lu Chen** Stanford U.	*The ins and outs of neurexins in homeostatic plasticity and FXS*
2:36-2:54 pm	**Zhaozhu Qiu** Johns Hopkins	*Epigenetic control of microglial mitochondrial immunity drives Alzheimer's disease pathogenesis*
2:54-3:12 pm	**Ying Sun** Cincinnati Children's	*Therapeutic and Modeling Strategies Using iPSC-Derived Systems in GBA1-Linked Neurodegenerative Diseases*
3:12-3:30 pm	**Yong-Hui Jiang** Yale U.	*Brain Wide Gene Editing via an Innovative STEP Delivery Platform for Treatment of Angelman Syndrome*
3:30-4:00 pm	**Break**	
4:00-5:30 pm	**Session 4: Neural Technology**	
(18min/talk)	**Chair: Feng Guo (Indiana U.) / Zhenpeng Qin (UT Dallas)**	
4:00-4:18 pm	**Yanxiang Deng** U. Penn	*Spatial multi-omics profiling in brain tissues*
4:18-4:36 pm	**Zhenpeng Qin** UT Dallas	*Minimally Invasive and Cell-Specific Delivery to Brain and Spinal Cord*
4:36-4:54 pm	**Hao Li** Northwestern U.	*The Role of Thalamic Neurotensin Circuits Underlying Valence Processing*
4:54-5:12 pm	**Nian Wang** UTSW	*High-Resolution Magnetic Resonance Imaging Techniques in Neurodegenerative Diseases*
5:12-5:30 pm	**Na Sun** MIT	*Decoding the Complexity of Brain Disorders with Deep Learning*
5:30-6:00 pm	**Travel to Fung's Kitchen** 7320 Southwest Fwy #115, Houston, TX 77074 (please plan your own transportation and carpooling)	
6:15-6:20 pm	**Welcome & Trophy Presentation to Dr. Hongkui Zeng**	
	Dr. Long-Jun Wu	
6:20-6:30 pm	**ASCN Trainee Awards**	
	Dr. Hongkui Zeng (in honor of Dr. Jane Wu)	
6:30-6:45 pm	**Molecular Psychiatry Editor-in-Chief Talk**	
	Dr. Julio Licinio, SUNY-Upstate	
6:45 -10:00 pm	**Dinner**	

DAY3, January 30th, 2026 (Fri.)

SRB 104 Beth Robertson Auditorium. 1825 Pressler Street, Houston, TX 77030

8:30-10:00 am	**Session 5: Neural Injury**	
(18min/talk)	**Chair: Junfang Wu (U. Maryland)**	
8:30-8:48 am	**Xiaoying Wang** Tulane U.	*Itaconate restrains acute proinflammatory activation of microglia after traumatic brain injury*
8:48-9:06 am	**Bingren Hu** UCSD	*The role of Lysosomes in Ischemic Brain Injury: Lysosomes at the crossroad of cell survival and death after brain ischemia*
9:06-9:24 am	**Ye Xiong** Henry Ford Hospital	*Mesenchymal Stem Cell-Derived Exosomes/sEVs as a Cell-Free Therapy for Traumatic Brain Injury*
9:24-9:42 am	**Li Min Chen** Vanderbilt U.	*Intraspinal Circuit Reorganization as a Pathway to Functional Recovery After Spinal Cord Injury*
9:42-10:00 am	**Hedong Li** Augusta U.	*Dynamic regulation of NeuroD1 expression level by a novel viral construct during astrocyte-to-neuron reprogramming*
10:00-10:30 am	**Break**	
10:30-12:00 pm	**Session 6: Neurodegeneration**	
(15min/talk)	**Chair: Hui Zheng (Baylor)**	
10:30-10:45 am	**Zhenyu Yue** Mount Sinai	*Transcriptomic Landscape of Human Substantia Nigra and LRRK2 in Parkinson's Disease*
10:45-11:00 am	**Ya Cheng Liao** Columbia U.	*Linking Lysosomal Damage to ALS: ANXA11-Dependent RNA Granule Recruitment and Local Translation*
11:00-11:15 am	**Zhao Sun** UT Dallas	*Direct neuronal reprogramming: a new avenue for studying brain aging and neurodegeneration*
11:15-11:30 am	**Beika Zhu** St. Louis U.	*The ADGRG1-MYC signaling axis drives protective microglial function in Alzheimer's disease*
11:30-11:45 pm	**Hongjie Li** Baylor	*Beyond the brain, how does neurodegeneration affect the body?*
11:45-12:00 pm	**Zhongcong Xie** UTHealth Houston	*Biomarker and Mechanistic Insight of Postoperative Delirium*
12:00-12:10 pm	**Platinum Vendor Presentations**	
	Transvista, AAVnerGene	
12:15-1:00 pm	**Lunch** (box lunch will be provided)	
1:00-1:45 pm	**Posters**	

2:00-3:30 pm	**Session 7: Neuroimmune / Glia / Brain Tumor**	
(15min/talk)	**Chair: Jian Hu (MD Anderson)**	
2:00-2:15 pm	**Jian Hu** MD Anderson	*Evolution of myeloid cells in brain tumor*
2:15-2:30 pm	**Peiwen Chen** Cleveland Clinic	*Targeting GSC-microglia interaction in glioblastoma*
2:30-2:45 pm	**Yuan Pan** MD Anderson	*The role of neurons in the initiation of gliomas*
2:45-3:00 pm	**Sheng Zhang** UTHealth Houston	*Hsp110 Chaperone is essential for glial migration and nervous system integrity*
3:00-3:15 pm	**Yingleong (Rigel) Chan** UMass	*Cadmium-Induced Disruption of Neuroinflammatory Pathways and Gene Regulation in Alzheimer's Disease Pathogenesis*
3:15-3:30 pm	**Sijia He** UTHealth San Antonio	*Microglial cGAS Deletion Preserves Intercellular Communication and Alleviates Amyloid-β-Induced Pathogenesis of Alzheimer's Disease*
3:30-4:00 pm	**Break**	
4:00-5:30 pm	**Session 8: Neurodevelopmental Disorders**	
(15min/talk)	**Chair: Zhen Yan (SUNY-Buffalo)**	
4:00-4:15 pm	**Hsiao-Tuan Chao** Baylor	*Discovery genetics and translational neuroscience for autism spectrum and neurodevelopmental disorders*
4:15-4:30 pm	**Peter Tsai** UTSW	*Roles for cerebellum in regulating cognition and behavior across the lifespan*
4:30-4:45 pm	**Chen Liu** UTSW	*Developmental reprogramming in melanocortin neurons modulates diet-induced obesity*
4:45-5:00 pm	**Ma-Li Wong** SUNY-Upstate	*The role of PHF21B in social memory*
5:00-5:15 pm	**Xiao-Bing Gao** Yale U.	*Dysregulated sensing of social homeostasis in rodent models of autism*
5:15-5:30 pm	**Guosong Hong** Stanford U.	*The "Transparent Mice": Achieve Transient Optical Transparency in Live Mammals*

5:30-5:35 pm	**Closing Remarks**	
	Dr. Long-Jun Wu, UTHealth Houston, President of ASCN	
5:35 pm	**Conference Adjourns**	

The ASCN Organizing Committee extends sincere appreciation to the local support team for their tremendous help and coordination of the symposium:

Mengdi Fei, Laura Montier, Minh Vo, Selina Hua

IMM-Center for Neuroimmunology and Glial Biology at UTHealth Houston

American Society for Chinese Neuroscientists 3rd Symposium
January 28 - 30, 2026
The Brown Foundation Institute of Molecular Medicine
SRB 104 Beth Robertson Auditorium
1825 Pressler Street, Houston, TX 77030

Poster Session

Number	Full Name	Poster Title	Institution
1	Wenxi Xia	*Tracking Administered Oxytocin with Fluorescence Imaging in Mice Using a Click Chemistry Approach*	U. Utah
2	Caroline Regnauld	*A fundamental brain-body mechanism underlying obesity development*	UTHealth Houston
3	Yuhan Cao	*Contrasting roles of PVH CRH neuron neurotransmission in diet-induced obesity*	UTHealth Houston
4	Mekenzie Peshoff	*TREM2 modulates glioma-associated microglia and macrophage function in a genetric driver dependent manner*	UTHealth Houston
5	Hairuo Du	*Cell specific proteomes reveal molecular mechanisms mediating astrocyte-neuron interaction*	UIUC
6	Qizhao Wang	*AAV-ShDs: Efficient BBB-Penetrant AAV Vectors Validated in Non-Human Primate and Human Models*	AAVnerGene Inc
7	Jiaying Zheng	*Myeloid Hv1–STING axis tunes brain tumor immunity*	UTHealth Houston
8	Guoyan Zhao	*Single nucleus multi-omic atlas of human dorsal root ganglia reveals the contribution of non-neuronal cell types to pain*	Washington U. St. Louis
9	Han Zheng	*Transcriptomic analysis in TPP1-null human haploid cell line identifies defective mitochondrial mechanisms*	Brown U. (currently UTSW)
10	Yang He	*Lac-Phe-sensitive brainstem circuit for exercise-specific thermoregulation*	Baylor
11	W. Jim Zheng	*BRAINCELL-AID: A Brain Cell Type Resource Created by Large Language Models and a Multi-Agent AI System for Collaborative Community Annotation*	UTHealth Houston
12	Kenneth Samuel	*Function of astrocytes in the medial amygdala neural circuits and social behavior*	UIUC
13	Koichiro Haruwaka	*Anesthesia-induced ATP Release Drives Microglial Shielding of Inhibitory Synapses and Post-Anesthetic Neuronal Hyperactivity*	UTHealth Houston
14	Yue Liang	*Cortical microglia promote noradrenergic signaling to maintain wakefulness*	UTHealth Houston
15	Mastura Akter	*TREM2 Agonist Antibody Promotes Microglial Function and Reduces Pathological TDP-43 Aggregates*	UTHealth Houston
16	Wenjun Zhou	*Rhythmicity of Rev-erb and SCNGABA neural activity regulates cognitive resilience to amyloid*	Baylor
17	Ripon Sarkar	*Interferon-responsive microglia link cardiometabolic multimorbidity to dementia*	UTHealth Houston
18	Jordy Sepulveda	*Extracellular ATP and Microglial calcium signaling is increased in Alzheimer Disease mouse model*	UTHealth Houston
19	Xin Tang	*Investigating microglia-tumor interactions in neuroimmune-competent human brain organoids*	Boston Children's Hospital
20	Manling Xie	*TREM1-Driven Metabolic Dysfunction in Peripheral Macrophages Impairs Brain Health: Peripheral Cross-Talk With the Brain*	Stanford U.
21	Haichao Wei	*Spatial transcriptomics and snrna-seq unravel cell-cell interactions and signaling pathways in the entorhinal cortex driving alzheimer's disease initiation and progression*	UTHealth Houston
22	Shunyi Zhao	*Satellite microglia gate neuronal excitability by shielding inhibitory synapses in adult brain*	UTHealth Houston
23	Megumi H. Seese	*Neural encoding of stress scalability by arcuate GABAergic neurons*	UTHealth Houston
24	Eunyoung Kim	*Prefrontal cortex astrocytes modulate distinct neuronal populations to control anxiety-like behavior*	UTHealth Houston
25	Sheng Zhang	*Essential and Dosage-Sensitive Role of Hsp110 Chaperone in Nervous System Integrity*	UTHealth Houston
26	Tingxin Zhang	*Oligodendrocyte Autophagy Restrains Myelin Sheath Formation to Modulate Social Behavior via the ER–Sphingolipid Axis*	UTSW
27	Xiaoai Zhao	*Lipidomic profiling reveals age-dependent changes in complex plasma membrane lipids that regulate neural stem cell aging*	Yale U.
28	Cunjin Su	*A novel neural basis for anorexia-like phenotypes*	UTHealth Houston
29	Hao Li	*Thalamo-amygdala Neurotensin Projections Regulate Reward-Seeking Decision under Risk*	Northwestern U.
30	Hairong Peng	*Explore the role of oligodendrocytic ABCA1 in Tau pathology*	Baylor

Thank you to our sponsors

Platinum Sponsors

Gold Sponsors