

Marisa Roberto, Ph.D.



Dr. Roberto is a Professor with Tenure in The Committee on the Neurobiology of Addictive Disorders at The Scripps Research Institute (TSRI) in La Jolla, California. She received her BA in Biological Sciences and her Ph.D in Basic Neuroscience from The University of Pisa, Italy. During her Ph.D, Dr. Roberto was a visiting student in the Neuropharmacology Department at TSRI under the guidance of Drs. George. R. Siggins and Donna Gruol, and it was during this time that she started her studies to understand the synaptic effects of alcohol and peptides in the brain.

In 2001 Dr. Roberto returned to TSRI as a postdoctoral fellow in Dr. Siggins' laboratory, and she focused on understanding the neuroadaptations induced by alcohol in the amygdala, a brain region crucial in mediating the behavioral effects of acute and chronic alcohol consumption. In 2005, Dr. Roberto started her own laboratory at TSRI, where she has continued to identify how stress, alcohol and other drugs of abuse alter neuronal function and synaptic transmission in the amygdala. In 2005, she was awarded the Young Investigator Award from the RSA, and in 2008, she received the Presidential Early Career Award for Scientists and Engineers (PECASE), which is the highest honor bestowed by the U.S. government on outstanding scientists and engineers beginning their independent careers. Dr. Roberto was Knighted with the "Order of Merit of the Republic of Italy" in 2011. She organizes the triannual international conference on "Alcoholism and Stress: A Framework for Future Treatment Strategies" in Italy, and is a member of RSA, ISBRA and SfN. She collaborates with researchers throughout Europe and the United States, and advocates the development of research and collaboration with international colleagues world-wide.

Research in Dr. Roberto's laboratory aims to elucidate which specific neuronal mechanisms underlie synaptic and/or molecular changes in amygdalar circuitry that influence the development of dependence to alcohol and other drugs of abuse.