

The Science of Behavior Change

March 29, 2019

An overview of just some of the programming coming to the APS Annual Convention in Washington, DC. To see all the exciting symposia, plenary sessions, and other events, [click here](#).

Behavioral factors are central to many public health challenges, including tobacco use, obesity, and cancer, so it's no surprise that changing behavior has the potential to improve health. But what are the scientifically proven ways to encourage that behavior change? Scientists will share answers to that question at the APS Annual Convention in Washington, DC in an event organized by the Science of Behavior Change Research Network (SOBC).

SOBC, an initiative funded by the National Institutes of Health (NIH), is coordinated by the Columbia University Medical Center, which oversees participating sites located across the United States. Representatives from NIH, Columbia, and participating sites will lead a special session on Friday, May 24 highlighting the mechanisms of self-regulation and behavior change.

“Attendees from all stages of career development — from students to senior faculty — will find something to glean from attending the SOBC research symposium and round table event,” says psychological scientist Jennifer Sumner, SOBC co-investigator and co-chair of the special event.

“During the research symposium, scientists will describe how they are using the SOBC experimental medicine approach to engage mechanisms of self-regulation in order to promote successful behavior change. These ‘lightning talks’ will distill key aspects of this research and provide attendees with rich snapshots of these innovative research projects. Then, during the round table event, attendees will get to hear perspectives from a variety of key players in the SOBC Research Network, including scientists and NIH representatives,” says Sumner.

Attendees interested in learning more about how to incorporate the SOBC method and resources into their research will have a chance to talk individually with scientists and NIH program officers following the round table.

2:30 PM – 4:30 PM Friday, May 24

Mechanisms of Self-Regulation and Behavior Change

Psychological scientists are increasingly adopting mechanism-focused approaches to behavior change science in order to address the substantial disease burden caused by maladaptive behaviors. This symposium features talks from leading scientists on mechanisms of self-regulation and how they can be engaged to induce sustainable behavior change, followed by a panel discussion.

Chairs:

Lis Nielsen, National Institute on Aging

Jennifer Sumner, Columbia University Medical Center

Speakers:

Alison Miller, University of Michigan

Karolina Lempert, University of Pennsylvania

Patrick Bissett, Stanford University

Jeff Stein, Virginia Tech

Karen Seymour, Johns Hopkins

4:30 PM – 5:30 PM Friday, May 24

How to Promote Lasting Change: A Round Table Discussion on the NIH Science of Behavior Change (SOBC) Common Fund Program

NIH encourages the use of a mechanism-focused experimental medicine approach to identify and engage mechanisms underlying behavior change. In this informal, interactive roundtable event, NIH representatives and researchers discuss this approach and highlight future directions. Those wishing to incorporate behavior change tools, methods, or principles into their research should attend.

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Karen Seymour, Johns Hopkins University

Jonathan King, National Institute on Aging

Janine Simmons, National Institute of Mental Health

Becky Ferrer, National Cancer Institute

Merav Sabri, National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health