Dr. Francesca Zoratto

Short bio
My academic training and research experience have provided me with a background in multiple disciplines that pertain to the study of animal behavior, including psychopharmacology, psychobiology, and neuroethology. I graduated at the University of Parma (Italy) in 2008 with a thesis in Ethology and subsequently obtained a PhD in the field of Behavioral Neuroscience at the University of Florence (Italy) in 2013, with a research project on impulsivity and gambling proneness in rats. Later, thanks to a L'ORÉAL-UNESCO For Women in Science Award, I focused my research on the social modulation of risky decision-making in non-human primates and rodents. In 2016 I was selected for the project "100 women against stereotypes for science" (www.100esperte.it), an online databank with the names and CVs of Italian female STEM experts.
Currently, I am working as a research scientist at the Centre for Behavioural Sciences and Mental Health of the Italian National Institute of Health (Rome, Italy), within a group that has a consolidated experience and tradition in the behavioral phenotyping of animal models. To date (April 2020), I have co-authored 44 papers in international peer-reviewed scientific journals (h-index: 14). Currently, I am co-PI of two 3-years projects for young researchers funded by the Italian Ministry of Health. My Researcher Identifiers are: (i) Scopus Author ID: 26657017600; (ii) ORCID: 0000-0002-3626-8928; (iii) ResearcherID: K-6031-2016. A full list of my published work can be found in the publicly available digital database "My Bibliography" (US National Library of Medicine) at the following URL: https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/myncbi/1V5xHyTcOxGAk/bibliography/public/

Research interests
My primary interest is the study of animal behavior in a functional and evolutionary perspective. For my research projects, I have dealt with multidisciplinary topics, studying different species and combining data from different fields. My research is mainly devoted to the development and validation of animal models of human neurobehavioural disorders, with particular reference to conduct and impulse control disorders and behavioral addictions (i.e. gambling disorder). The behavioral methodology I use comprises operant tasks for decision-making with delayed and/or uncertain rewards as well as maze-based tasks for emotional/motivational domains.