

PSYCHOCLUB SEMINAR

# From risk to illness: the role of neural responses to reward on the pathway to depression



Thursday, 25<sup>th</sup> June, 14:30  
Room 2A, Psico2 building



**Prof. Anna Weinberg**

*Associate Professor at McGill  
University, Montréal, Canada*

invited by Dr. Carola Dell'Acqua

**ABSTRACT OF THE TALK:** Major Depressive Disorder (MDD) is one of the world's most common, and costly, forms of illness. Effective treatment and prevention interventions have been developed, but do not work for everyone, suggesting a need to identify clearer etiological explanations as well as, potentially, new avenues for intervention. In this talk, I will discuss studies my lab has undertaken, focusing on neural responses to rewards as measured by event-related potentials, or ERPs, to determine a) how neural responses to reward are involved in the intergenerational transmission of depression, b) how stress exposure might cause adaptations in neural systems that process rewards, c) how these adaptations might make individuals more vulnerable to the occurrence of future stress, and d) how variation in neural responses to rewards might guide real-world behavior and affect in ways that are depressogenic. Combined, this line of research has implications for understanding pathways to depression, as well as identifying future applications that can reduce the prevalence of burdensome disease.