

Dr. Alejandro Arias Vásquez, PhD

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Alejandro Arias is an Associate Professor of the departments of Psychiatry and Human Genetics at the Radboud medical Centre, Nijmegen, the Netherlands. Alejandro obtained his PhD in Genetic Epidemiology in 2006 where he investigated the contribution of common genetic variants in the risk of Alzheimer's Disease. Alejandro links clinical and basic research investigating the influence that key genetic and environmental factors have on the variation of human behaviour and neurobiological development and the risk of psychiatric diseases. His work on (mainly) ADHD and ASD allowed him to establish, for the first time at Radboudumc, the analytical pipeline to search for genes involved in the biological relevance of behavioural traits and neuropsychiatric disorders.

Alejandro is the head of the microbiota-brain research group at Radboudumc. Since 2013, he set-up a one-of-a-kind collaboration of psychiatry, brain imaging, behavior, genetics and microbiology to investigate, for the first time, the relationship between gut bacteria (the microbiota) and human behaviour and neurodevelopment accounting for host genome. In this group his research activities are imbedded within three domains: (i) Effects of the Microbiota Gut-Brain Axis, (ii) Genetic Epidemiology, and (iii) High order analysis methods of complex traits.

His research activities include the teaching & training of young researchers and guide them through the process of learning, internalizing and being able to apply research methods (i.e. study design, concepts of basic statistics and the fundamentals of genetic epidemiology and the microbiota gut-brain axis).

Alejandro has received support from multiple national (Dutch) and international grants to carry out his research. He is involved in more than 150 peer reviewed scientific articles and is actively engaged in scientific communication, education and dissemination aimed at building strong links between scientific and clinical experts and the general public.

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