



EARLY CAREER AWARD FOR CONTRIBUTIONS TO RESEARCH

ELSJE VAN BERGEN, PH.D.

Elsje van Bergen, Ph.D., is an internationally recognized leader in educational genetics, dedicated to advancing the mission of the International Dyslexia Association (IDA) through groundbreaking research and advocacy for individuals with dyslexia. She is Associate Professor at Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, leads the Educational Genetics Lab, and is Visiting Professor at the University of Oslo.

Dr. van Bergen's interdisciplinary research sits at the intersection of psychology, education, public health, psychiatry, and genetics. Her work explores why learning differences such as dyslexia, dyscalculia, and ADHD run in families, focusing on the interplay of genetic and environmental factors that shape children's abilities in language, reading, and math. By disentangling genetic inheritance from environmental influences, her team aims to identify actionable levers for educational and health interventions, with direct implications for policy and practice. Her research also examines the links between learning difficulties and mental health, striving to break cycles of educational disadvantage.

Her impact on the field has been recognized with numerous prestigious awards, including the 2025 Early Career Award from the International Dyslexia Association, which she will receive at the IDA Annual Conference in Atlanta. Dr. van Bergen has also been honoured by the Society for the Scientific Study of Reading, named a Rising Star in Psychological Science, and received the Impact Award in Brain & Behavioural Sciences. She is supported by highly competitive grants, including a Junior Research Fellowship at Oxford University, an ERC Grant, a VIDI Talent Grant, and the Jacobs Foundation Fellowship.

Dr. van Bergen has served as co-chair of the IDA's Scientific Advisory Board, helping to shape the future of dyslexia research and support. Her mission is to ensure all children have the opportunity to learn, thrive, and fulfill their potential.

