

# Pathway specific TNF-mediated metaplasticity in the hippocampus

Cliff Abraham



Aotearoa  
Brain  
Project

Kaupapa  
Roro o  
Aotearoa

Brain Health  
Research Centre  
Te Pokapū Rakahau Hauora Hinekarō



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of  
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*Te Whare Wānanga o Otāgo*  
NEW ZEALAND



**Aotearoa  
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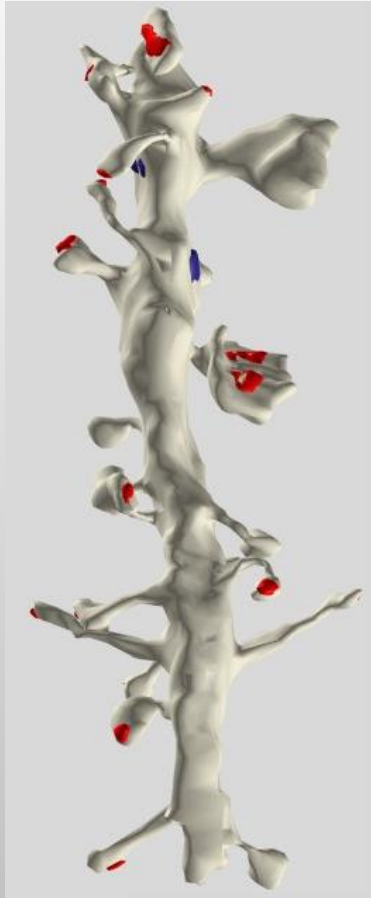
**Kaupapa  
Roro o  
Aotearoa**

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# Activity-Dependent Neural Plasticity: Plasticity vs Stability

(Abraham & Robins, *TINS*, 2005)

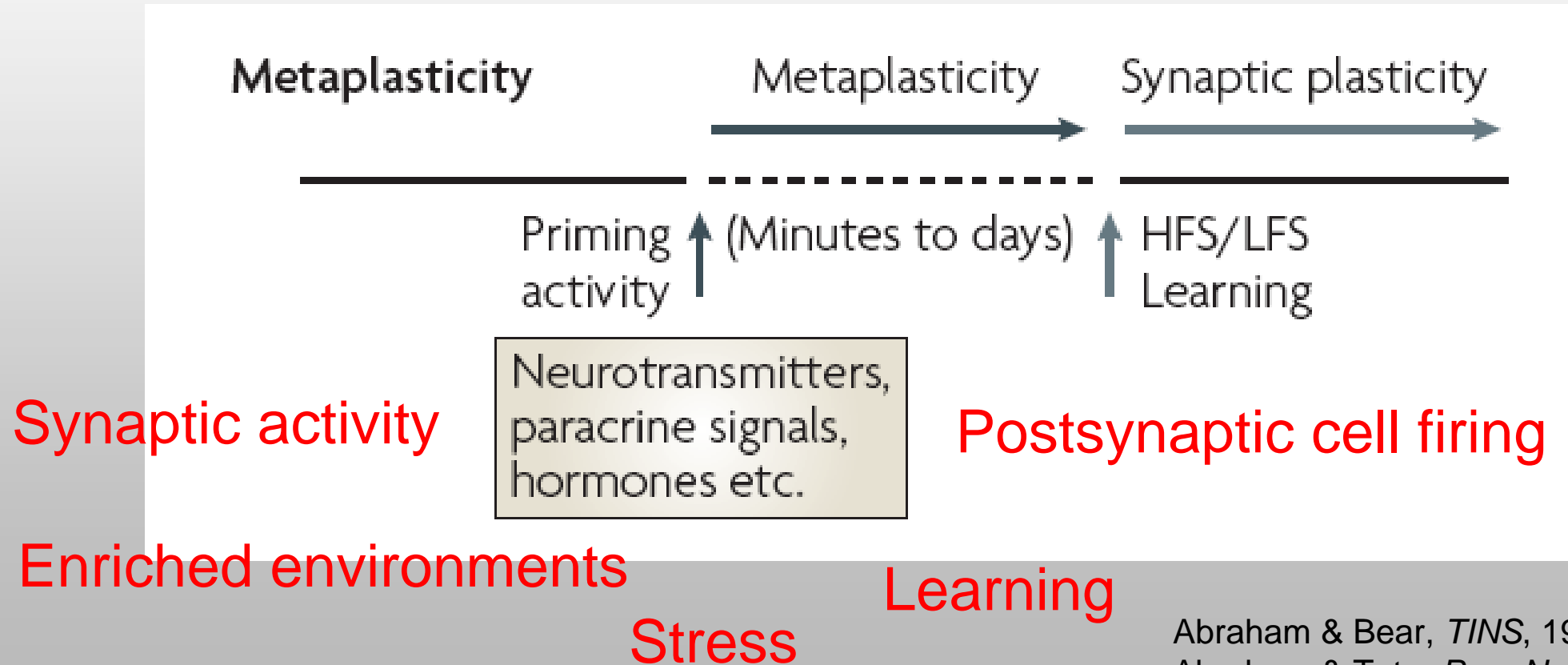


Courtesy of Kristen  
Harris, Univ Texas Austin

- Synaptic Plasticity (LTP/LTD)
- Intrinsic Plasticity
- Structural plasticity
- Homeostatic Plasticity
- Regeneration
- Neurogenesis
- Epigenetic adaptations
- **Metaplasticity: Plasticity of the neural “state”**


## Metaplasticity

Prior neural activity alters persistently the tonic state (forms a subthreshold memory), regulating future synaptic plasticity (and learning)



Abraham & Bear, *TINS*, 1996  
Abraham & Tate, *Prog Neurobiol*, 1997  
Abraham, *Nat Rev Neurosci*, 2008

## Instantaneous “state” variables regulating synaptic plasticity (LTP / LTD)

- 
- NMDA receptor (subunit) complement
  - Degree of postsynaptic cell excitability
  - Degree of GABAergic synaptic inhibition
  - Modulatory neurotransmitters, cytokines, hormones
  - Recent history of synaptic or neural activity

“Metaplasticity” (Abraham & Bear, *TINS*, 1996)

(Metacognition, Meta-analysis, Meta-Learning, Metaphysics)

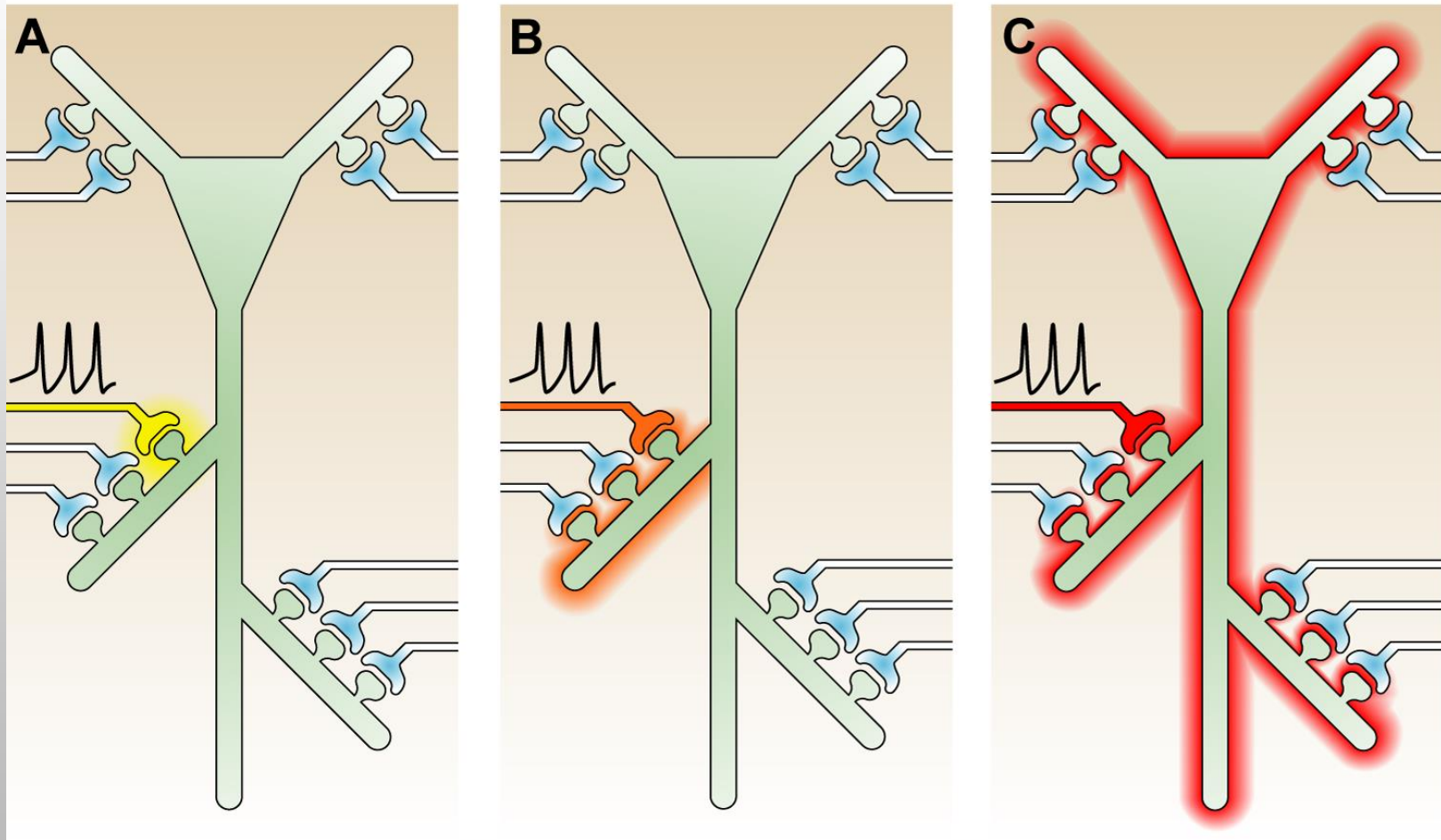
Local state change

Global state change  
i.e., Heterosynaptic metaplasticity

Synapse-specific

Compartment-specific

Cell-wide



# Computational models of memory are optimized by metaplasticity rules

Cascade models of synaptically stored memories.

Fusi S, Drew PJ, Abbott LF. *Neuron*, 2005, 45, 599-611

On the biological plausibility of artificial metaplasticity learning algorithm.

Diego Andina D, Ropero-Pelaez, F.J. *Neurocomputing*, 2013, 114, 32–35

Metaplasticity as a neural substrate for adaptive learning and choice under uncertainty.

Farashahi S, Donahue CH, Khorsand P, Seo H, Lee D, Soltani A. *Neuron*, 2017, 94, 401-414.e6.

Artificial neural networks utilize metaplasticity principles to combat catastrophic forgetting during continual learning

Contributions by metaplasticity to solving the Catastrophic Forgetting Problem.

Jedlicka P, Tomko M, Robins A, Abraham WC. *Trends in Neurosciences*. 2022 Sep;45(9):656-666.

e.g. “Regularisation”; Learning rate changes

Computational modelling suggests that cell-wide metaplasticity is needed for maintaining stability of the net strength of synaptic inputs to a cell.

Connectivity reflects coding: a model of voltage-based STDP with homeostasis.  
Clopath C, Büsing L, Vasilaki E, Gerstner W. *Nature Neuroscience*, 2010, 13, 344-52.

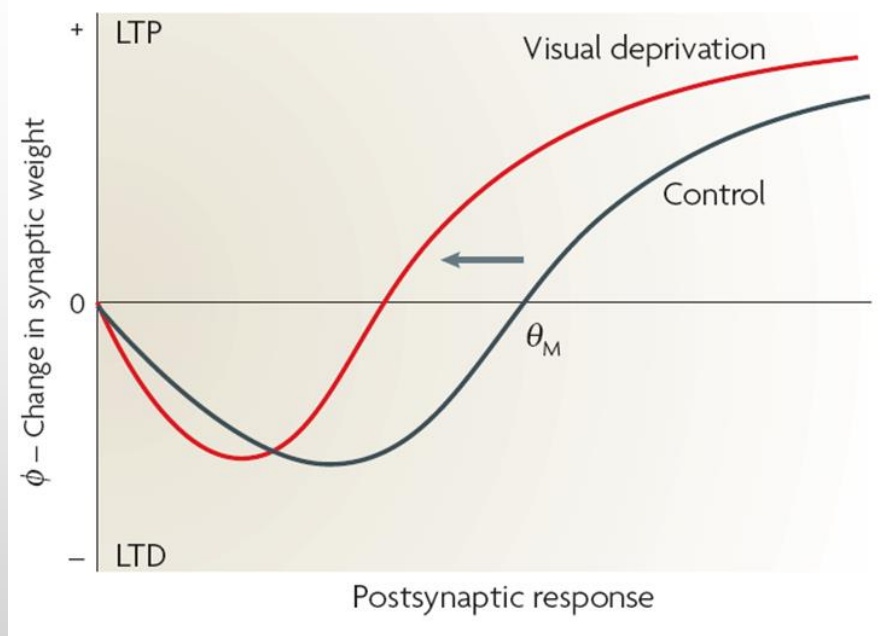
A voltage-based STDP rule combined with fast BCM-like metaplasticity accounts for LTP and concurrent "Heterosynaptic" LTD in the dentate gyrus in vivo.  
Jedlicka P, Benuskova L, Abraham WC. *PLoS Computational Biology*, 2015, 11, e1004588.

Hebbian plasticity requires compensatory processes on multiple timescales.  
Zenke F, Gerstner W.  
*Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society of London B, Biological Sciences*, 2017, 372 (1715).

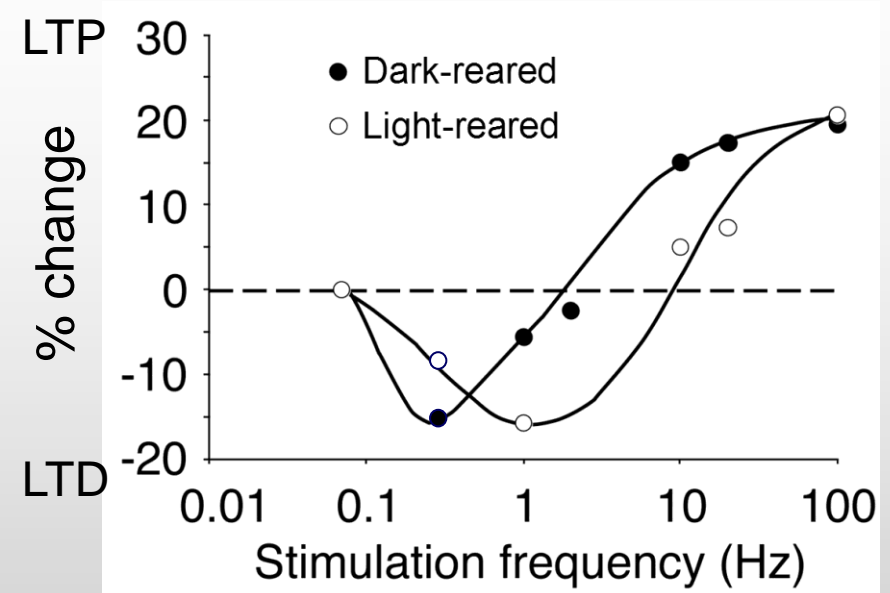
Integrating Hebbian and homeostatic plasticity: the current state of the field and future research directions  
Keck, T. et al  
*Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society of London B, Biological Sciences*, 2017, 372 (1715).



Homeostatic Metaplasticity  
Bienenstock, Cooper, Munro (BCM) theory  
*J Neurophysiology*, 1982



adapted from Philpot et al,  
*J Neuroscience*, 2003



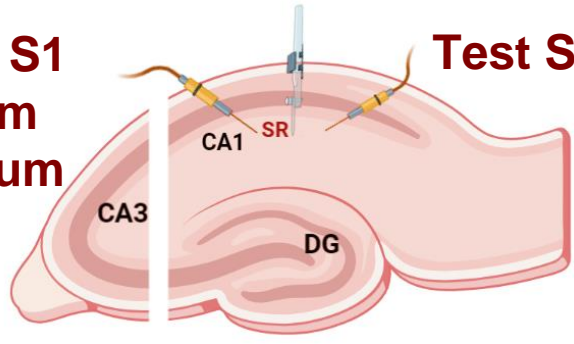
BCM Postulates

1.  $\theta_M$  varies for all excitatory synapses on the postsynaptic cell (i.e. is heterosynaptic)...
2.  $\theta_M$  varies as a function of prior time-averaged postsynaptic cell firing...

What are the mechanisms underpinning BCM-like metaplasticity?

# BCM-like metaplasticity in the hippocampus

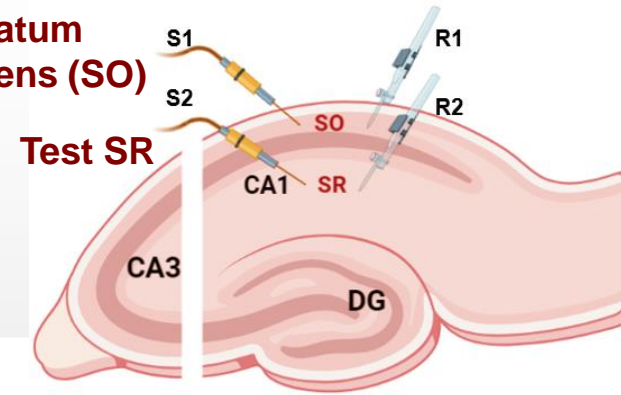
**Prime S1  
stratum  
radiatum  
(SR)**



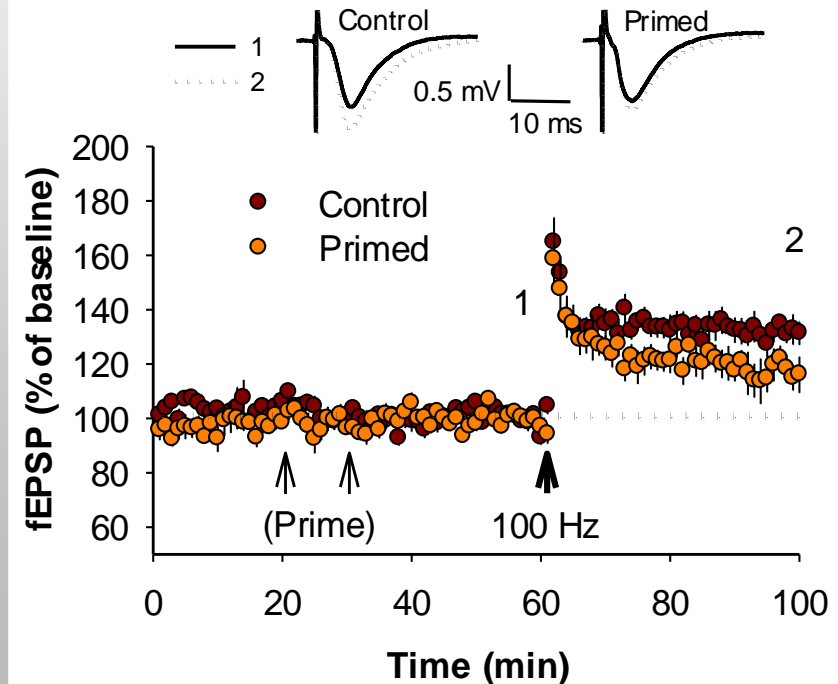
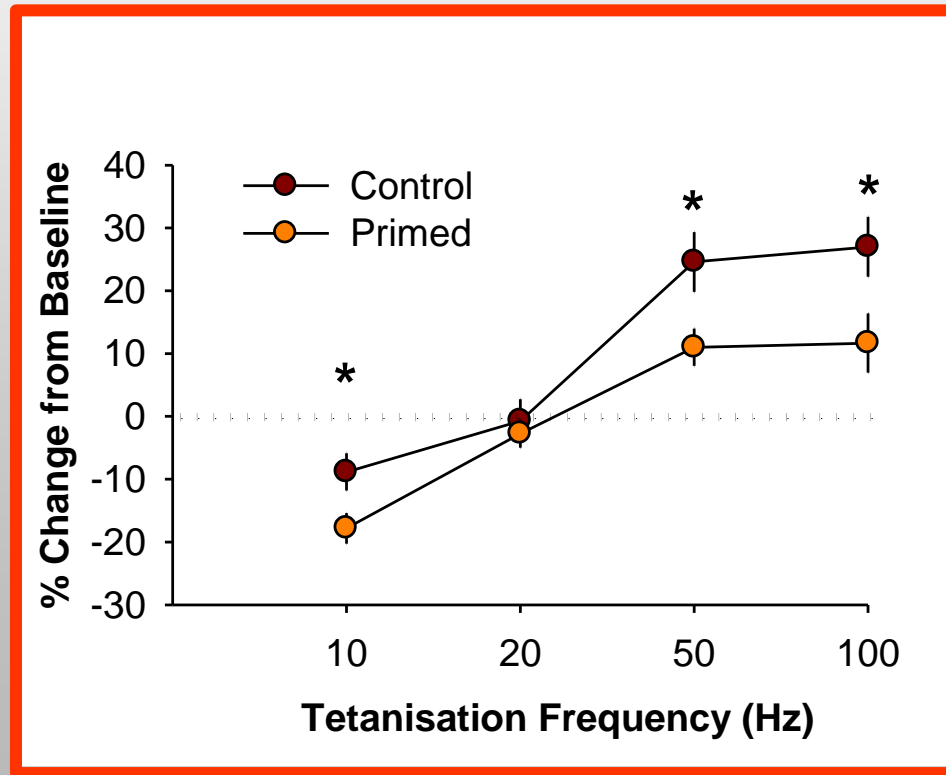
**Test S2**



**Prime  
stratum  
oriens (SO)**



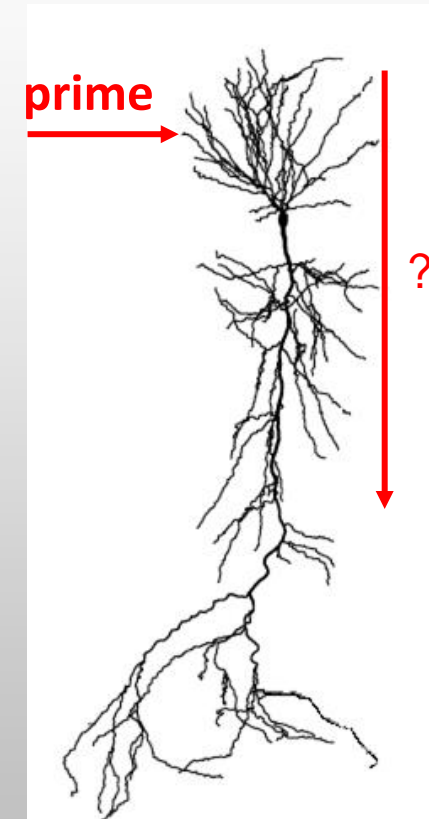
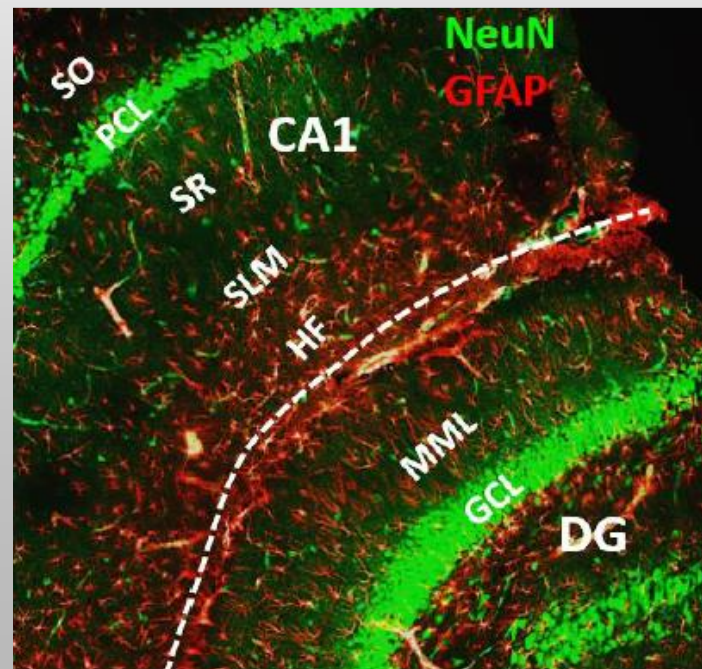
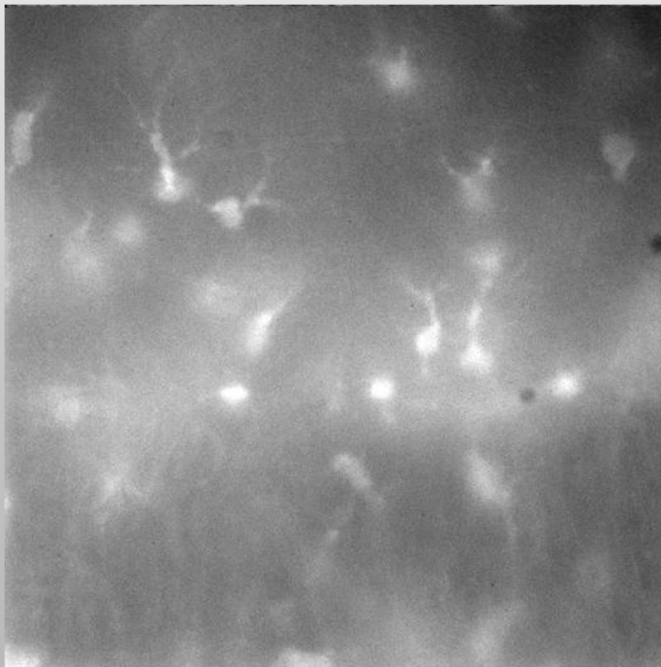
**Test SR**



# What is the “Activity Integrator” during priming?

- X Postsynaptic spiking / depolarization (so not BCM)
- X NMDA receptors
- X L-Type VDCCs
- ✓ Calcium release from intracellular stores via IP<sub>3</sub> receptors

SR101-labelled astrocytes

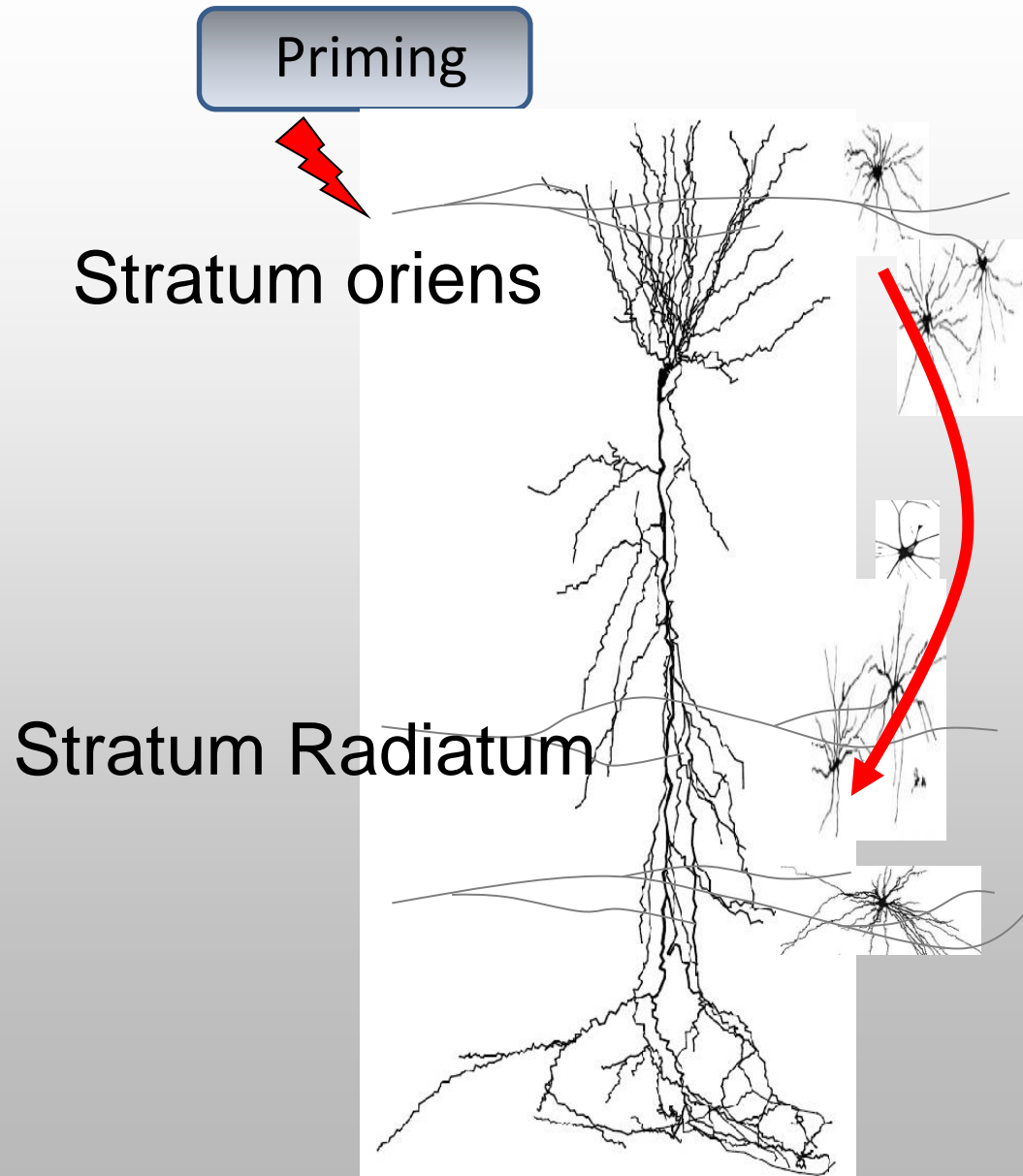


# Working hypothesis

Astrocytes sense neural activity and adjust thresholds for future synaptic plasticity in the network.

**Network Metaplasticity**

# Astrocytic Network - adding **space** to time for metaplasticity

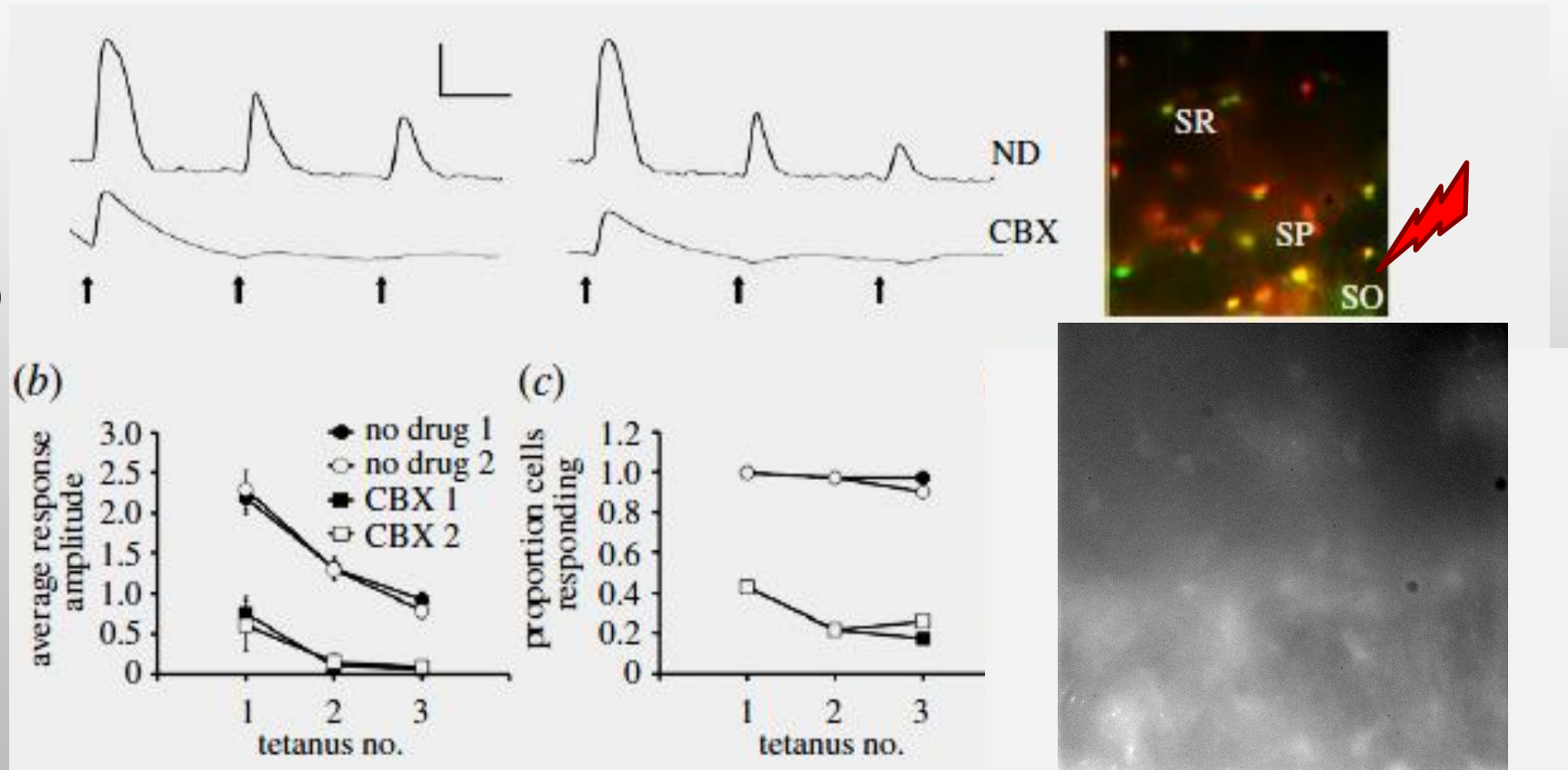


- Express neurotransmitter metabotropic receptors coupled to IP<sub>3</sub>R signalling (e.g., **mGluRs, mAChRs, P2YRs**)
- Widespread, interconnected network communicating via gap junctions, hemichannels, release of ATP, etc
- Gliotransmitters released following rise in [Ca<sup>2+</sup>]<sub>i</sub>
  - ATP, adenosine
  - **Glutamate, serine, TNFα**

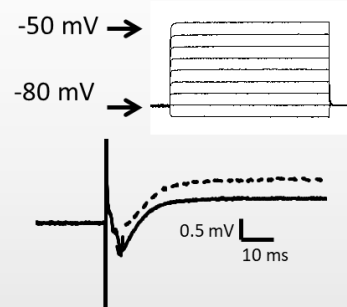
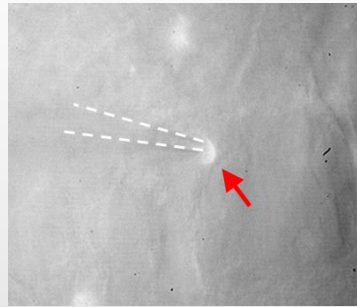
# Radiatum astrocyte calcium responses to Oriens priming

Fluo-4 AM  
Sulforhodamine 101

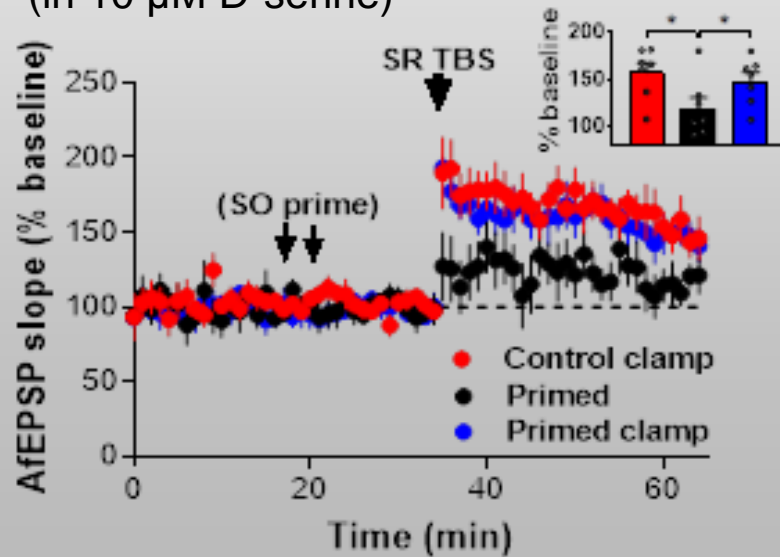
HFS (100 Hz, 1 s)



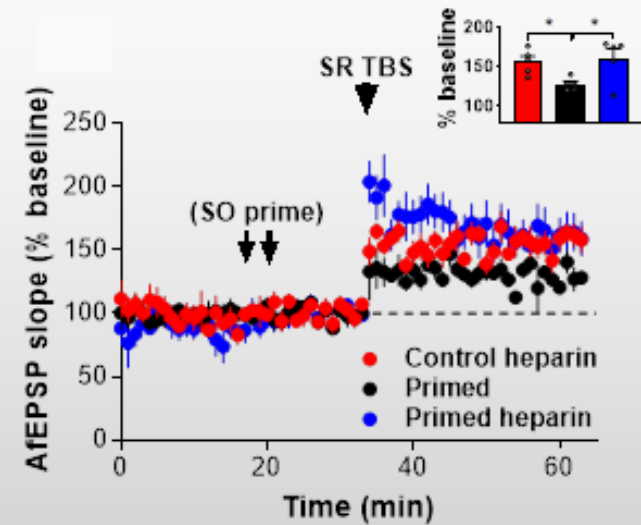
# Priming is blocked by astrocyte calcium control



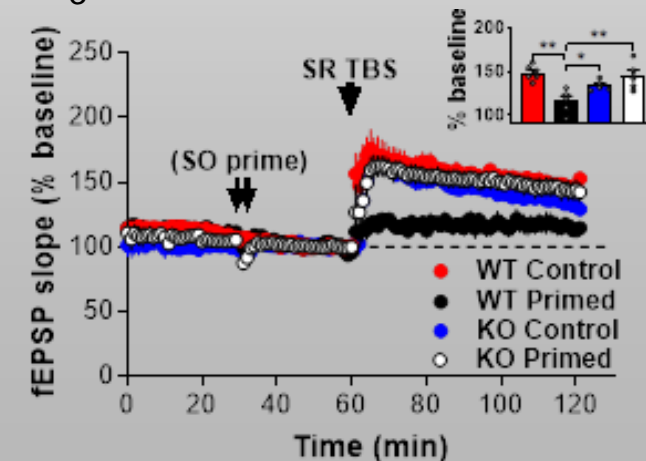
SR Astrocyte, intracellular EGTA  
(in 10  $\mu$ M D-serine)



SR Astrocyte intracellular heparin

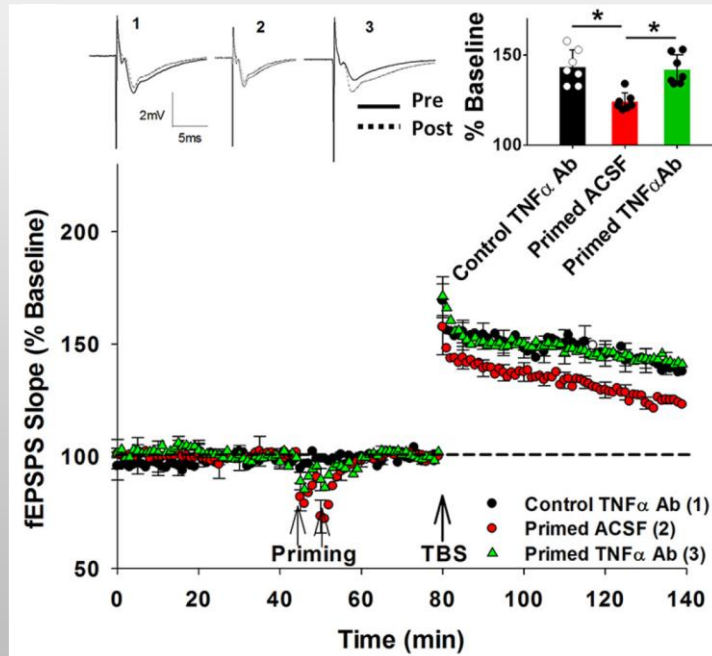


IP<sub>3</sub>R2<sup>-/-</sup> mice

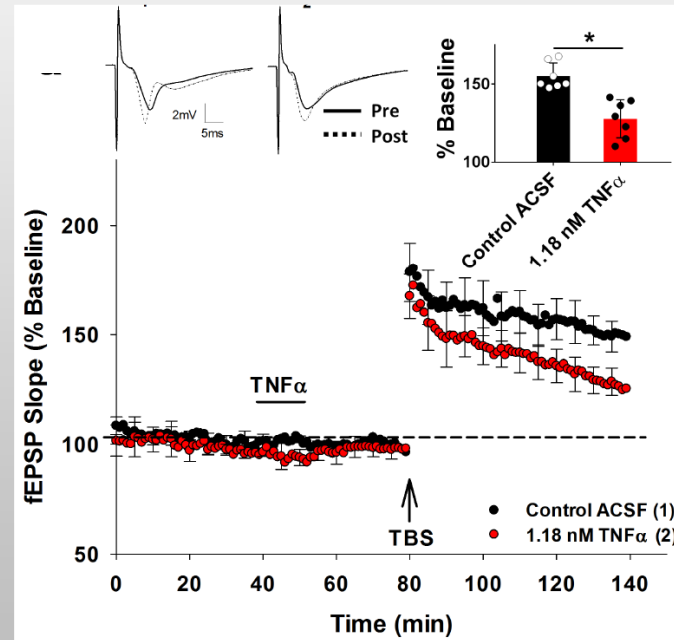


# Tumor necrosis factor- $\alpha$ (TNF $\alpha$ ) – TNFR1 contributes to the priming effect

## TNF $\alpha$ antibody blocks priming

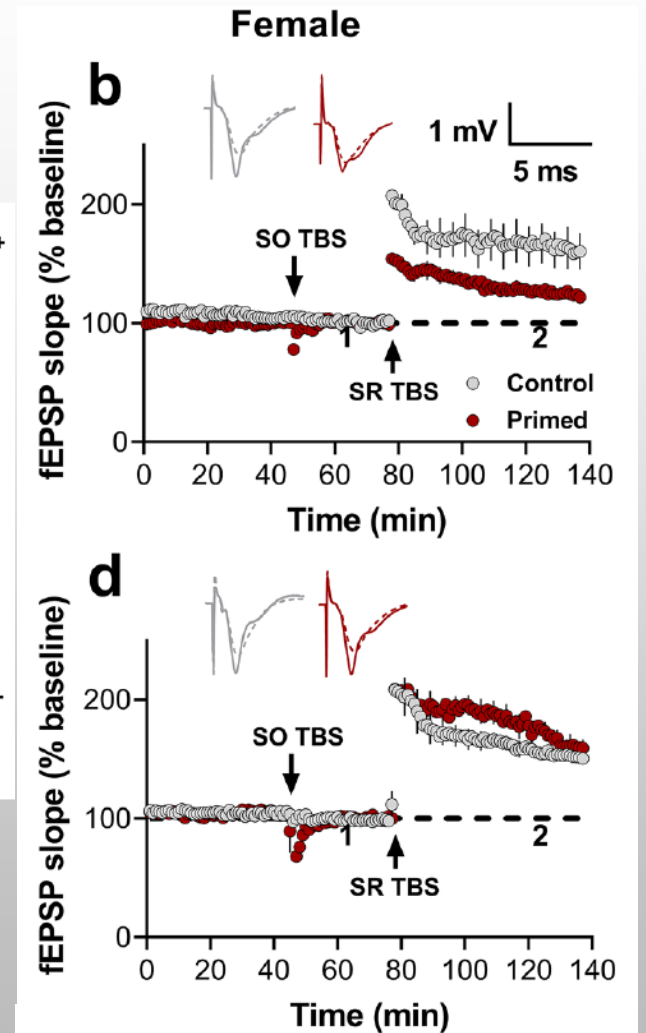


## TNF $\alpha$ can cause priming



TNFR1<sup>+/+</sup>

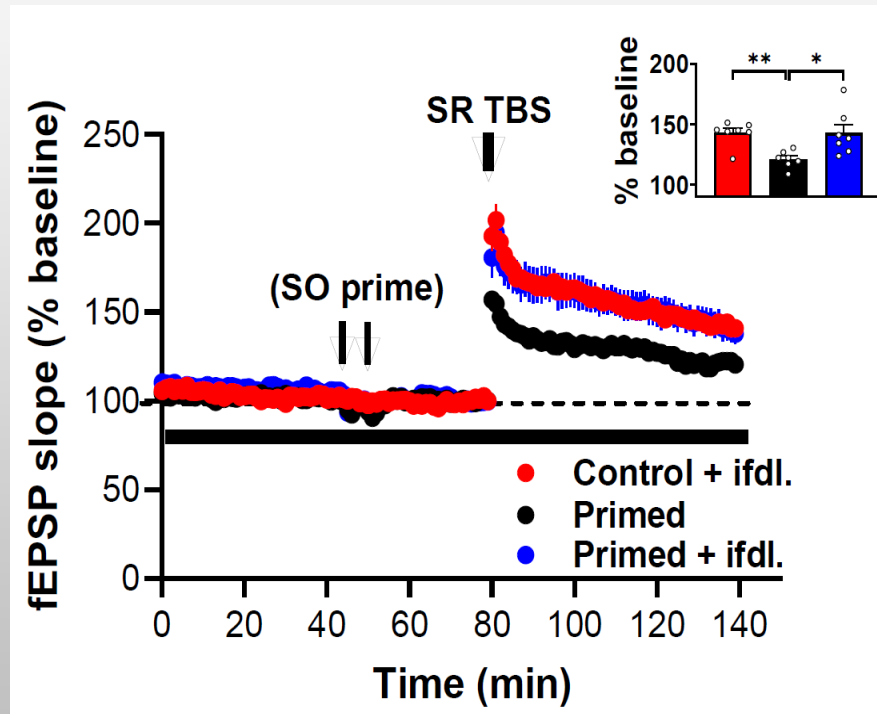
TNFR1<sup>-/-</sup>



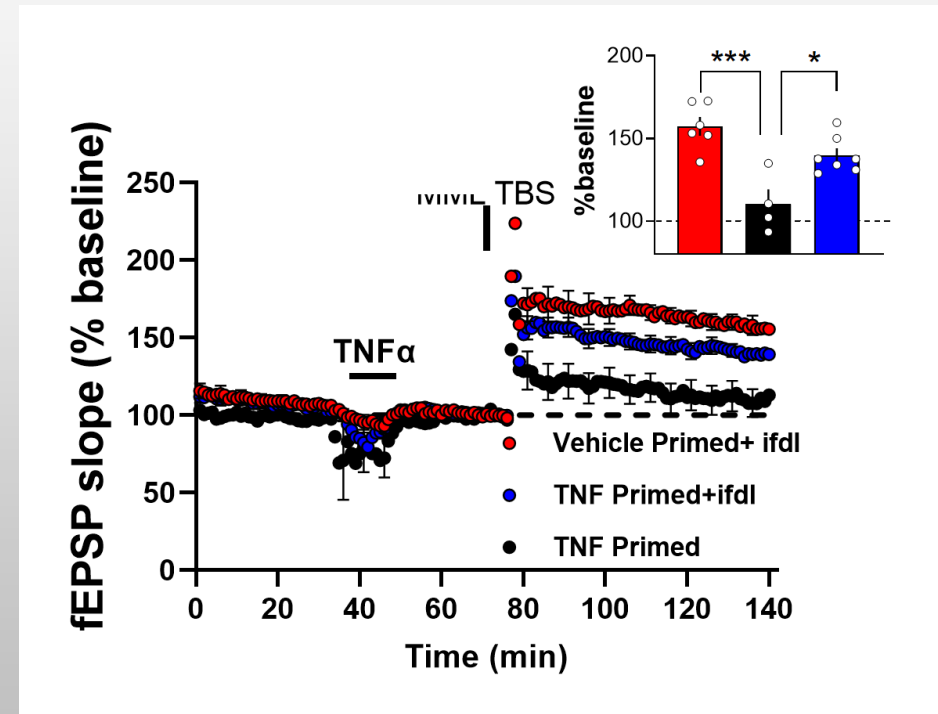


# TNF $\alpha$ primes via GluN2B-containing NMDARs

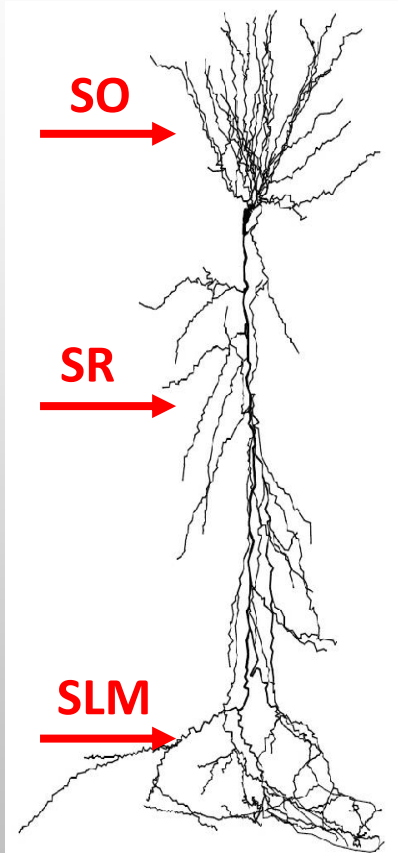
Electrical priming + Ifenprodil



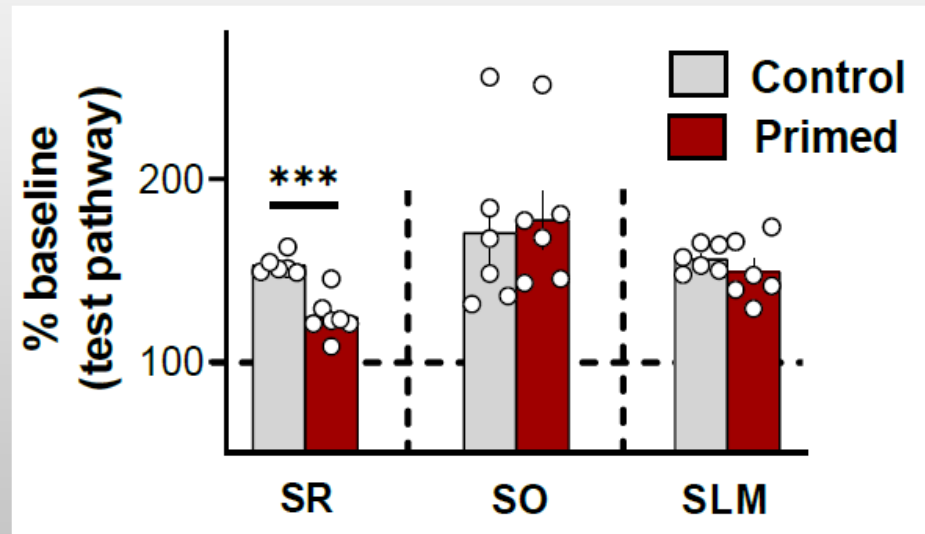
TNF priming + Ifenprodil



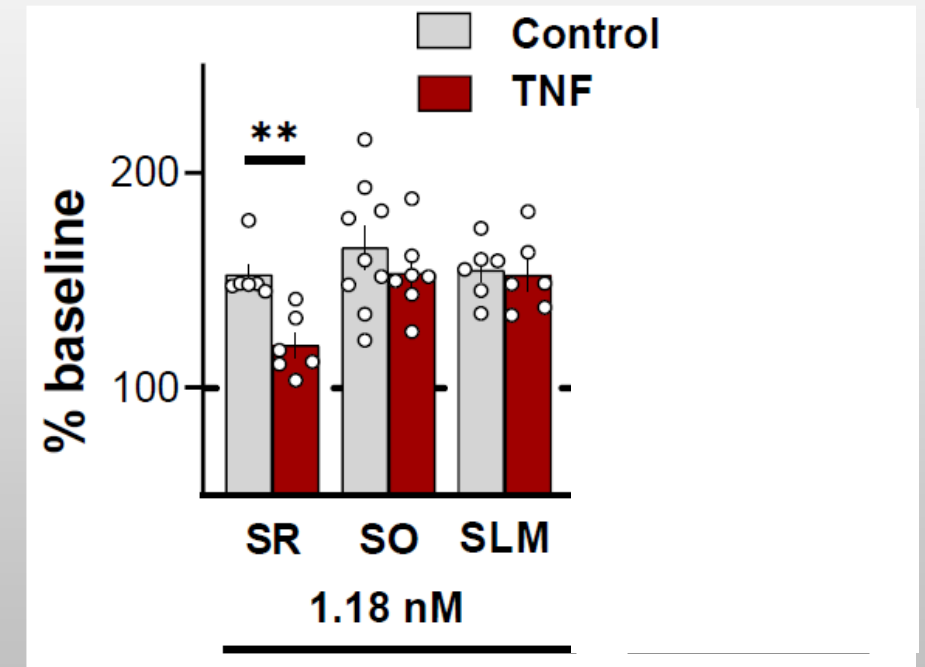
# The priming effect is pathway-specific, not cell-wide



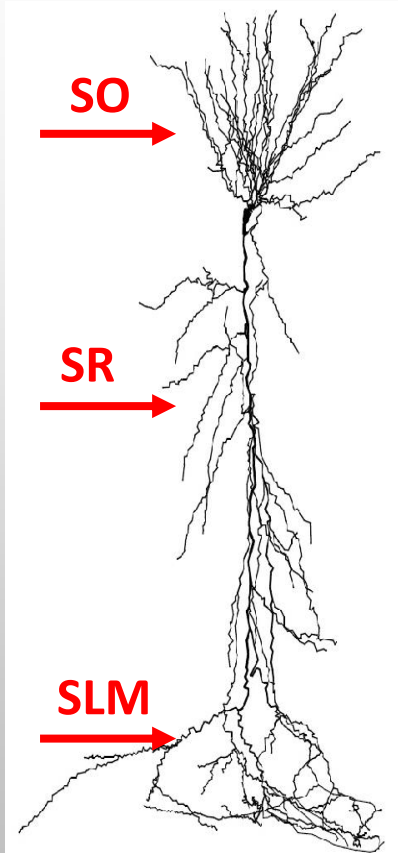
## Electrical priming



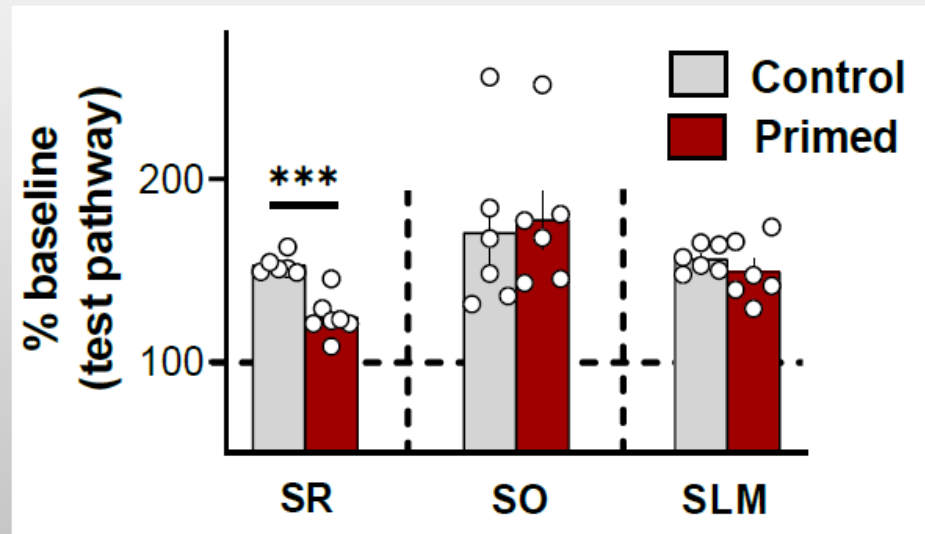
## TNF priming



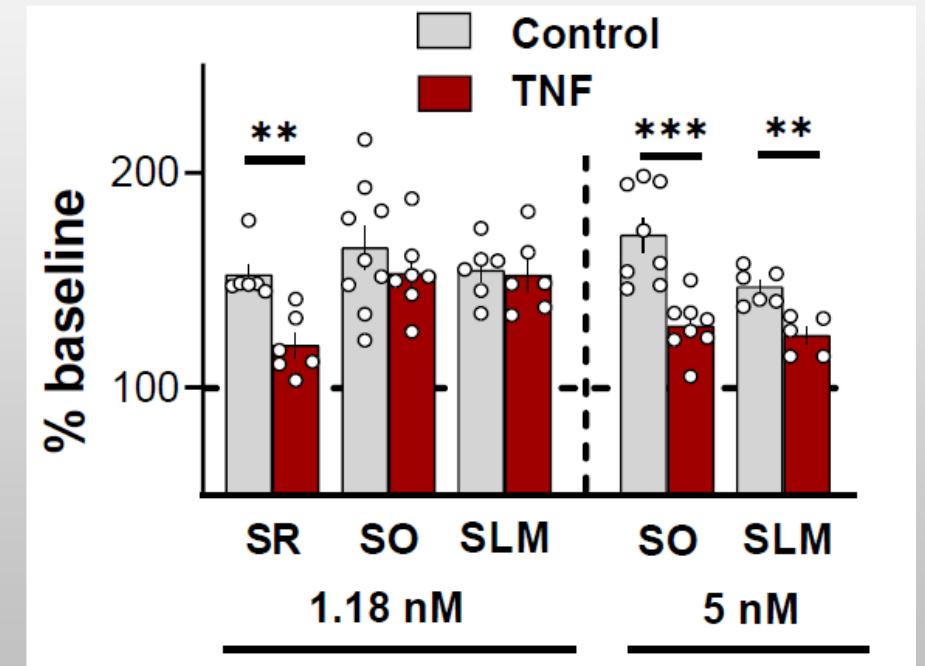
# The priming effect is pathway-specific, not cell-wide



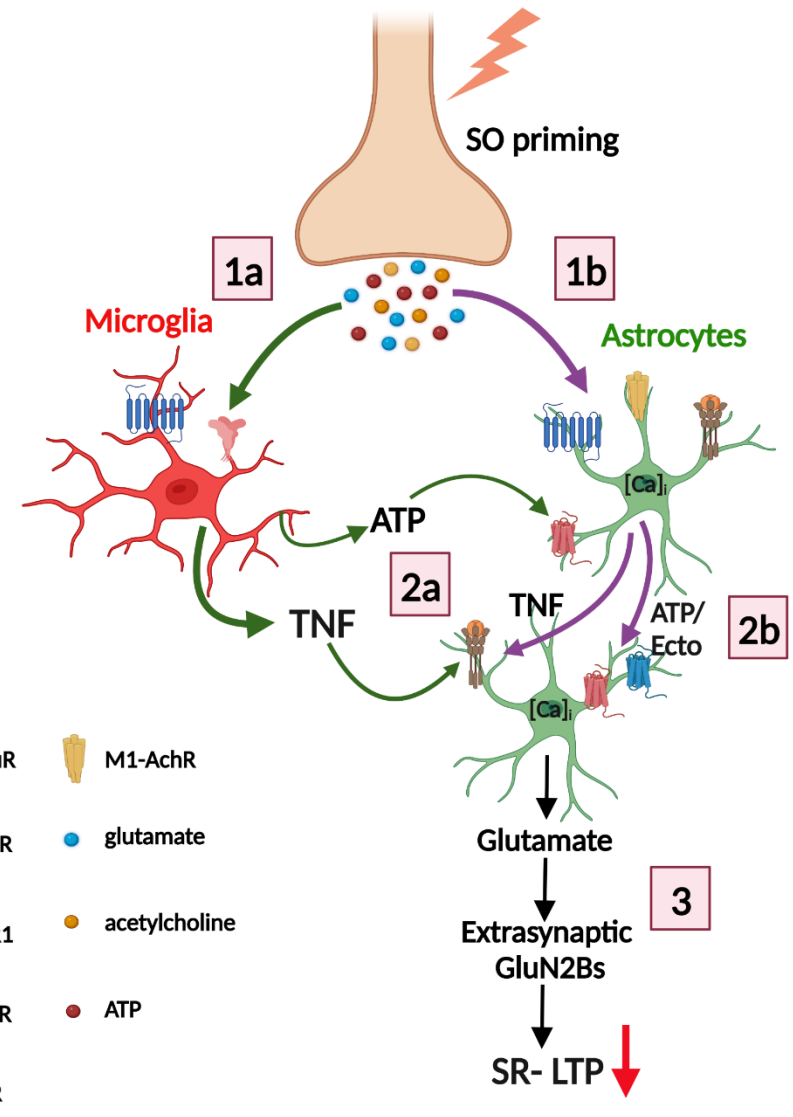
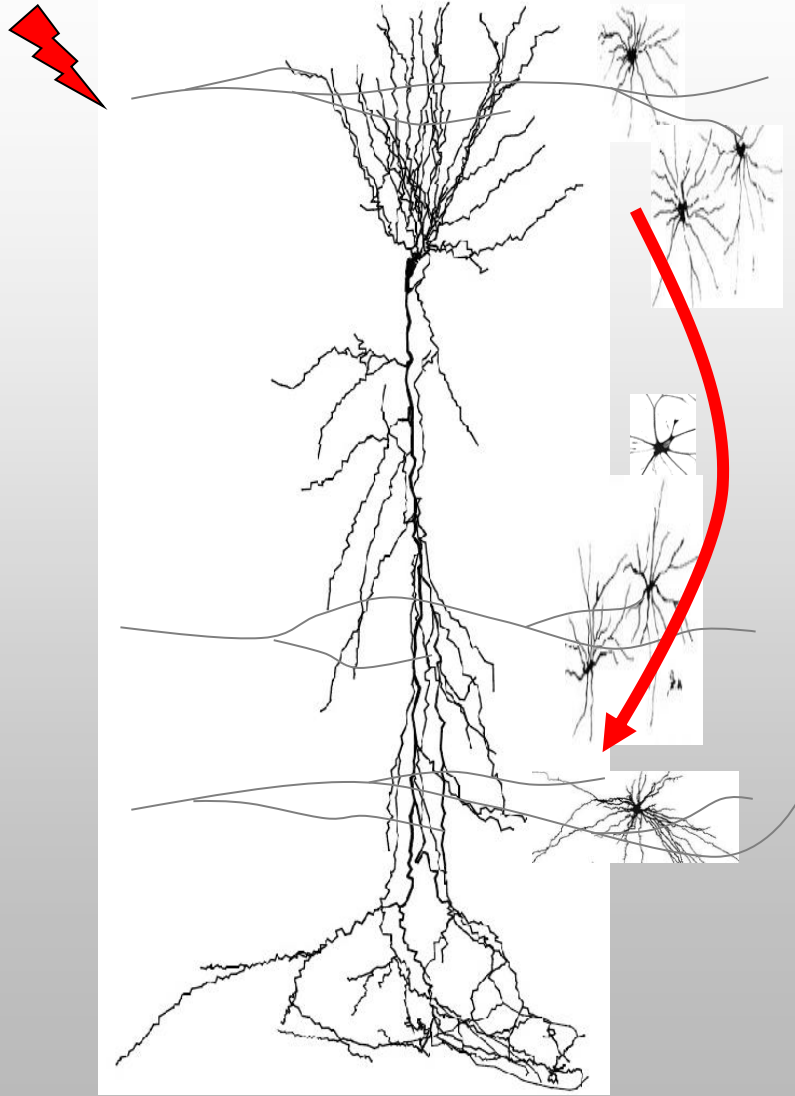
## Electrical priming



## TNF priming

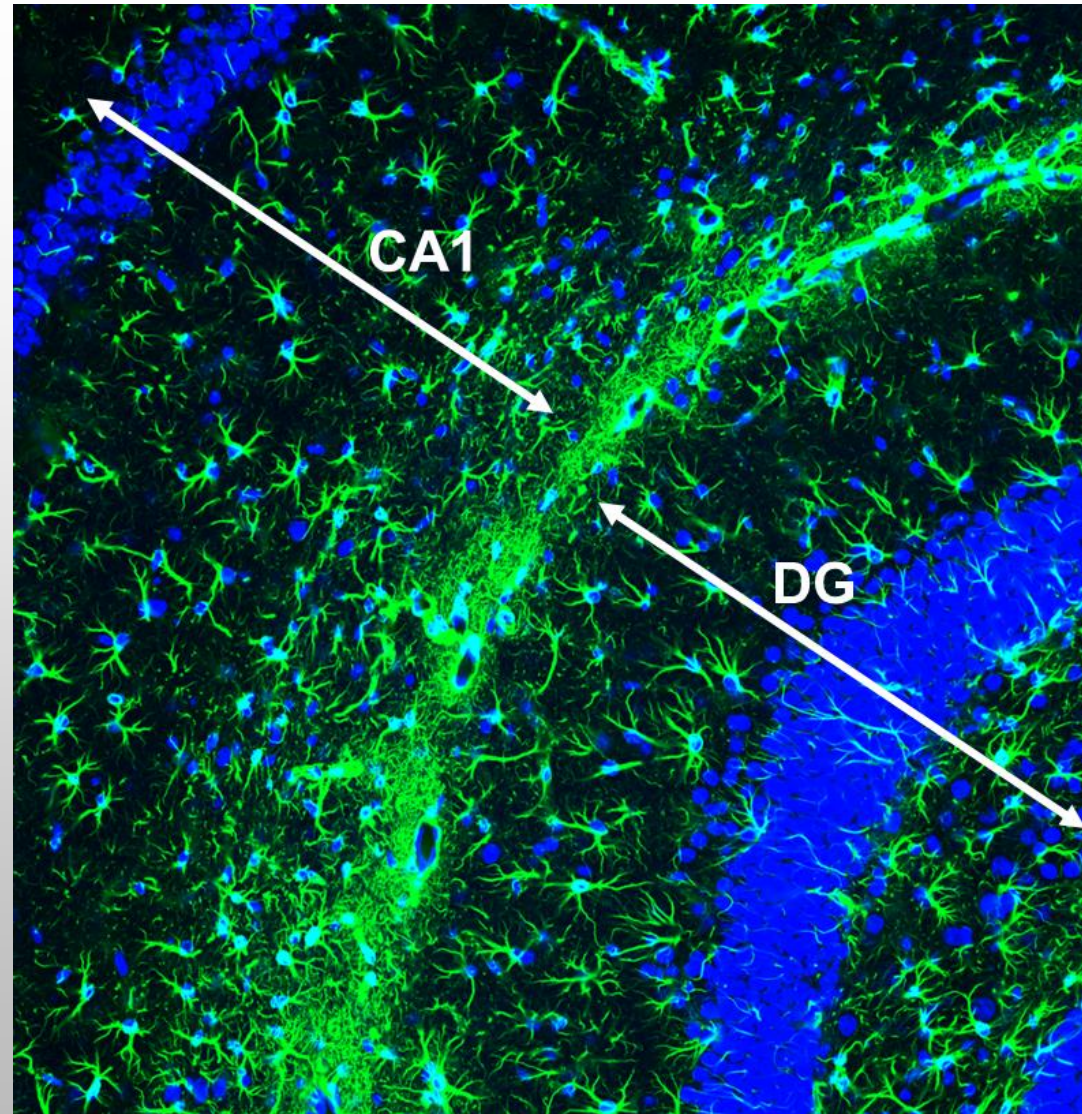


# Priming

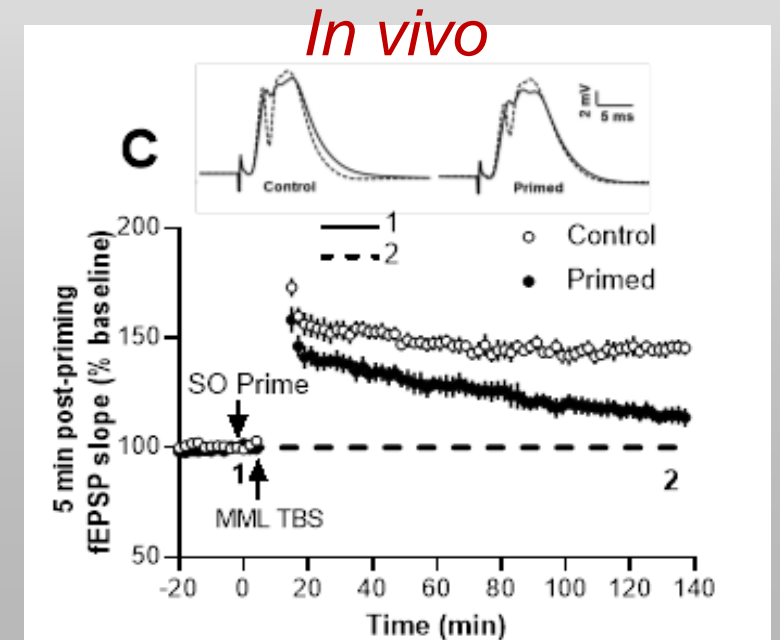
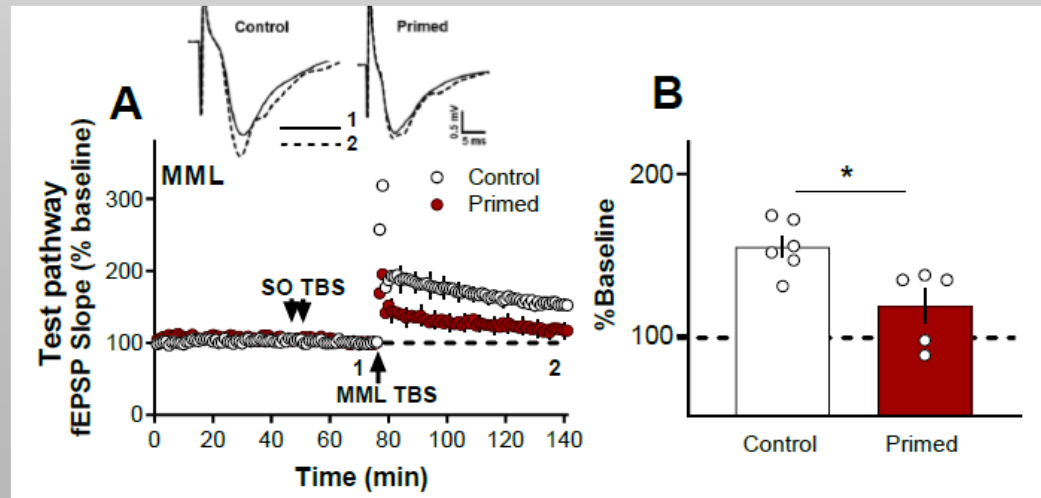
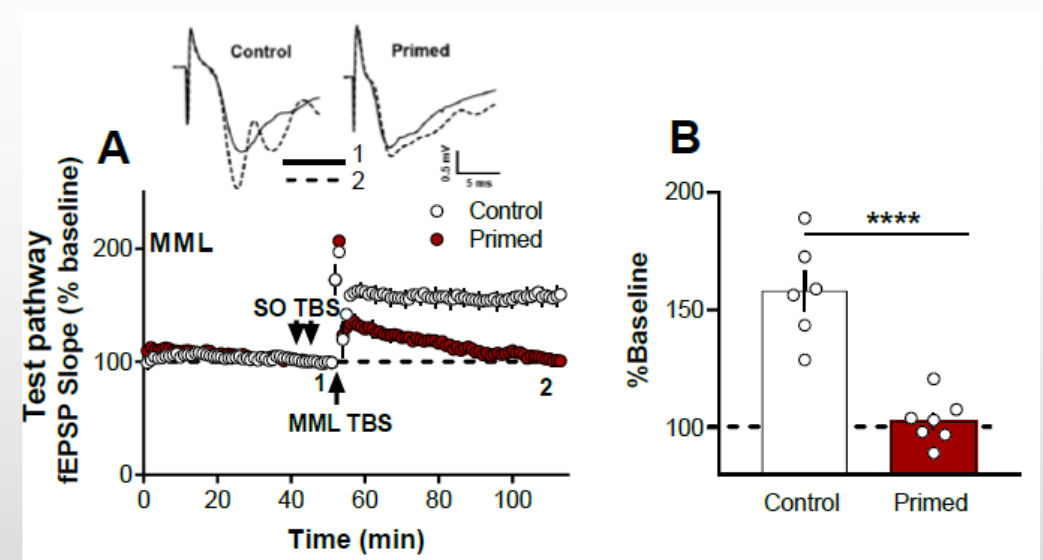
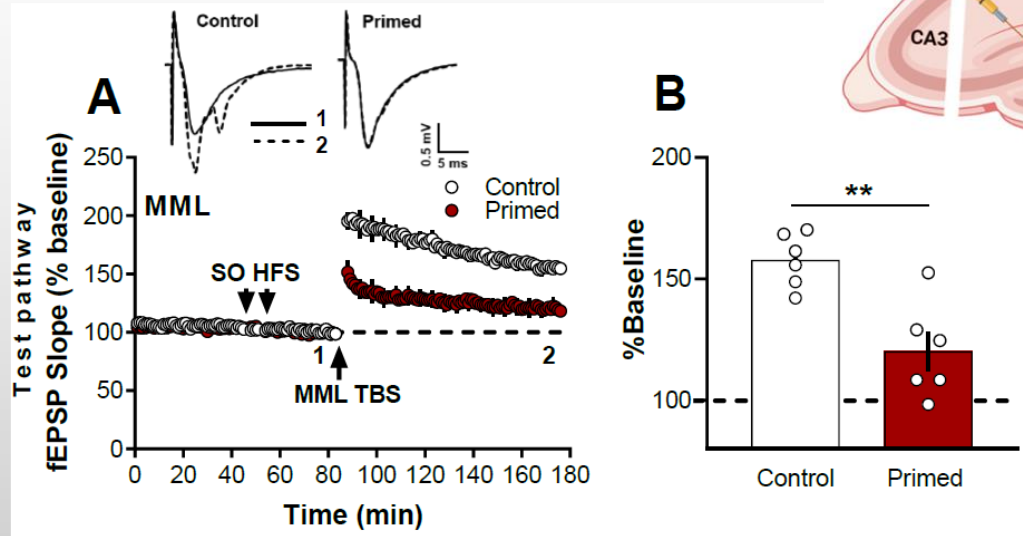
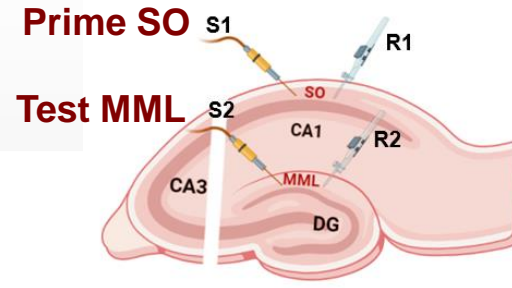


GFAP

DAPI

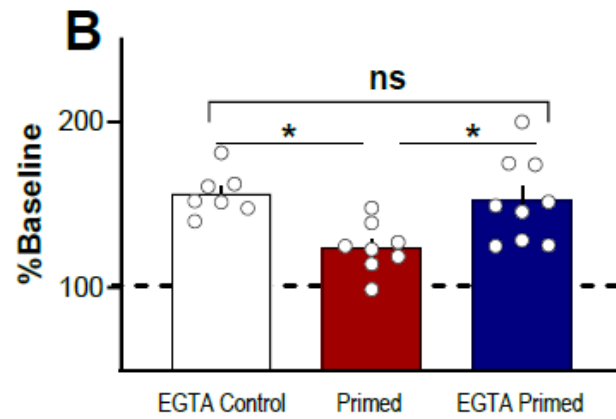
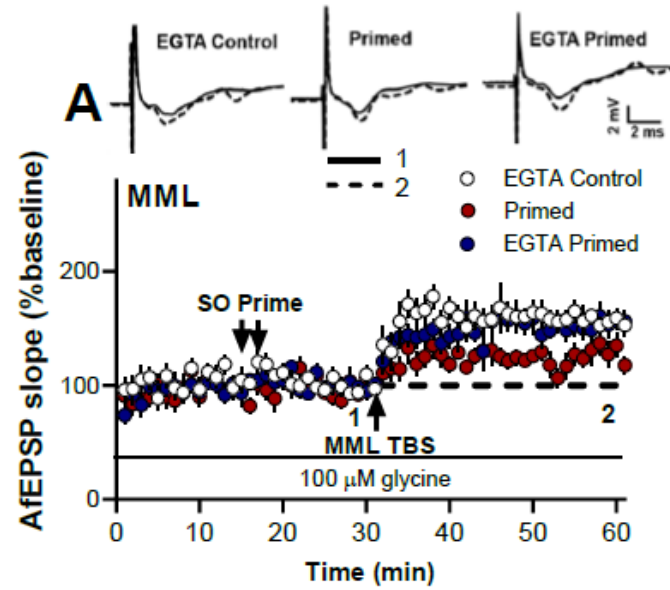
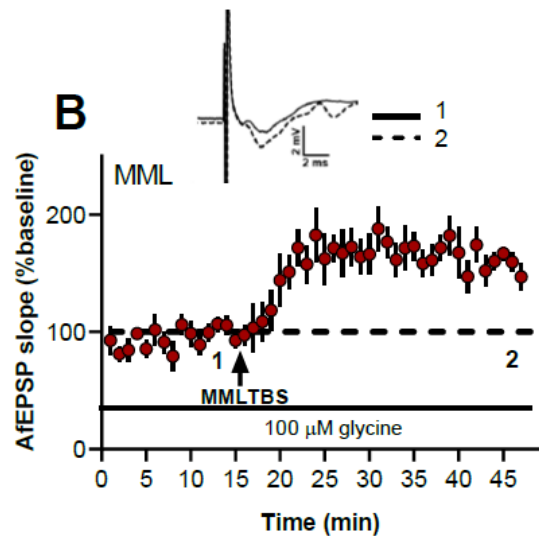
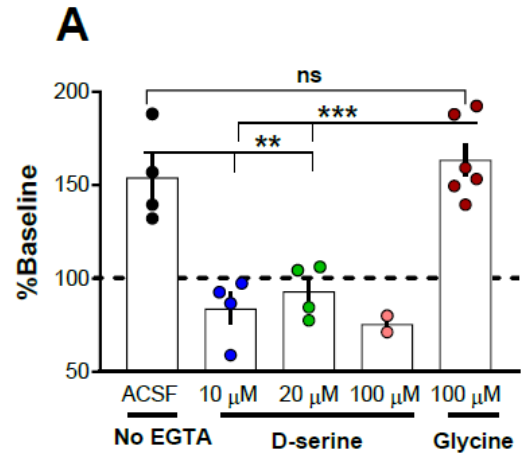
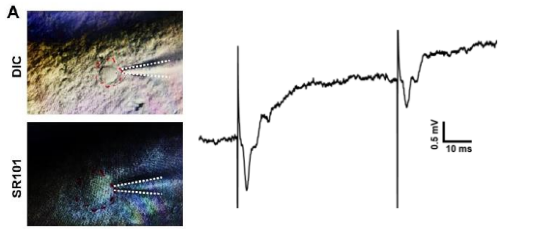


# Priming in SO also inhibits LTP in the dentate gyrus middle molecular layer (MML)

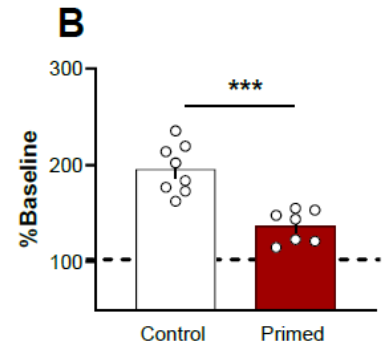
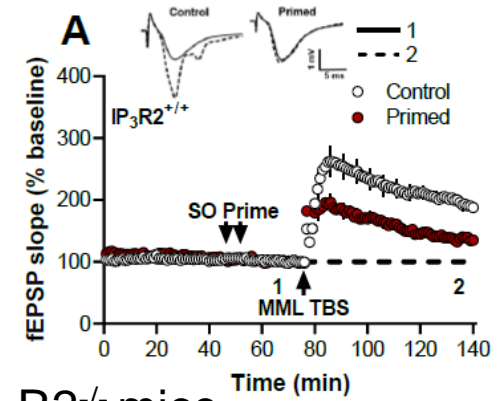


Sateesh, Suzuki et al, unpub.

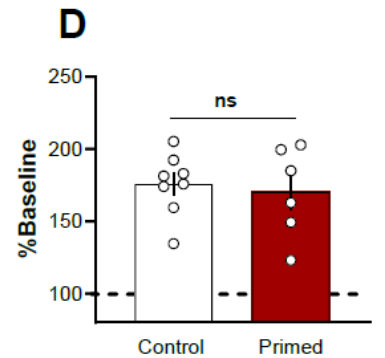
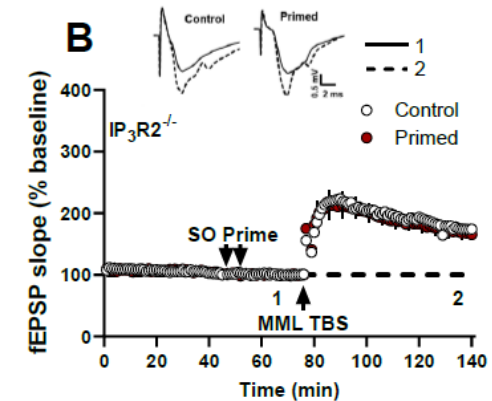
# The spatial spread to the dentate gyrus is also astrocyte-mediated

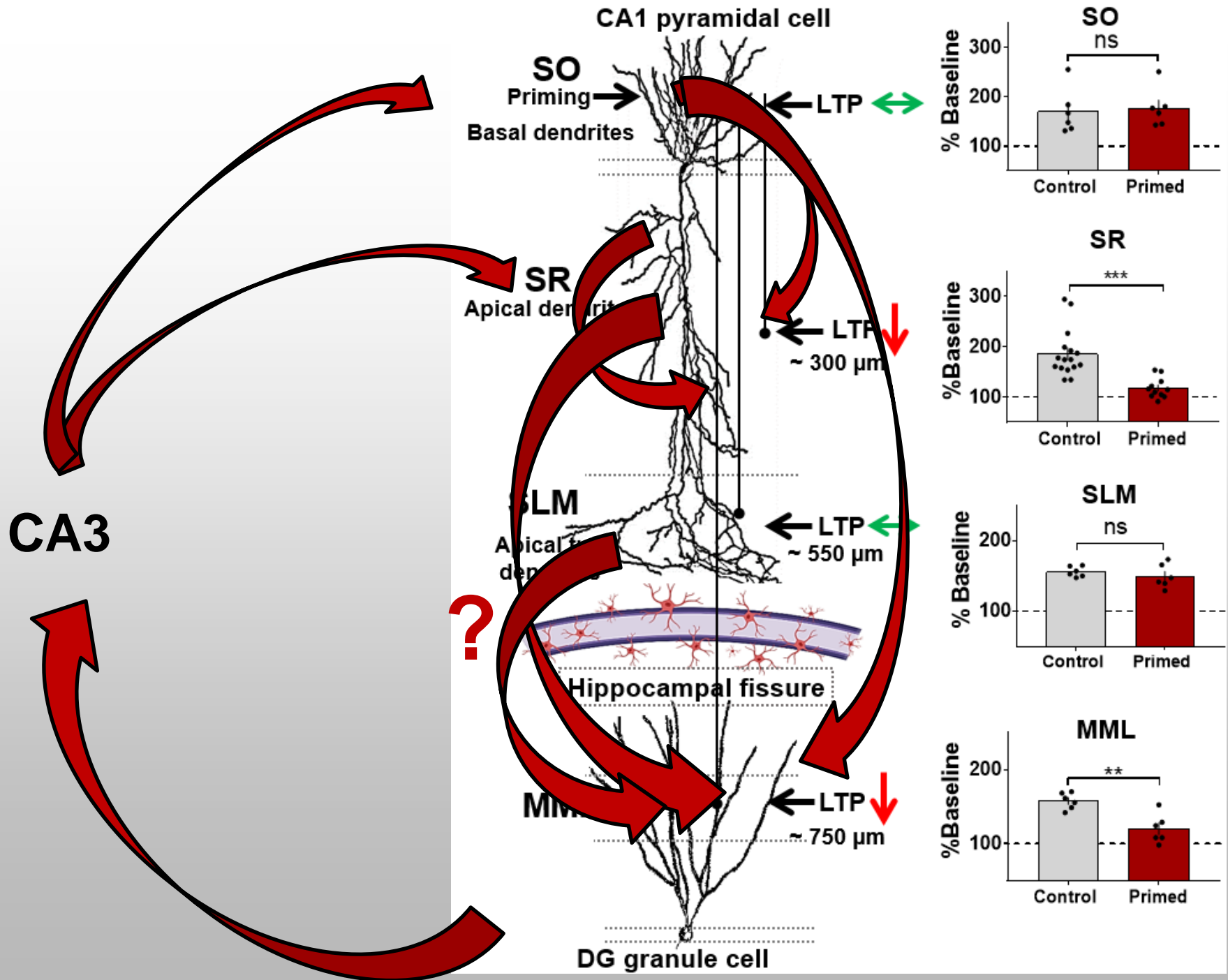


WT mice



IP<sub>3</sub>R2<sup>-/-</sup> mice

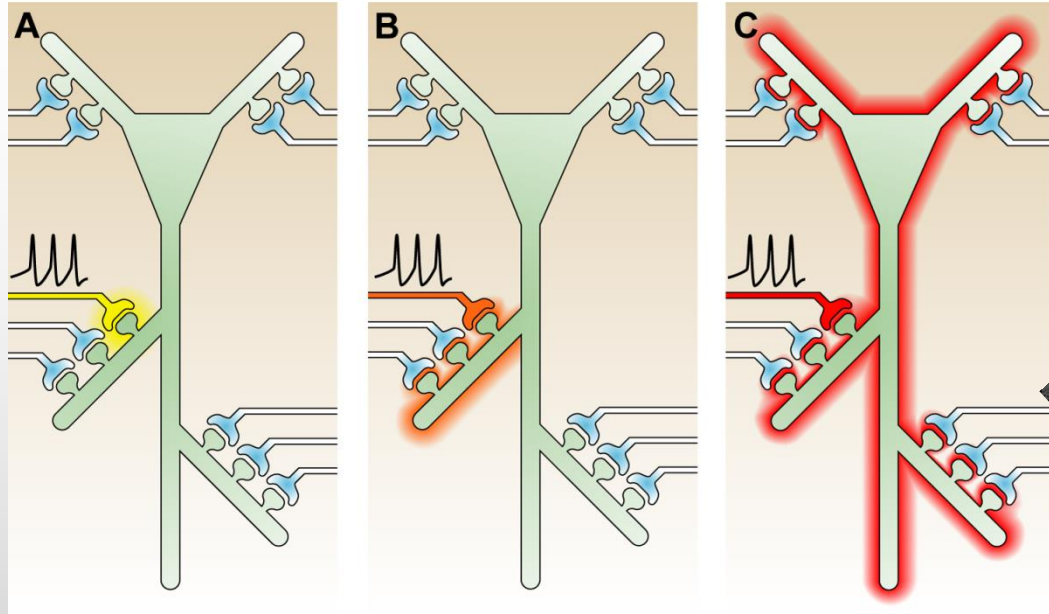






# Metaplasticity

Synapse-specific    Compartment-specific    Cell-wide



Network-wide (= ANN learning rate change?)



## Astrocytes and (meta)plasticity

- Online local regulation of LTP via D-serine and glycine
- Network level metaplastic regulation of LTP/LTD across space and time through the hippocampus via TNF signalling
  - Homeostasis?
  - Biasing of storage vs retrieval pathways in the hippocampus?

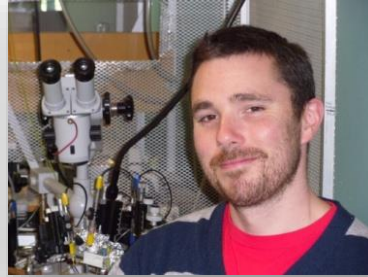
# Summary

1. Rapid, BCM-like metaplasticity may help stabilize synaptic drive following LTP events by facilitating ongoing activity to drive the balancing of synaptic weights.
2. But a different form of metaplasticity also exists via activation of the astrocytic network, involving TNF acting at TNF-R1s followed by glutamate acting at GluN2B-NMDARs.
3. The effect is pathway-specific and extending even to a different subregion, revealing a novel “backward” communication from CA1 to the DG.
4. This effect is curiously opposite in direction to Synaptic Tag & Capture.
5. In normal tissue, this could be a consolidation mechanism by temporarily preventing interference from new learning via the trisynaptic circuit.  
(IP3R2-KO mice have impaired LTD and remote memory.)
6. Its aberrant engagement in neuroinflammatory disorders, e.g. AD models, appears to contribute to impairments in LTP and cognition.

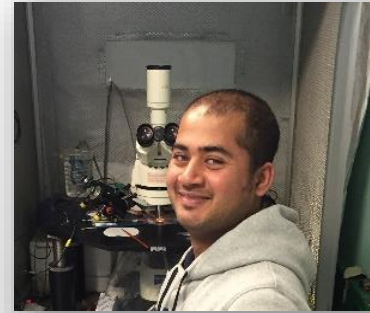
Sarah Hulme



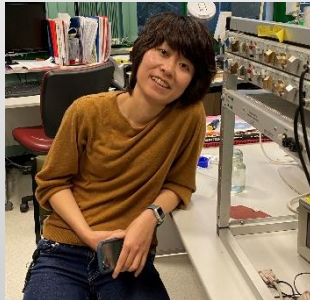
Owen Jones



Anurag Singh



Shruthi Sateesh



Miki Suzuki, Shizuoka  
Clarke Raymond, ANU, Canberra  
Pankaj Sah, QBI, Brisbane

Ju Chen, San Diego



