

ISAE New Investigator Award 2023

Dr **Maria Vilain Rørvang** is a recently appointed Associate Professor at the Department of Biosystems and Technology in Alnarp, Sweden. She has an MSc in Agrobiography, a PhD in Animal Science, and has recently become a Docent in Agricultural Science. Her research focuses on the perceptual and cognitive abilities of farm animals, to study the underlying motivations when farm animals interact with their physical and social environment. Despite this very fundamental angle to her studies, Maria has always aimed her work at creating knowledge to improve the housing systems and management of our livestock, as well as to enhance the enjoyment of humans and animals working and living together.

Maria's expertise is unusual in having worked on several species during her relatively short scientific career. Her PhD was on cattle, whereas her more recent work has included work on pigs, poultry and horses. Despite being an ECR, she is the team leader of several projects, one relating to the use of odours to improve rooting materials for growing pigs, and another on the cognitive ability of horses.

Maria has authored 21 peer-reviewed articles, some of them highly cited for a young scientist, and has participated as invited speaker at conferences (e.g., EVCBMAW 2022). She has served as an outstanding mentor and supervisor for numerous younger colleagues, who have benefited from Maria's enthusiasm for applied ethology and her excellent teaching skills. And last, but not least, Maria is very prolific communicator on social media, promoting not only her own work, but that of colleagues as well as the efforts of the ISAE.

The ISAE Award Committee and her colleagues agreed that Maria Vilain Rørvang is an excellent and rounded candidate who has demonstrated scientific independence and scientific excellence with multiple publications as first author and in collaboration with other researchers, demonstrating broad collaborative aptitude. Her input within the field has clearly been significant in a short period of time.

For more information about Dr Maria Vilain Rørvang, please click [here](#).

