



Sloboda Bio

Dr Deborah Sloboda is a Professor and the Associate Chair of Research in the Dept of Biochemistry and Biomedical Sciences at McMaster University, Canada. She holds a Tier 1 Canada Research Chair in Early Origins of Health and Disease. She completed her PhD training at the University of Toronto in Physiology in 2001 following which she was a Postdoctoral Research Fellow at the University of Western Australia. In 2006 she was recruited to the Liggins Institute at the University of Auckland in New Zealand and where from 2008 -2011, she was the Deputy Director of the National Research Centre for Growth and Development. In 2012, she left Auckland to take up a faculty position at McMaster University and held a Tier 2 Canada Research Chair in Perinatal Programming for 10 years from 2012-2022.

Dr Sloboda's laboratory investigates how early life factors impact maternal, fetal and placental development in a way that leads to an increased risk of disease; known as the *Developmental (or Early) Origins of Health and Disease*. Her experimental studies investigate parental diet impacts on pregnancy adaptations, including the microbiome and placental vasculogenesis, and on offspring reproductive and metabolic function. In community-based health studies, Dr Sloboda engages with expectant mothers and services that support pregnant people, where she has developed community-based knowledge transfer and work programs to promote and advocate for health behaviours before and after conception. She also leads an arts-based knowledge translation/science communication program (the Art of Creation) in partnership with the Art Gallery of Hamilton and the City of Hamilton Public Health. This Project uses art to translate early origins science to the public and policy makers to promote and advocate for improved preconception health.

In 2015, Dr Sloboda was awarded the International Society of Developmental Origins of Health and Disease Nick Hales Award for outstanding research contribution to the field of early origins science, in 2017 won the Hamilton YWCA Woman of Distinction Award in Science, Trade and Technology, in 2019 was awarded the FHS McMaster University Graduate supervision award for her outstanding student mentoring, and in 2023 was awarded a Tier 1 Canada Research Chair in Early Origins of Health and Disease.

Dr Sloboda is one of the founding co-Presidents of the Developmental Origins of Health and Disease Society of Canada and was the Secretary and Executive member of the International Society for the Developmental Origins of Health and Disease for 10 years. She has published >145 papers in scientific journals and book chapters on the early life origins of health and disease.