

Media Release

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## 20<sup>th</sup> Steven Karger Prize of the Faculty of Psychology at the University of Basel

The Faculty of Psychology at the University of Basel awarded the Steven Karger Prize for the 20<sup>th</sup> time this year. The award went to Sarah Kuhn, MSc, for her publication on coronavirus conspiracy beliefs.

On Friday, the 20<sup>th</sup> Steven Karger Prize was awarded by the Faculty of Psychology of the University of Basel. Sarah Kuhn, MSc, received the award for her publication **“Coronavirus conspiracy beliefs in the German-speaking general population: endorsement rates and links to reasoning biases and paranoia”** in the journal *Psychological Medicine*.

In her work, Sarah Kuhn investigates conspiracy beliefs related to the coronavirus pandemic. Her research shows that only a small percentage of people strongly hold these beliefs and that they coincide with certain reasoning biases, such as precipitous data collection or a tendency to trust changeable theories. The results show that conspiracy beliefs were most strongly endorsed by people with both very strong and very weak reasoning biases.

Kuhn’s article presents an initial assessment of the endorsement of conspiracy beliefs regarding the coronavirus pandemic in German-speaking countries. This current and socially important topic also remains relevant beyond the context of the pandemic as it is becoming increasingly pertinent in relation to the growing volume of information and misinformation that we need to evaluate daily.

“Being honored with the Steven Karger Prize is both an encouragement and a confirmation for me as a young researcher. I believe it provides a great opportunity to spotlight the importance of basic research and of this research field, which is particularly important in times of misinformation being spread digitally. At the same

time, it emphasizes that this topic is of public interest and on a personal level, it very much encourages me to further pursue my research interests in new projects,” says Sarah Kuhn, the winner of the Steven Karger Prize.

Prof. Dr Rui Mata, a member of the jury and the Academic Dean at the Faculty of Psychology, also emphasizes the importance of the prize: “The Steven Karger Prize distinguishes excellent research by a young investigator, but the prize serves not only as an acknowledgment of Sarah Kuhn’s excellent work, but also as a signal to young researchers concerning the promise of the psychological sciences in dealing with important societal issues, such as the propagation of conspiracy beliefs in today’s connected world.”

For Karger Publishers, the promotion and support of young scientists – especially those located in Basel – is an important mission. Karger Publishers has been donating the prize that has been awarded by the Faculty of Psychology since 2003. Since 2008, this award has been dedicated to the memory of the late CEO Steven Karger. “This prize is an expression of our gratitude for the trust placed in us and an investment in the future of science and society,” states Gabriella Karger, Chairwoman of the Board of Directors at Karger Publishers and sister of Steven Karger. Karger Publishers publishes several scientific journals and book series in the fields of **psychology and psychiatry**.

To discover more, watch the **interview with Sarah Kuhn**.

## About Karger Publishers

Karger Publishers is a worldwide publisher of scientific and medical content based in Basel, Switzerland. It is independent and family-led in the fourth generation by Chairwoman and Publisher Gabriella Karger. Connecting and advancing health sciences since 1890, Karger has been continuously evolving, keeping pace with the current developments and shifts in research and publishing. The publishing house is dedicated to serving the information needs of the scientific community, clinicians, and patients with publications of high-quality content and services in health sciences. Karger Publishers has 240 employees and is present in 15 countries around the globe.

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Media Contact:  
**Cora Wirtz-Spycher** · Head of Corporate Communications · Karger Publishers  
+41 61 306 1271 · [c.wirtz@karger.com](mailto:c.wirtz@karger.com) · [karger.com/Media-Relations](https://www.karger.com/Media-Relations)

