

**Supplementary Table 1** Final LMMs with significant confounding factors on personality and cognitive traits in harvest mice. Sample sizes (N) are given as observations/individuals. Generation was fitted as a quadratic function. SE = standard error.

| personality/cognitive trait     | behavioural test         | N       | confounding factors     | estimate $\pm$ SE   | p value |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------|---------|-------------------------|---------------------|---------|
| <b>activity</b>                 | Open Field               | 186/96  | generation              | - 0.848 $\pm$ 0.247 | < 0.001 |
|                                 |                          |         | generation <sup>2</sup> | +0.118 $\pm$ 0.032  | < 0.001 |
| <b>boldness</b>                 | Y Maze                   | 184/96  | -                       |                     |         |
|                                 | Scare Test               | 94/56   | -                       |                     |         |
|                                 | Open Field               | 186/96  | trial number            | +0.327 $\pm$ 0.117  | 0.006   |
|                                 |                          |         | observer                | - 0.377 $\pm$ 0.149 | 0.013   |
| <b>exploration</b>              | Novel Object             | 131/69  | housing condition       | +0.544 $\pm$ 0.182  | 0.004   |
|                                 | Novel Environment        | 119/60  | trial number            | +0.584 $\pm$ 0.148  | < 0.001 |
| <b>spatial recognition</b>      | Y Maze                   | 184/96  | -                       |                     |         |
| <b>spatial learning ability</b> | Spatial Orientation Task | 110/57  | trial number            | - 0.378 $\pm$ 0.175 | 0.035   |
| <b>decision accuracy</b>        | Spatial Orientation Task | 102/56  | -                       |                     |         |
| <b>decision speed</b>           | Spatial Orientation Task | 1156/56 | observer                | - 0.117 $\pm$ 0.015 | < 0.001 |
|                                 |                          |         | run number              | +0.025 $\pm$ 0.005  | < 0.001 |

We observed that the trial number had a significant effect on three variables. Boldness increased in the second trial of the Open Field, and exploration also increased in the second trial of the Novel Environment as mice visited four tubes faster than in the first trial. These effects were likely caused by a habituation of the mice to the test arenas. Spatial learning ability decreased in the second trial (mice reached the learning criterion on average later than during the first trial). Here, mice might have been less motivated to reach the target box during the second trial, as they recognized the general test setup. With increasing run numbers during the Spatial Orientation Task, mice decided faster, which may indicate learning and memory of the target box position. The observer had a significant effect on boldness in the Open Field and on decision speed in the Spatial Orientation Task, which could be due to differences in handling of the animals. Harvest mice housed in pairs were further more explorative in the Novel Object test. We discussed confounding factors in more detail in Schuster et al. (submitted).



