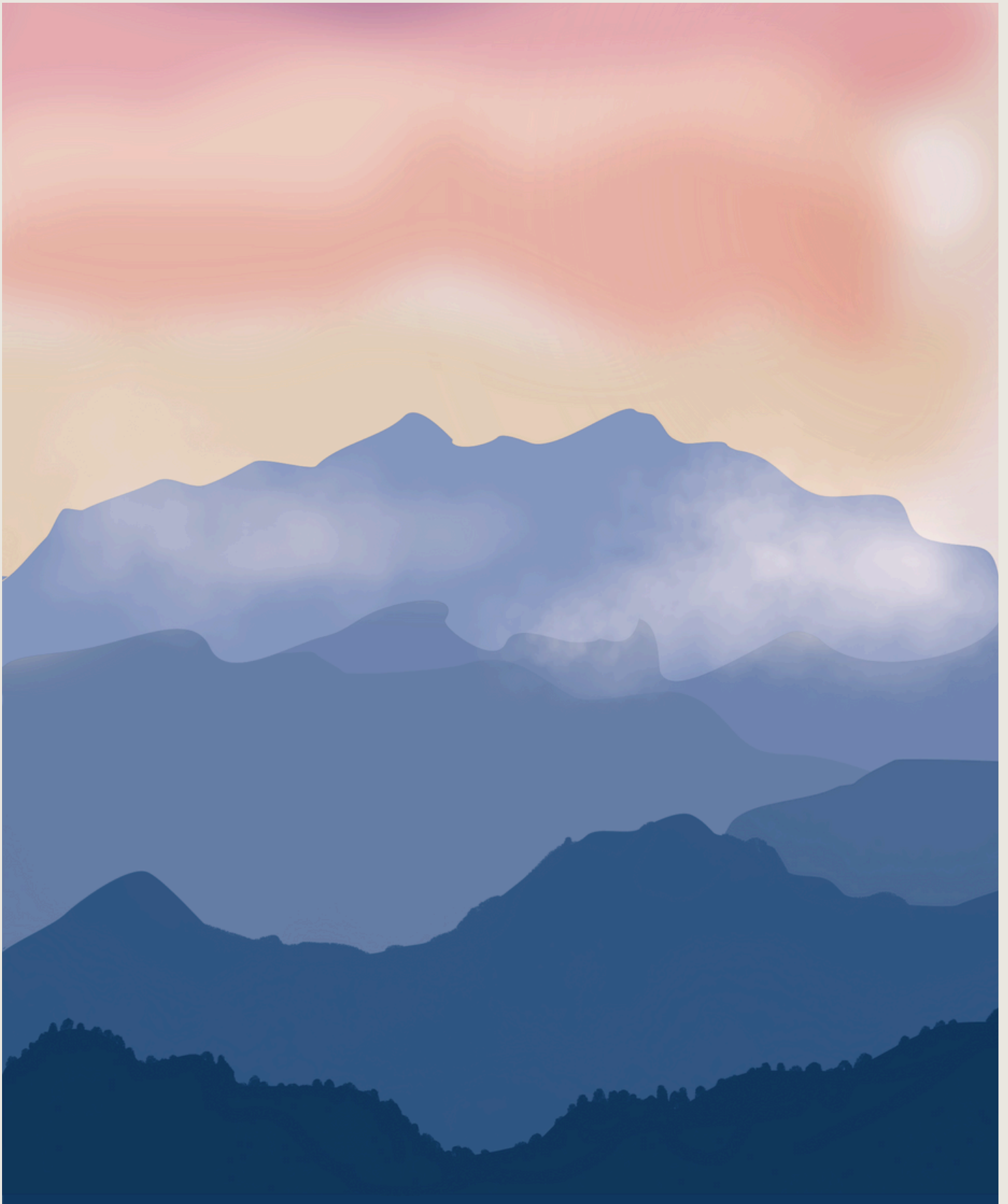# EMBRACING CHALLENGES

SCDTP FINAL YEAR CONFERENCE 2025

EVOLVE   ADAPT   INNOVATE

WELCOME
SCDTP

Dear Colleagues and Friends,

Welcome to the South Coast Doctoral Training Partnership's Final Year Conference 2025! Every year, we come together to celebrate the remarkable achievements of our doctoral candidates and the innovative research that defines our SCDTP community. This year's theme, "Embracing Challenges," invites us to reflect on the profound and complex issues shaping our world and to explore how research can navigate the complex challenges facing today's world.

Throughout this day-long event, we will delve into diverse projects that push boundaries, question assumptions, and embrace the uncertainties of the unknown. This conference not only highlights the breadth and depth of research within our community but also celebrates the ways in which we evolve, adapt and innovate that drive these efforts.
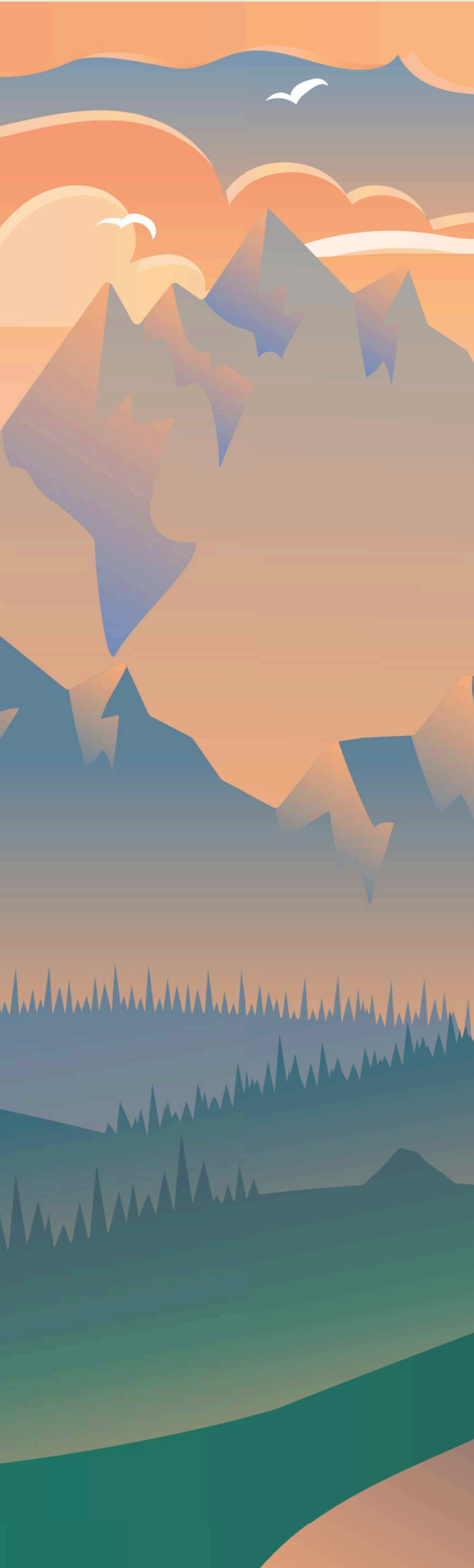
We hope today sparks meaningful discussions, new connections, and fresh perspectives, empowering us to navigate the complexities of our time with vision and purpose.

Thank you for joining us. Together, let's celebrate the power of research to shape a better future.

Your Final Year Conference Committee

TIMELINE OF DAY

10:00 - 10:30

Arrival, coffee and registration.
Room: Freda Swain Lounge

10:30 - 10:40 🎤 Amplified Sound

Welcome, Grounding Session & Meditation,
Room: The Lens Studio

10:40 - 10:55 🎤 Amplified Sound

Keynote: Dr. Ed Stoddard. Room: The Lens Studio

10:55 - 11:05

Comfort Break

11:05 - 12:50

Breakout Session 1. Meeting Room 1: Evolve / The Lens Studio: Adapt / Meeting Room 2: Innovate

12:50 - 13:50

Lunch break and Poster / Networking session. Students are encouraged to stand by their posters at 13:30! Room: Freda Swain Lounge

13:50 - 15:50

Breakout Session 2: Meeting Room 1: Evolve / The Lens Studio: Adapt / Meeting Room 2: Innovate

15:50 - 16.00

Comfort Break

16.00 - 16.05 🎤 Amplified Sound

Event Summary: Prof. Athina Vlachantoni
Room: The Lens Studio

16.05 - 16.30

Networking / Posters. Room: Freda Swain Lounge
Then: off to SCDTP Social at Koh Thai restaurant

Dr. Edward Stoddard is an Associate Professor in International Security at the University of Portsmouth, specialising in regional security, armed conflict, and non-state actors.

Room: The Lens Studio, 10:40

KEYNOTE

"The ~~Coming~~ (actually already here) Challenge of AI"

This talk explores the transformative but challenging potential of new generative AI tools like ChatGPT, emphasising their potential impact on productivity, creativity, and skill development. Dr. Stoddard will discuss the current "AI moment" and how these technologies are reshaping the (academic) workplace, urging both caution and proactive engagement. The talk discusses different strategies for integrating AI into workflows—and offers practical advice on how to think about leveraging these tools, ethically, for academic tasks.

Dr. Edward Stoddard holds a PhD in International Relations from Portsmouth, funded by the ESRC, and was a Postdoc Fellow at the Freie Universitat in Berlin and a Marie Curie Fellow at Scuola Superiore Sant'Anna in Pisa, where he researched the evolving character of warfare. He is a Visiting Professor at the College of Europe (Warsaw), a Fellow of the Society for Peace Studies and Practice, Nigeria, a member of the University of Lancaster's Centre for War and Diplomacy and an Affiliated Member of the Emerging Research in International Security Group at Sant'Anna. His interdisciplinary work has explored security challenges across West Africa, the Levant, the Gulf, and the former Soviet Union, including most recently a comparative British Academy-funded project on armed conflicts in the Sahel and Lake Chad regions. Dr. Stoddard is currently exploring research looking to integrate machine learning and geospatial data science with qualitative conflict analysis to understand conflict expansion dynamics in order to mitigate humanitarian challenges in West African armed conflicts.

SCDTP

University of Brighton

UNIVERSITY OF CHICHESTER

UNIVERSITYOF PORTSMOUTH

University of Southampton

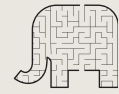UKRI Economic and Social Research Council

SUMMARY

Prof. Athina Vlachantoni

As the Director of the SCDTP, Professor of Gerontology and Social Policy in the Department of Gerontology at the University of Southampton, Athina is also a member of the Centre for Research on Ageing and the ESRC Centre for Population Change. Her research interests are at the interface of ageing over the life-course and social policy. Her recent research projects have focused on informal care provision across the life-course in the UK, Europe and China; pension protection among minority ethnic groups in the UK; and long-term care provision in India, China, the UK and sub-Saharan Africa.

"The SCDTP Final Year conference is here! We are excited to hear about all finalists' research, make new friendships and solidify existing ones. Thank you to the fantastic organising committee and the SCDTP office for all your hard work, and to all colleagues across the four Universities for supervising our students. Have an inspiring day!" - Athina

SCDTP

OUR CHAIRS

Max Dixon
University of Portsmouth

I am a PhD candidate at the University of Portsmouth researching British foreign policy towards Taiwan following Taiwan's democratisation in the 1990s. I hold an undergraduate degree in Politics and Sociology from the University of Warwick, a Masters' degree in International Relations from the University of Portsmouth and a Masters' degree in Social Research Methods from the University of Southampton. Beyond academia I undertook research on China, Hong Kong and Taiwan for the former chair of the Foreign Affairs Select Committee Alicia Kearns MP, I currently lead a research project charting the development of Taiwan Studies in Europe and North America for the European Association of Taiwan Studies and I have vast previous experience in education and the international education industry in the United Kingdom, Hong Kong and mainland China.

Emma Levy
University of Brighton

I am a first-year PhD student at the University of Brighton, researching a harm reduction model for hazing and initiations in UK university sport. I did my undergraduate degree in Criminology and Criminal Justice at Swansea University, where I started my research of hazing and initiation culture, which included hegemonic masculinity in male initiation culture. I continued similar research for my MSc in Social Research Methods at Swansea University, where I researched the overlap of male initiation culture in female sport. My hope in my current research is to bridge the gap between university regulation and student sport culture, that I have found in my previous research.

Alice Bell
University of Southampton

I am a first-year PhD student in Economics. I am studying cooperation around common pool resources with tipping points. I previously completed a BSc and an MRes in Economics at the University of Southampton. I hope to use experiments to examine the underlying mechanisms for coordination around common pool resources with tipping points. I am particularly interested in their application to climate change and cooperation around avoiding uncertain and risky tipping points that will cause irreversible damage to our environment.

EVOLVE

" NEVER STOP CREATING. "

BREAKOUT SESSION 1: TIMELINE

Luke Chandaman

11:10

The Death Positivity Bias

Pamela Radcliffe

11:25

Memory beliefs and memory distortion: The impact of memory misunderstanding in clinical and legal contexts

Mohamed Ismail Abdul Kader

11:40

Save the Last Dance for Me: Dynamic Cues and Social Perception

Emily Ribbons

11:55

Exploring Individuation as a Strategy for Enhancing Recall Accuracy in Intelligence-Gathering Investigation Teams

Francesca Zecchinato [● REC]

12:10

Promoting the Mental Health of Children with Anxious Mothers and Fathers: Examining Risk Factors and Parents' Needs

Questions for presenters

12:25

Scan the Slido QR code in the room, type in your question and we'll read it out at the end!

LUKE CHANDAMAN

The Death Positivity Bias

The death positivity bias (DPB) refers to appraising the dead more favourably than the living. Existing findings show that the DPB boosts appraisals across several evaluative domains, such as liking, competence, and morality. Additionally, the DPB extends beyond appraisals of individuals. For example, participants form more favourable impressions of a company's financial health, if they believe its founder is dead than alive. In four experiments, I tested the robustness of the DPB. In addition to liking, competence, and morality, I introduced respect as an evaluative domain of interest, give that 'respect the dead' is one of the most common sayings that can be linked with the DPB. In Experiment 1, I conducted the first experiment investigating the DPB toward neutral, lay targets (Ella). I did not find evidence for the DPB. In Experiment 2, I introduced evaluatively ambiguous (i.e., equally likely to be interpreted as positive and negative) targets, Alex and Sam. Participants liked and respected dead targets more than alive ones, evincing the DPB. In Experiment 3, I reused one of the Experiment 2 vignettes and manipulated whether the target was an ingroup versus outgroup member. Participants regarded the dead (than alive) target as more moral, and respected them more, regardless of ingroup or outgroup status, manifesting the DPB. In a subsequent Integrative Data Analysis of Experiments 2 and 3, participants evaluated dead targets more favourably not only on morality and respect, but also on liking. In pre-registered Experiment 4, I replicated the DPB findings of Experiments 2 and 3, and further found that the DPB was not mediated by adherence to social norms. Next, I plan to test whether the DPB transcends group membership when the outgroup is viewed as antagonistic.

Keywords: death positivity bias, liking, competence, morality, respect

PAMELA RADCLIFFE

Memory beliefs and memory distortion: The impact of memory misunderstanding in clinical and legal contexts

Societal memory beliefs have not evolved with mainstream science. My research investigates the prevalence of misunderstanding for memory function, especially traumatic experiences. Past evidence shows such misunderstanding may cause adverse health and justice outcomes. This study captures novel UK data (N = 747) from the lay public (n = 419); lawyers, judges and barristers, (n =150) and mental health professionals (n = 178) about their memory beliefs. Method: a self-selecting, anonymous, quantitative, online survey comprising nine statements about memory function. Participants gave Likert scale responses and could skip any question. Legal and mental health participants received additional questions. Overall findings reinforce scientists' concerns of a science-knowledge gap. Memory misconceptions were commonplace. All groups showed high agreement for the controversial notions of unconscious repression (>78%) and for dissociative amnesia, a similar concept - the lay public and legal professionals (>88%). Mental health participants' agreement for dissociative amnesia was also high overall (>84%); trauma-focused practitioners showed elevated agreement (96%). Moreover, 75% of the lay public and trauma-focused practitioners believed that repressed memories could be accurately therapeutically retrieved. Conclusion: suboptimal legal and mental health professionals' education may underpin continued misunderstanding about memory. Recommendations are made for improved scientific education for lawyers and increased guidance for clinicians. Memory beliefs must evolve with science to safeguard public health and justice.

My second study bridges a related research gap. It investigates the impact of social media upon individuals' beliefs about dissociative identity disorder (DID) – a clinically controversial and formerly rare, memory disorder. Scholars are concerned an upsurge in self-diagnoses of DID, may signal a social contagion effect caused by online media content. Public health may be at risk. Survey data has been collected, but not yet analysed. Method: experimental, quantitative, self-selecting, anonymous, online survey. Participants are randomly assigned to one of two videos explaining DID

MOHAMED ISMAIL ABDUL KADER

Save the Last Dance for Me: Dynamic Cues and Social Perception

Evolutionary and social psychological theories suggest that social perception plays a key role in making decisions on mate choices, relationships, friendships, etc. Previous studies have explored social perception using static cues like facial symmetry, skin colour, and body shape from static stimuli such as photographs. However, real-life judgements are made on moving bodies and less is known about the dynamic cues that may have an influence on our perceptions. This study chose two contrasting forms of movements—walking and dancing—to study the perception of three basic factors: attractiveness, competence and warmth. While walking is a simple and common form of movement, dancing is a complex form of movement which also plays a role in wooing and courtship. To separate dynamic from static cues, motion-capture technology was used. Normal videos and motion-captured videos of walking and dancing were collected from 100 individuals along with their photographs which were rated for attractiveness, competence and warmth by 102 raters. Sexual dimorphism ratings were collected based on the motion-captures walking and dancing videos. Multiple regression analysis showed both static and dynamic cues were significant predictors of said social factors. The study also found sex and sexual dimorphism had a significant effect on the perception of attractiveness, competence and warmth. This study also explored the differences in social perception between the two forms of movements chosen. These findings suggest that movements play a significant role in social perception and sex and sexual dimorphism in movements has a strong influence on the way we perceive each other.

Keywords: Dynamic Cues, Social Perception, Sexual Dimorphism, Attractiveness, Competence, Warmth

EMILY RIBBONS

Exploring Individuation as a Strategy for Enhancing Recall Accuracy in Intelligence-Gathering Investigation Teams

Intelligence-gathering investigations often involve covert teams of operatives working together to gather and report information critical to security efforts, such as counterterrorism operations. Despite the high stakes, limited research has explored strategies to optimise information recall in such teams or whether information is best recalled collaboratively or individually. Therefore, the main experiment of my PhD programme investigated individuation — a theory-driven strategy in which team members adopt distinct, complementary roles to enhance memory performance — and compared the effectiveness of collaborative versus nominal (aggregated individual) recall in terms of maximising accuracy.

The experiment employed a 2 (Strategy: Individuation vs. Control [no strategy]) × 2 (Recall type: Collaborative vs. Nominal) between-subjects design. Participants (N = 213) worked in triads, taking on the 'undercover operatives' role tasked with memorising details of a simulated terrorism plot, including suspect, weapon, location, and redundant information. In the individuation condition, team members focused on distinct categories of information, while the control group received baseline instructions to work together. After the task, participants recalled information either collaboratively or individually. Transcripts were analysed for total, correct, and incorrect information recalled.

Results demonstrated that individuation significantly enhanced recall accuracy compared to the control condition. Furthermore, collaborative recall groups demonstrated greater accuracy than nominal (aggregated individual) recall.

By investigating the individuation strategy and recall methods within a simulated security context, this research provides evidence-based recommendations to improve the efficiency and accuracy of intelligence-gathering teams. These findings hold potential practical implications for enhancing public safety and informing best practices in crime prevention operations.

FRANCESCA ZECCHINATO

Promoting the Mental Health of Children with Anxious Mothers and Fathers: Examining Risk Factors and Parents' Needs

The rising rates of mental ill-health among children and young people represent a pressing global concern and are currently recognised as an international health priority. Investing in prevention has been identified as a key solution to limit these increasing rates and mitigate the associated burden for individuals and societies. However, to develop and implement effective prevention strategies, it is crucial to identify the risk factors contributing to youth mental ill-health. Parental mental illness is an important, modifiable, risk factor for child mental ill-health. Among all the psychiatric conditions in the general population, anxiety disorders are the most prevalent worldwide, particularly in parents.

The three studies that are part of my PhD project focus on the risk posed by parental anxiety to their children and on strategies to promote the mental health of children with anxious parents, addressing some of the knowledge gaps in the field. In Study 1, I focus on our limited understanding of the role played by fathers and present a comprehensive systematic review and meta-analysis showing that paternal anxiety is significantly associated with offspring emotional and behavioural difficulties with small and small-to-medium effect sizes. In Study 2, I use a prenatal vs postnatal design, with longitudinal data from a large UK-based birth cohort, to show that paternal perinatal anxiety is a unique risk factor for child mental ill-health, even after accounting for maternal mental health, child temperament and sociodemographic variables, and highlight different patterns of associations at different child ages. In Study 3, I address the current lack of understanding of how to support anxious parents in promoting mental health among their children with a qualitative design that provides insights into what an accessible and acceptable preventive service should entail.

The knowledge gathered with this empirical work highlights the importance of involving both mothers and fathers in the promotion of child mental health.

BREAKOUT SESSION 2: TIMELINE

Shannon Slater-Johnson

13:55 How orangutans cope in a rehabilitation environment: Examining attachment and attachment-related behaviours with mothers, caregivers and peers

Rory Phibbs

14:10 Cross-gender Coaching: Women Coaching Men in Field Hockey

Robin Skyer

14:25 Conceptualisations of care in trans communities in England

Conor Gaughan   [● REC]

14:45 Charting Westminster's Bubble: An Ideological Map of Britain's Digital Elite

Carolynn Low

15:00 The relevance of the 'refugee' category for entrepreneurs

Questions for presenters

15:15 Scan the Slido QR code in the room, type in your question and we'll read it out at the end!

SHANNON SLATER-JOHNSON

How orangutans cope in a rehabilitation environment: Examining attachment and attachment-related behaviours with mothers, caregivers and peers

Attachment has evolutionary advantages which aid survival and attachment security in childhood can have significant effects on behaviour in later life with many factors playing a role in attachment security. Orangutans share 97% of DNA with humans and have one of the longest immature periods in great apes staying with their mothers until the age of 8, echoing the long human childhood period. This therefore allows for the examination of the evolutionary and comparative elements of attachment. Orangutans in rehabilitation are often captured as infants, experiencing attachment disruption, and are then cared for by human caregivers. Currently there is very little research on attachment in Orangutans especially in rehabilitation, therefore this PhD examines attachment and attachment related behaviours in orangutans at Sepilok Orangutan rehabilitation centre in Sabah, Malaysia. Sepilok Orangutan Rehabilitation Centre offers a unique environment to examine both rehabilitant mother and mother-reared-mother/offspring dyads and human-reared orangutans. Study one creates an observational method of attachment assessment for orangutans based on the Attachment Q-set and Attachment Q-set for Macaques, assesses the validity and reliability of this while also examining attachment security of 11 mother and offspring dyads. Study two examines the attachment security of 5 young orangutans at the rehabilitation centre to their human caregivers, factors affecting this and the relationship between this and sociality and human orientation. Both studies, one and two, use 30-minute focal recordings. As orangutans age and progress through rehabilitation there is more focus on conspecific peer attachments therefore study three considers this, examining the success of a behaviour linked to attachment formation, food sharing, with peers. Study three examines 36 orangutans from all stages of the rehabilitation process using 3- and 5-minute focal recordings and examines if gaze and facial directedness increases the success of food sharing interactions and if this increases with age.

RORY PHIBBS

Cross-gender Coaching: Women Coaching Men in Field Hockey

Women in sports coaching is a site of significant research interest. Findings have shown women face a number of barriers in gaining and maintaining coaching roles. This increased research interest has led to academics highlighting the saturated nature of the field, calling for future focus upon individual experience or the structures limiting the progression of women. However, within women in coaching research there is a dearth of literature regarding women coaching men in the United Kingdom.

Therefore, this study aimed to build a greater understanding of women's experiences of coaching men and the environment they worked within. To draw on individual experience and gain deeper understanding of women coaching men, a feminist theoretical framework and a qualitative approach were adopted. With field hockey the chosen sport, the study has involved three distinct phases that are interlinked.

The first phase began with a steering group of six experienced women coaches, who were coaching a men's hockey team, using in depth semi-structured interviews. Through thematic analysis, key themes were identified such as hiring practices, self-doubt, and negative experiences. These themes helped steer the direction of the following two phases.

The second phase involved training session observation and subsequent interviews with male players at two sites where women coach men. This phase ends in early December 2024. Early findings have shown support for coaches, how women in coaching are perceived and how men see women's sport. The project will culminate with a third phase in January 2025, involving interviews with women currently coaching, or who have previously coached, male hockey players. Findings of the project will expand understanding of women coaching men in sport as well as career experiences, influence governing body practice and guide future research direction within the field.

ROBIN SKYER

Conceptualisations of care in trans communities in England

Transgender (trans) care networks transcend traditional modes of care, reaching beyond heteronormative structures and the boundaries of capitalist medicalised settings. Yet rather than considering trans care networks to be merely a response to hostile contexts, bridging the gaps within existing care structures, might a "t4t [trans4trans] praxis of love" (Malatino, 2020, p44) provide better ways to care for ourselves, and each other?

Current literature is yet to investigate the direct experience of trans people as they navigate formal and informal care networks. Therefore, through autoethnographic analysis, participant diaries and focus groups, this study explores trans experiences and understandings of care, through the perspective of research participants and the researcher.

Results of the study suggest that prevailing hegemonic ideas continue to inform and inflect the ways in which trans people in England access and experience care. They also suggest that participants of the study see care as a collective political project, but they have differing worldviews regarding the future of care.

CONOR GAUGHAN

Charting Westminster's Bubble: An Ideological Map of Britian's Digital Elite

The social networking site, Twitter (now rebranded as X), is a microblogging platform which has garnered a reputation for being a platform for the elites. Not only are its users disproportionately members of socially privileged groups – younger, wealthier, and more highly educated – relative to other social networking sites, it has become the favourited social media platform for many high profile media and political elites. This is no less the case than in the United Kingdom (U.K) where many of the country's politicians, journalists, media outlets, and political commentators have taken to the site en masse over the last decade and a half, transferring their offline authority to the online sphere. The recent digitisation of Britain's commentariat has presented an opportunity to trace the networks of political and media elites in the U.K and exploit them to gather a better understanding of important offline phenomena. Using advanced quantitative and computational techniques, this three-paper thesis leverages original large-scale digital data from the Twitter/X networks of U.K political and media elites to address three key concepts: (1) intra-party competition; (2) media balance; and (3) dyadic representation.

Paper 1 of this thesis generates a set of formally validated left/right ideal points of U.K MPs and their wider sets of followers by applying multidimensional scaling to their Twitter/X follower networks, and these ideal points are subsequently used to model candidate endorsement in the September 2022 Conservative Party leadership contest. Paper 2 directly builds on the concepts and data of Paper 1 to present a descriptive illustration of ideological balance on the flagship political programmes of mainstream broadcasters in the U.K. Finally, Paper 3 makes use of contemporary developments in small area estimation in the form of multilevel regression with poststratification (MRP) to assess the dyadic relationship between an MP's Twitter/X networks + tweet timelines and the positions of their constituents.
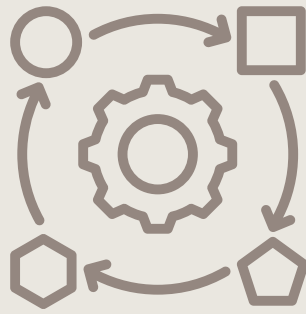
CAROLYNN LOW

The relevance of the 'refugee' category for entrepreneurs

Refugees as a specific 'type' of entrepreneur in the Global North have become a growing focus of interest in research and policy in recent years, but the category itself has received little critical evaluation. This paper considers the relevance of the category 'refugee' for entrepreneurs from a forced migration background by drawing on in-depth qualitative interviews with 30 entrepreneurs and 20 professionals working in the refugee sector in a city in England. It explores how 'refugee' as a category is understood, what consequences they perceive the application of this category entails in terms of labour market access, and, for entrepreneurs, whether it is relevant to their lived experiences. Emerging through participants' accounts, the paper suggests a typology of four competing yet overlapping understandings of the 'refugee' category: (i) the utility argument suggests the importance of categorising to understand needs and provide appropriate support; (ii) the transformative argument asserts the importance of challenging and contesting negative stereotypes, particularly around work and contribution; (iii) the divisive argument points to the imposition of categories by others, and the sense of difference, even inferiority, that is created; and finally, (iv) the ill-fitting argument highlights the heterogeneity of refugees as people and the sense of 'refugee' as a temporary state of being. This analysis contributes to critical accounts interrogating the use of categories in migration research, policy and practice, which might lead to homogenised, fixed and often binary understandings of complex experiences, and which hold significant power concerning accessing rights, resources, and ideas of inclusion.

ADAPT

" NEVER STOP CREATING. "

Amplified Sound

BREAKOUT SESSION 1: TIMELINE

Colette Nsofor

11:10

The influence of disruptive technologies on agri-food supply chain resilience

Chloe Dixon

11:25

Reducing work hours for a 'better future'? Exploring preferences and experiences of working-time reduction

Anthony Howell

11:40

Alienation via Online Shopping in Brighton and Reykjavik

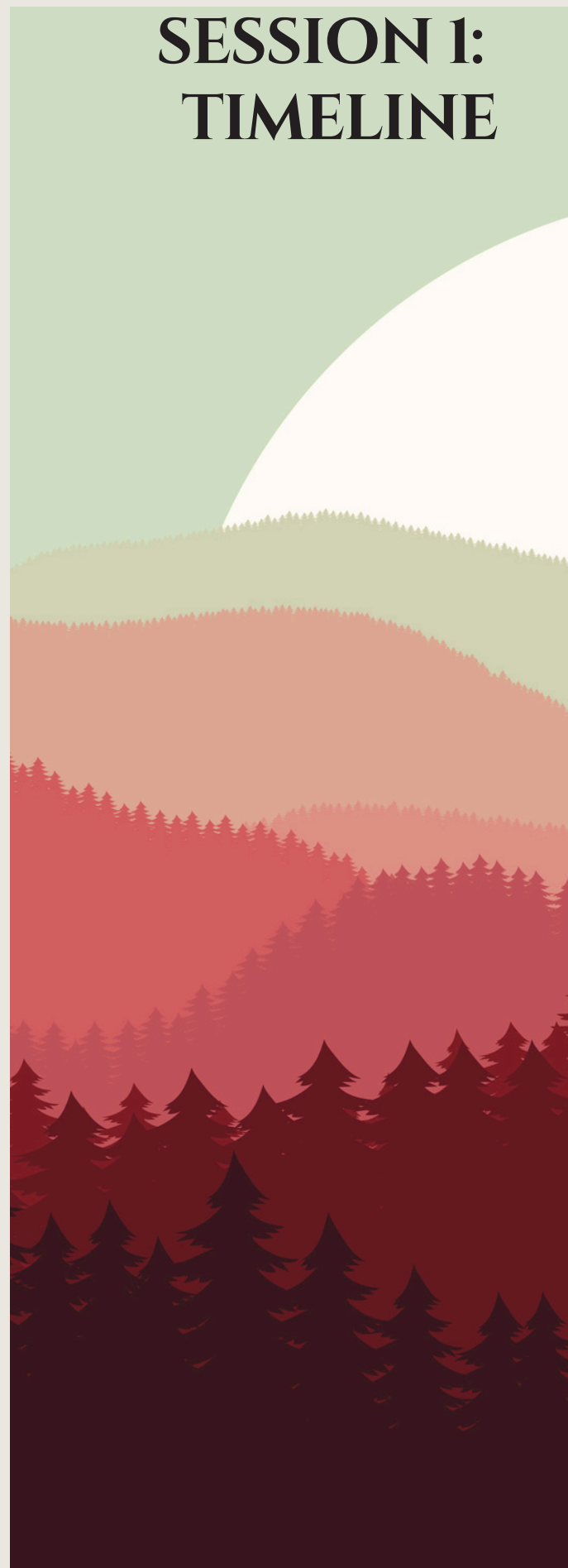## Mabel Newton

11:55

Radical right populism and anti-migrant norm contestation: a comparative analysis of the UK and US

Haru Menard

12:10

Material belongings: Family and nation as lived by members of LGBTQ+ in Lebanon

Questions for presenters

12:25

Scan the Slido QR code in the room, type in your question and we'll read it out at the end!

COLETTE NSOFOR

The influence of disruptive technologies on agri-food supply chain resilience

The increasing exposure of the agri-food supply chain (AFSC) to severe disruptions causing ripple effects has exposed the vulnerabilities of the AFSC, serving as a wake-up call to develop a more resilient supply chain to secure agri-food systems. While disruptive technologies including the Internet of Things, Blockchain, Artificial Intelligence, and Big Data Analytics, are often claimed to be promising in enhancing resilience to disruptions, the emerging existing literature offers limited empirical insights into the mechanisms through which disruptive technologies enhance agri-food supply chain resilience (AFSCRes). Additionally, there is an under-exploration of research on the conditions under which disruptive technologies might potentially introduce unintended consequences, and compromise resilience if unaddressed. Therefore, this study aimed to investigate the impact of disruptive technologies on AFSCRes. Drawing from a systematic literature review and through the lens of complex adaptive systems theory, a technology-enabled AFSCRes model with testable hypotheses was conceptually developed. The model was empirically validated using survey data gathered from agri-food practitioners in the United Kingdom through a web-based questionnaire and analysed using advanced partial least squares structural equation modeling techniques. Key findings revealed a dual-edged narrative: although disruptive technologies significantly contribute positively to enhancing AFSCRes through several elements, they can also bring about tech-induced issues such as data ownership/sovereignty, privacy, and environmental concerns, to mention a few, which can negatively impact resilience. It was also found that putting in place effective institutional forces in the form of data governance and government support can alleviate tech-induced issues, highlighting the relevance of governance and regulations. Another interesting finding is that exposure to disruptions can trigger AFSC to use disruptive technologies for resilience-building quests, which differs across agri-food supply chain agents; upstream, midstream, and downstream. This research offers insights for researchers, industry practitioners, and policymakers.

CHLOE DIXON

Reducing work hours for a 'better future'? Exploring preferences and experiences of working-time reduction

Working-time reduction, and in particular, the 4-day week, has been gaining a lot of traction in research and the mainstream media. Prior and ongoing research has shown that a purposeful move to reduce work hours can have a range of social, economic, wellbeing and environmental benefits. This project aims to explore work hour preferences and experiences among financially secure, full-time workers to assess the feasibility and practicality of a working-time reduction policy. To do this, a mixed methods approach has and will be used. First, large-scale Labour Force Survey data has been analysed to explore how a range of demographic factors correlate with a preference to be working fewer hours, to inform where interest and objection to this kind of policy may lie in the population. Some of the most significant predictor variables of a preference to be working less include gender, education level, health, current work hours and home ownership – as will be demonstrated in my presentation. The quantitative findings will be explored further in interviews. Different perspectives on these findings and beyond has been gained through interviews with key stakeholders relevant to the working-time reduction movement. Additional interviews with employees in 'case study' companies with varied work hour norms may also help to uncover explanations for the trends found in the quantitative data, alongside an exploration of the ways that shorter working hours affect work and personal life outcomes.

ANTHONY HOWELL

Alienation via Online Shopping in Brighton and Reykjavik

This theoretical, inductive and iterative research investigates the relationship between online shopping, including use of gig-economy services, and alienation. Two coastal cities were chosen for the research: Brighton, England and Reykjavik, Iceland. Whereas Brighton & Hove is one city interconnected with numerous other larger, more populous cities, the population of Iceland is concentrated in Reykjavik. There are different climates, landscapes, histories, economies and cultures, and without wishing to generalise, potentially differing attitudes and experiences related to online shopping and life more broadly. A total of 21 interviews were conducted: 12 in Brighton; and 9 in Reykjavik. The purpose was to seek 'affective-discursive meaning-making', and to ground the research in everyday lived experiences. I undertook thematic analysis to identify, analyse and report patterns, which formed four main themes. By reflecting upon the primary data and theories of scholars including Marx, Adorno, Jaeggi, Bauman and Rosa, I compiled four contextual and overlapping aspects that I posit are salient to contemporary experiences. Together, these form the acronym MADE. MADE consists of an increasingly Marketised environment; intensifying Atomisation; an omnipresent Digital realm; and an increasingly hectic Existence. The potentially alienating MADE context arguably induces individuals to shop online; online shopping practice arguably further entrenches MADE context. Therefore, late capitalist life may be imbued with experiences of an alienating, mutually reinforcing context and practice. The research complements theoretical studies of alienation by analysing primary data focussed upon contemporary experiences. It contributes to existing studies of the gig economy that tend to focus on gig-economy workers, thereby providing a fuller understanding of alienating relations. This research aims to enhance awareness of how, and why, harmful relations develop and are perpetuated. By developing knowledge of online shopping and its influence on social relations, we are better placed to redress the negative impacts.

MABEL NEWTON

Radical right populism and anti-migrant norm contestation: a comparative analysis of the UK and US

The 2015 'refugee crisis' is considered a catalyst for the mainstreaming of the radical right in Europe and increasing security concerns regarding the influx of irregular migrants via the US-Mexico border as a key factor for the demand and support for Trump's RRP leadership (Wright & Esses, 2019; Mudde, 2019). The study of norms and human rights has been central in IR theory, though migration norms receive less attention compared to other human rights and the status and force of refugee protection norms remains ambiguous (Coen, 2021). Furthermore, norm dynamics research tends to focus on the role of international actors and research is less clear on how international refugee norms are contested by nonstate actors. This thesis explores this area of contestation focusing on the role of nonstate actors within anti-migrant movements in the UK and US. The theoretical framework categorises this group as 'norm saboteurs' who seek to undermine established international norms and outlines a strategic framework of discursive persuasion, blocking, obfuscating, refuting, and resistance mechanisms. The legal framework for international refugee norms is widely accepted among states globally, but with various levels of force and status, and the analysis focuses on the principles of non-refoulement, non-criminalisation, non-penalisation, non-detention, non-discrimination, and responsibility-sharing. Drawing on the constructivist approach, this comparative case study examines the strategies employed by anti-migrant movements to undermine the international refugee norms outlined. Data is analysed thematically utilising a coding process facilitated by NVivo software. The analysis demonstrates anti-migrant movements utilising a norm sabotage framework to undermine international refugee norms and identifies RRP ideology as a tool used as moral and political leverage to defend restricting refugee rights in the UK and US. This thesis contributes to migration studies and IR literature to develop a deeper understanding of how nonstate actors undermine established international refugee norms.

HARU MENARD

Material belongings: Family and nation as lived by members of LGBTQ+ in Lebanon

Informed by intersectional and decolonial theory, my PhD research takes a look at how queerness has been deployed as a site of cultural contestation by the Lebanese state, on the one hand, and how queer people themselves negotiate belonging and survival in a collapsing security state, on the other. Based on 37 interviews with queer people in Lebanon, my research contributes to understanding the role of sexuality as a key site of contestation in post-colonial nation building.

BREAKOUT SESSION 2: TIMELINE

Amruta Bagwe

13:55 Essays on Youth Unemployment and Child Work in India

Elinor Lim

14:10 Investigating the role of family in autistic students' university journeys

Isaac Thornton

14:25 An international education strategy? A social ecological approach to social exclusion and resilience among international students

Emily Ellington

14:45 Discussing significant life decisions with autistic young people: supporting understanding and agency through dialogue

Seyedeh Sorour Farahi

15:00 Impact of policy alternatives on patient outcomes using simulation modelling in hospital operations following flood disasters

Questions for presenters

15:15 Scan the Slido QR code in the room, type in your question and we'll read it out at the end!

AMRUTA BAGWE

Essays on Youth Unemployment and Child Work in India

India has struggled to fully harness its demographic dividend due to barriers in human capital accumulation during schooling years and labor market imperfections faced by its young workforce. This thesis investigates one of the key contributors to high youth unemployment: the skills deficit, characterized by a mismatch between educational qualifications and job market expectations. Vocational and Technical Training (VTT) has been widely recognized as an intervention to address this skills gap by enhancing employability. Using data from the Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) in India, this study analyzes the causal impact of VTT on employment and wages. Given the non-random assignment of training, the analysis employs an Instrumental Variable (IV) approach, revealing a positive effect on employment probabilities. Additionally, the Conditional Recursive Mixed-Process (CMP) method is used to address endogeneity and sample selection bias in estimating the returns to training, showing significant wage increases for youth who undergo vocational training.

Beyond labor market entry and sustainability, India's young generation faces challenges during their foundational years of human capital development. Many children across Indian states engage in paid and unpaid work outside school, driven by intergenerational poverty, demand for low-skilled work, lack of access to education, and the prevalence of informal economies. These vulnerabilities are compounded by weak preventive policies. This study further explores how external shocks, such as natural disasters, exacerbate child work. Using data from the 2006 Young Lives Survey in Andhra Pradesh, the analysis identifies a causal relationship between natural disasters and increased child work, both extensive (participation rates) and intensive (hours worked).

This thesis contributes to understanding the structural and external factors influencing youth labor market outcomes and underscores the importance of targeted interventions in skill development and child welfare policies.

ELINOR LIM

Investigating the role of family in autistic students' university journeys

Although research on factors influencing autistic students' experiences in higher education has proliferated in recent years (e.g., review by Anderson et al., 2017), the role and impact of family dynamics on these experiences remains underexplored, despite calls for investigation (Dallas et al., 2015). My PhD research involves three studies on this topic: a scoping review and an exploratory sequential mixed-methods investigation.

The scoping review included 21 empirical records. Review findings indicated that the main role of family is in providing non-academic support, but more research investigating determinants and outcomes of family involvement and support is needed.

A steering group comprising autistic university students, family members of autistic university students, and specialist autism mentors informed the mixed-methods design and study materials. In Study 2, 26 autistic students and 11 family members of autistic students completed semi-structured interviews about family relationships and support dynamics in relation to students' experiences of university in the UK. Reflexive thematic analysis produced findings indicating that family relationships and family involvement are heavily intertwined (e.g., good relationships were often described alongside positive experiences of support) and that the role of siblings is distinct from parents' (e.g., different support provided).

Informed by these findings, Study 3 entails an online survey for autistic students investigating the impact of five types of family support (emotional, informational, practical, emergency, and financial) on four student outcomes (wellbeing, university completion, academic achievement, and post-university engagement). Data collection is still ongoing. Planned analyses include correlations and regression models examining relationships between support and outcome variables. Findings from both studies will be integrated to provide a holistic view of autistic university students' family dynamics and experiences of support.

Preliminary findings across all studies indicate that family support complexly impacts students' wellbeing, university success, and family relationships, underscoring the need to balance students' independence with mutual interdependence within families.

ISAAC THORNTON

An international education strategy? A social ecological approach to social exclusion and resilience among international students

International students (IS) benefit UK universities and society more broadly. However, IS face challenges throughout their studies, including acculturation challenges, deficit narratives, and social exclusion (an inability to fully participate in all areas of social, political, cultural, and economic life). However, little research holistically explores IS' resilience to adversity, viewing IS as an equity seeking group. This PhD explored social exclusion and resilience among IS at UK universities, adopting a social ecological approach whereby resilience is a socially embedded, dynamic process, rather than a static individual trait. Adopting a pragmatist epistemology and critical realist ontology, this PhD's mixed-methods approach comprised three studies. In study 1, a rapid review explored literature on the social policy context for IS in the UK and its implications for social exclusion. In study 2, 11 IS shared images representing their experiences. These were discussed in photo elicitation interviews and transcripts were analysed using reflexive thematic analysis to understand IS' lived experiences of adversity and resilience. For study 3, in a longitudinal survey of 97 students, regression-based moderation analysis was used to identify whether social ecological resilience ameliorates the relationships between social exclusion and three outcomes: wellbeing, life satisfaction, and academic adjustment. Study 1 suggests that policy both creates barriers to inclusion (e.g., hostile environment migration/bordering practices) and supports inclusion/adaption (e.g., sanctuary scholarships, Graduate Visas), while IS lack equitable participation in wellbeing-relevant provision. Study 2 suggests that resilience occurs in interconnected domains of life (academic, acculturative, personal, interpersonal, community, socioeconomic, dynamic) through various processes (e.g., adjusting to British academia, finding and creating community in various places). Study 3 indicates that social ecological resilience is associated with positive outcomes but cannot always moderate harmful impacts of social exclusion. Overall, IS show considerable resilience to social exclusion and related adversities while studying, actively engaging with social ecologies/resources. Nonetheless, student resilience is no substitute for tackling structural inequalities and exclusionary policy.

EMILY ELLINGTON

Discussing significant life decisions with autistic young people: supporting understanding and agency through dialogue

Young people have significant decisions to make in life, and their right to be involved in matters which affect them is outlined within the United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child (UNCRC, 1989). To help young people make sense of their choices and exert agency over their decisions, adults often discuss and explore decisions together with them. However, for autistic young people, some conversations held about significant life decisions may not suit their cognitive and communication profile.

Autistic people have been shown to process decisions differently to non-autistic people and making decisions can be anxiety provoking for them, particularly if the decision needs to be made within a social context. Additionally, autistic people have a different communication and interaction profile to non-autistic people which means that autistic and non-autistic people can struggle to understand each other. Consequently, autistic people frequently report feeling misunderstood in social exchanges and raise concerns that a lack of understanding about autism is a barrier to them receiving high quality care and support. Taken together, these differences in cognition and communication pose questions about how conversations relating to significant life decisions should be enacted with autistic young people to support their understanding and agency.

My research seeks to identify how the understanding and agency of autistic young people can be supported when discussing significant life decisions by exploring how decision-making conversations are enacted in different circumstances. My first study was a qualitative case study within a community mental health service which explored how shared decision-making was enacted with autistic young people, and what features of practice enabled their participation in decision-making conversations. My second (ongoing) study is a multi-case study, exploring how autistic young people are involved in conversations about their post-16 options across several special needs schools in England and what features of practice support their understanding and agency with regards to this significant life decision.
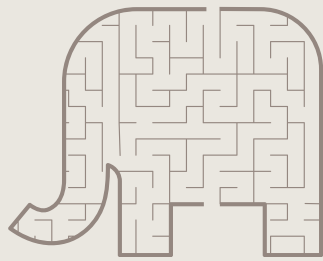
SOROUR FARAHI

Navigating Hospital Operations Through Simulation: A Study of Urban Flooding Disasters and Physical Damage Impact

Urban flooding represents a serious and growing challenge, often resulting in widespread devastation, economic damages, and the loss of human lives. Floods are the most common natural disasters worldwide and are expected to rise in frequency in the coming decades due to climate change and rapid urbanisation. On the other hand, a flood causes physical damage that can significantly disrupt healthcare infrastructure. Maintaining operational capability becomes a major challenge for healthcare facilities, as they must continue functioning despite suffering partial damage or destruction. This study presents a discrete-event simulation model of an entire hospital to investigate the impact of urban flooding disasters, specifically focusing on physical damage to the hospital building and its implications for patient care. A novel patient-centred health utility function is introduced to assess patient outcomes in addition to process-based outcomes. By incorporating this health utility function into the simulation model, the study enables the tracking of each patient's health outcomes throughout their entire treatment journey within the hospital and enables the model to explore potential health-related trade-offs between disaster and routine patients under different response policies. The model is used to simulate a two-wave disaster scenario: the initial wave represents physically injured patients due to the flooding, while the second wave captures patients with flood-related infections. Additionally, this paper experiments with strategies and policies to respond effectively to the disaster and enhance resilience. The results demonstrate the model's ability to evaluate hospital resilience and balance the needs of disaster victims and routine patients. This work lays the foundation for data-driven disaster preparedness and response planning and informs patient prioritisation decisions.

INNOVATE

" NEVER STOP CREATING. "

BREAKOUT SESSION 1: TIMELINE

Daniel Griffiths

11:10 — "It feels like a lightness, and it feels... happy": Gender Euphoria, Gender Dysphoria, and Sexual Wellbeing in Transgender and Non-Binary Adults

Rhia Perks

11:25 — Attachment and Support Behaviours in Long-Distance Relationships

Fraedan Mastrantonio

11:40 — Non-binary people's sexuality and wellbeing: the role of overlapping minoritized identities'

Sarah Jenner

11:55 — Using adolescent identity formation to motivate dietary change: The role of adolescent peer group values

Thokozile Tembo

12:10 — News Sentiment and Cryptocurrencies: Empirical Asset Pricing, Intraday News Asymmetry and Stability during Crisis Periods

Questions for presenters

12:25 — Scan the Slido QR code in the room, type in your question and we'll read it out at the end!

DANIEL GRIFFITHS

"It feels like a lightness, and it feels… happy": Gender Euphoria, Gender Dysphoria, and Sexual Wellbeing in Transgender and Non-Binary Adults

Considerable research with transgender individuals has centred on gender dysphoria, often neglecting the diverse range of transgender experiences and minimizing the importance of opportunities for positive self-identification. However, an emerging body of literature challenges this pathologizing perspective by exploring the concept of gender euphoria, which highlights the affirmative dimensions of transgender experiences and disputes the idea that transgender identities are exclusively defined by hardship and distress. Consequently, this work has sought to explore how dimensions of gender euphoria and dysphoria may influence transgender and non-binary individuals' sexual well-being and functioning.

Within study one, interviews with 24 transgender and non-binary participants informed the generation of five themes: definitions of gender dysphoria and gender euphoria; cissexist norms and LGBTQ+ community norms; relationship characteristics and sexual wellbeing; embodied gender dysphoria, gender euphoria, and changes through transition; and sexual behaviours. Study two explores relationships between dimensions of sexual well-being, sexual functioning, and gender euphoria/dysphoria. Finally, study three will explore if transgender individuals' feelings of gender euphoria and sexual well-being are associated with time and transition stages and milestones.

These findings provide insights into gender euphoria and dysphoria among transgender individuals and practical implications for researchers and practitioners. Understanding gender euphoria's impact on sexual experiences may help enhance the sexual health and overall well-being of transgender individuals.

RHIA PERKS

Attachment and Support Behaviours in Long-Distance Relationships

Research consistently demonstrates the role of support-seeking in romantic relationships in predicting individual and relational outcome. Additionally, there is a well-established association between attachment styles and support-seeking behaviors. Yet, much of this research depends on face-to-face interactions and does not account for long-distance relationships where in-person communication is not always possible. Thus, throughout my research, I seek to identify how individuals in long-distance relationships can seek support from a partner using computer-mediated communication. I assess whether this can predict individual or relational outcomes. In my first research project, I developed a scale to assess support-seeking in romantic partners - the Romantic Support-Seeking (RoSS) scale. This allows researchers to examine four distinct types of support-seeking within one measure: direct emotional support-seeking; direct instrumental support-seeking; indirect support-seeking; no support wanted. My second project utilised this measure in an online survey (n = 551) examining the differences in support-seeking behaviours between individuals in long-distance and geographically-close relationships. I assessed distinctions between the use of computer-mediated communication in seeking support from a partner. Furthermore, I investigated the associations of these communication channels in predicting relationship satisfaction, life satisfaction, and stress. Moreover, I assessed the role of attachment avoidance and attachment anxiety in predicting support-seeking behaviours and associated outcomes. Finally, my third project seeks to examine these support-seeking behaviours in long-distance couples, using a longitudinal diary design over 10 days. I assess whether support-seeking predicts individual and relational outcomes over time. I also assess whether actor or partner attachment predicts support-seeking behaviours and associated outcomes. The findings provide a unique insight into the specific support-seeking behaviors used by long-distance couples, which expands upon previous work into geographically-close couples and has important implications for the individual and relational wellbeing of these couples

FRAEDAN MASTRANTONIO

Non-binary people's sexuality and wellbeing: the role of overlapping minoritized identities

Quantitative research with gender minorities has often neglected the experiences of individuals existing outside the gender binary and has failed to consider how intersecting identities shape individuals' sexuality and wellbeing. My research addresses this gap by investigating the sexuality, mental health, and wellbeing of non-binary populations, accounting for intersectional identities, with a focus on autistic identity. After completing a systematic review on the sexuality and sexual health of non-binary people, two studies were conducted using an online questionnaire informed by autistic and gender-minority experts-by-experience.

The first study examined sexual wellbeing, satisfaction, and relationship satisfaction among 462 non-binary adults, comparing their experiences to that of 129 binary transgender and 231 cisgender individuals. Results showed that non-binary and binary trans participants reported significantly lower sexual satisfaction and wellbeing than cisgender individuals, though relationship satisfaction was similar across groups. Interestingly, asexual identity and being autistic were linked with higher levels of sexual wellbeing in non-binary participants. These findings suggest that despite societal barriers, gender-diverse people have often developed effective strategies for fulfilling partnerships, though sexual wellbeing disparities persist and warrant further exploration.

The second study explored the intersection of non-binary gender identity and neurodivergence, focusing on the mental health, sexual health, and autistic masking in 265 non-binary autistic individuals. Participants reported moderate anxiety and mild depression. An association between higher levels of masking and poorer mental health outcomes was found. Higher depression was linked to lower sexual wellbeing; masking did not appear to impact sexual wellbeing, suggesting that non-binary autistic individuals may feel less compelled to mask in intimate contexts.

Overall, findings point to the importance of considering intersectionality when investigating the wellbeing of non-binary people. Further research looking at how overlapping identities shape non-binary people's experiences of sexuality and health are needed.

SARAH JENNER

Using adolescent identity formation to motivate dietary change: The role of adolescent peer group values

Improving the health of young people benefits those young people, their future adult selves, and any children they may choose to have. Adolescence is a critical period for biopsychosocial development, and a key developmental task that occurs during this time is identity formation. This PhD aimed to understand the relationships between identity, social media and food choices in young people to inform future development of identity-based health behaviour change interventions.

The first element of this PhD is a systematic review of identity-based health interventions aimed at young people. The systematic review revealed that although interventions incorporating elements of identity theories, such as self-affirmation theory, showed promise in engaging young people in behaviour change, their efficacy in changing health outcomes was low.

Following the systematic review, qualitative work was undertaken to explore the role of identity and social media in food choices through the eyes of young people. 77 young people (age 13-25 years) were recruited to a story completion study. Narrative analysis of 138 stories identified four narratives - personal responsibility, role models, social comparison, and control - which depicted positive and negative sides of social media in relation to identity development and food choices. Differences in stories written by younger (13-18 years) and older (19-25 years) participants reflected established developmental periods for identity formation, suggesting that younger adolescents may need more support in navigating the identity formation process using social media.

The final element of the PhD is the development of a novel method for AI-assisted narrative analysis, which was developed iteratively during the story completion study. Following the human narrative analysis, all 138 stories were analysed by two AI models. The findings showed that AI is helpful tool to enhance narrative analysis and save researchers time, and can provide helpful insights into patterns of meaning within textual data.

THOKOZILE TEMBO

News Sentiment and Cryptocurrencies: Empirical Asset Pricing, Intraday News Asymmetry And Stability during Crisis Periods

Cryptocurrencies, as disruptive financial innovations, have redefined global markets but present unique challenges due to their volatility, lack of fundamental valuation frameworks, and sensitivity to external news. This thesis explores the role of news sentiment in cryptocurrency markets, focusing on asset pricing, asymmetric market reactions, and systemic stability during crises. It examines how external information, particularly sentiment from news events, influences returns and volatility.

Chapter 1 integrates news sentiment into asset pricing models, addressing a gap in the literature by analyzing how cryptocurrencies react to event-based sentiment. Using a four-factor model, the study reveals significant asymmetry: negative news disproportionately impacts returns, consistent with behavioural finance theories like negativity bias. This equips investors and policymakers with tools to interpret market signals in a volatile asset class.

Chapter 2 investigates the asymmetric influence of event-specific news on cryptocurrency volatility using advanced econometric models like EGARCH. Leveraging hourly intraday data, the study finds that positive sentiment influences volatility more than negative sentiment, contrary to traditional negativity bias. This behavior is linked to speculative trading and herd dynamics, particularly in Bitcoin, where sentiment asymmetry drives intraday volatility. The findings highlight the importance of real-time market reactions in understanding investor behavior and refining market risk models.

Chapter 3 focuses on crises, analyzing how news about unconventional monetary policies, such as quantitative easing, affects cryptocurrency stability. While these policies aim to stabilize traditional markets, their implications for cryptocurrencies remain underexplored. Together, these studies provide a comprehensive understanding of how news sentiment shapes cryptocurrency market dynamics. By bridging gaps in literature and offering actionable insights, this thesis advances theoretical and practical knowledge, equipping stakeholders with strategies to navigate the risks and opportunities of this evolving financial landscape.

BREAKOUT SESSION 2: TIMELINE

Luciano Perfetti-Villa

13:55 On the use of small area estimation with geospatial data

Alice Wolfle

14:10 Seasonality and Child Health in Bangladesh

Shilpy Bhat

14:25 Understanding the implementation of 'Cobots': A mixed-methods case study on Hybrid Assistive Limb (HAL) in Hampshire County Council's adult social care

Haden Dewis

14:45 An Interdisciplinary Approach to Understanding why Targets Are Missed During Interactive Searches

Michaela Trescakova

15:00 Perception of Natural Scenes: Colour and Depth in Vision

Hannah Carr

15:15 Conduct problems and head injuries across development: Investigating longitudinal symptom interplay and common neural correlates

Questions for presenters

15:30 Scan the Slido QR code in the room, type in your question and we'll read it out at the end!

LUCIANO PERFETTI-VILLA

On the use of small area estimation with geospatial data

Addressing extreme poverty is a key objective of the United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals for 2030. The UN reports that nearly 670 million people are living in conditions of extreme poverty. Unfortunately, poverty statistics for numerous countries in the Global South are either lacking or infrequently updated, even though they are essential for formulating effective policies. Additionally, detailed poverty statistics at smaller geographical levels are crucial for designing and implementing targeted initiatives to eradicate extreme poverty. Small-area estimation methods, which often depend on census data, are commonly employed for poverty mapping. While the most developed countries conduct censuses every ten years, this frequency is considerably lower in many countries within the Global South.

Geospatial data offer an alternative source for small-area models during off-census years, potentially improving the frequency of poverty estimates. However, it is essential to carefully consider how we process and utilize this geospatial data for official statistics. In this study, we theoretically and empirically examine the properties of small-area estimators that incorporate geospatial zonal statistics as predictors. These estimators are employed to estimate headcount poverty rates for districts in Mozambique and mean income estimates for the UK.

We compare the results obtained using geospatial data with estimates produced using predictors from the most recent census (considered the industry standard) and the older 2007 census data in Mozambique. The geospatial-based estimates align well with the industry standard estimates, while the estimates based on the 2007 census data do not exhibit the same accuracy. The application in Mozambique highlights the importance of model building and selection when using geospatial data and the potential pitfalls of relying on outdated census data. The UK case further demonstrates the value of geospatial data in developed countries and highlights the need for additional methodological research.

ALICE WOLFLE

Seasonality and Child Health in Bangladesh

Background: Large-scale cross-sectional surveys such as Demographic Health Surveys (DHSs) are a key data source for monitoring progress towards the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in low- and middle-income contexts. Such surveys typically collect data over a 3-to-6-month period of the year, which can introduce seasonal basis. This research explores seasonal variation in under-5 child acute undernutrition in Bangladesh as a case study to highlight the extent to which seasonal variation is observed in cross-sectional survey data and proposes approaches to accounting for seasonality when monitoring longer-term trends.

Data: To overcome limitations that have previously hindered the study of seasonality and health, this research leverages existing survey data by pooling six cross-sectional Bangladesh DHSs conducted between 1999 and 2018. This approach creates sample coverage spanning all month of the year to enable the analysis of seasonal trends in health and nutrition status.

Methods: Various modelling approaches including logistic and harmonic Fourier regression analysis were compared with descriptive statistics to explore seasonal and annual variability in wasting prevalence (an indicator of acute undernutrition among children under 5).

Results: The analysis found significant seasonal variation in wasting prevalence, which was highest during the hot and humid pre -monsoon season and lowest in the cold, dry winter. This showed that many dependant variables associated with wasting, such as diarrhoea prevalence, sanitation facilities and drinking water sources also exhibited seasonal trends.

Implications: These findings present evidence of when acute undernutrition prevalence (and associated determinants) are high and low during the year, enabling policy makers to better time interventions to mitigate seasonal variation in acute child undernutrition. Furthermore, this research demonstrates that ignoring seasonal variation in population and health survey data can lead to the misinterpretation of longer-term trends, particularly when annual averages are derived from data collected during limited periods of the year.

SHILPY BHAT

Understanding the implementation of 'Cobots': A mixed-methods case study on Hybrid Assistive Limb (HAL) in Hampshire County Council's adult social care

Work-related musculoskeletal disorders are a global challenge in physically demanding sectors such as healthcare, social care, and industry. These disorders significantly impact workers quality of life and productivity. 'Exoskeletons', wearable devices that provide mechanical support to reduce physical strain are emerging as promising interventions. Despite their potential ergonomic benefits, the real-world implementation remains underexplored, particularly within adult social care. This PhD research explores the factors influencing the implementation of Cobots (HAL Lumbar Type) within Hampshire County Council's adult social care settings. The study is informed by insights from a systematic scoping review and primary research to address critical gaps in evidence and practice.

This research adopts a sequential explanatory mixed-methods case study design. Initial cognitive interviews refined a survey questions assessing stakeholder perceptions, with findings highlighting the importance of clear communication and contextual examples. A cross-sectional survey and in-depth interviews with council staff will explore real-world experiences of Cobot implementation. The findings will integrate to inform practical recommendations for adopting wearable technologies in adult social care.

A systematic scoping review using Joanna Briggs Institute methodology included 53 studies exploring exoskeleton adoption across healthcare, social care, and industry. The findings reveal that while exoskeletons reduce physical strain during repetitive tasks, barriers such as discomfort from prolonged use, limited mobility, and fitting challenges hinder their widespread adoption and implementation. Facilitators included task-specific compatibility, ergonomic benefits, and ease of use. Unique to social care, emotional connection with care recipients and social acceptance emerged as critical factors influencing adoption.

This study bridges evidence gaps by combining scoping review insights with mixed-methods primary research. By addressing individual, organisational, and contextual factors (external factors specific to the broader environment in which the exoskeletons are being implemented), the research will provide recommendations for adopting exoskeletons into diverse occupational settings, contributing to workforce well-being and sustainable care delivery.

HADEN DEWIS

An Interdisciplinary Approach to Understanding why Targets are Missed During Interactive Searches

When searching for an object, you may be required to interact with your environment to successfully locate the object that you are searching for. These searches are known as interactive searches. We have conducted three separate studies to further understandings of interactive search within Psychology. In Study 1, we developed and piloted a new methodology for capturing the extremely important moment-to-moment interaction data that occurs whilst someone carries out an interactive search task. We created a guide for other researchers and made our methodologies open source. For Study 2, we utilised this new methodology to convert a typical visual search task for T shapes amongst L shapes, into an interactive low target prevalence search task. Target prevalence refers to how often the target we are searching for is present within the display. Previous visual search literature has shown that when target prevalence is low, searchers will frequently miss the target on the occasions that it does appear. In our interactive search experiments, we found that participants often missed the target in low prevalence conditions, however, this effect was not as strong as what is typically found within the visual search literature. Additionally, participants interacted with objects in surprising ways that we did not successfully predict. In Study 3, we created an interactive search task utilising the same methodologies. In this study we investigated whether the aspects of interactive search which set it apart from visual search (motoric effort and the revealing of obscured visual information) were strong enough to guide visual attention and interaction order. Here, results revealed that these two aspects of interactive search were indeed extremely strong guiding attributes for participants when conducting interactive searches. The new methodologies and associated findings from these studies provide opportunity for a wealth of further research into interactive search

MICHAELA TRESCAKOVA

Perception of Natural Scenes: Colour and Depth in Vision

Human depth perception integrates information about the environment from numerous visual cues with learned heuristics relating to natural scenes to guide the observer towards an interpretation of the world around them. The goal of the current research is to investigate and quantify the effects of a variety of visual cues on human judgements of visual aspects of natural scenes, using Southampton-York Natural Scenes (SYNS) dataset. In the first study, we manipulated colour information in images of natural scenes, and observed their impact on rapid estimation of relative depth. The effects of colour information on depth perception were present across the experiments, interacting with other depth cues and variables, such as binocular disparity, presentation time and elevation. In the second study, we measure perception of slant and tilt, quantifying discrimination accuracy and biases, and relating human judgements to ground-truth natural statistics of the environment, based on Bayesian ideal observer framework. In the third study, we ask participants to produce semantic segmentation maps of images from the SYNS dataset – where they identified and labelled objects in the scenes, whilst segmenting them from the background. This newly developed dataset with segmented and labelled scenes will be unique addition to the existing literature, as it contains real ground-truth depth information. It will be used to provide insight into figure-ground perception—how humans distinguish objects from backgrounds, and to understand which features (e.g., edges, textures colour, depth) humans use to separate objects from the background.

HANNAH CARR

Conduct problems and head injuries across development: Investigating longitudinal symptom interplay and common neutral correlates

Recent findings suggest childhood head injuries and conduct problems increase the risk for one another. With such research in its infancy, the current research aims to investigate the epidemiology and developmental pathophysiology of this bidirectional association.

As conduct problems are known to present at various developmental periods, latent class analysis was utilised on longitudinal birth-cohort data to identify whether this bidirectional association is applicable to various subtypes of conduct problems. As expected, three clinically relevant groups were identified displaying conduct problems pathways during childhood, adolescence, and persistent across development. Importantly, these pathways were all linked with distinct pathways of head injury suggesting this bidirectional association is applicable to several subgroups of children across development.

A second study investigated potential negative outcomes following their co-occurrence. Negative binomial regression models applied to the same dataset, identified a greater risk of early adolescent delinquency (i.e., substance use) in those with a history of both compared to those with one or neither. This suggests that their co-occurrence further increases the risk of early maladaptive outcomes and highlights a critical need for the future development of preventative intervention.

Finally, a neuroimaging dataset was utilised to investigate whether neural correlates of reward-processing could be a characteristic of co-occurring childhood head injuries and conduct disorder; a potential mechanism contributing to a greater risk of delinquency. Increased activation in the left amygdala and hippocampus during reward receipt was identified in children with a history of conduct disorder and sustaining a head injury suggesting stronger encoding of emotionally charged reward experiences in these children, which could reinforce subsequent memory-guided reward-seeking behaviour (i.e. delinquency).

These findings provide novel insight into co-occurring childhood head injuries and conduct problems and will guide future research with the aim of developing appropriate preventative intervention practices.
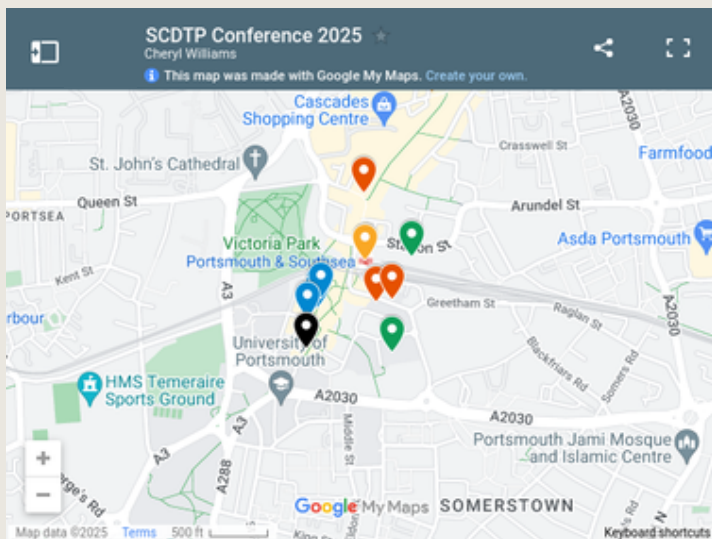
GETTING THERE

LOCATION:

Portsmouth Guildhall, Guildhall Square, Portsmouth. PO1 2AB.

Click on this symbol above for the map legend. Double-click on the map to interact.

DROP-OFF

You can be dropped off outside the Guildhall, on King Henry 1st Street.
A drop curb is outside the venue.

TAXI

There is a metered taxi rank on Guildhall Walk.

BY TRAIN:

Portsmouth & Southsea Train Station is located 100 meters from the venue.

BY BUS:

Most local and regional bus services stop at Commercial Road, City Centre, 5 minutes from the venue. The closest stop is Civic Offices on Isambard Brunel (Stop M (from the north) or K (from Southsea)).
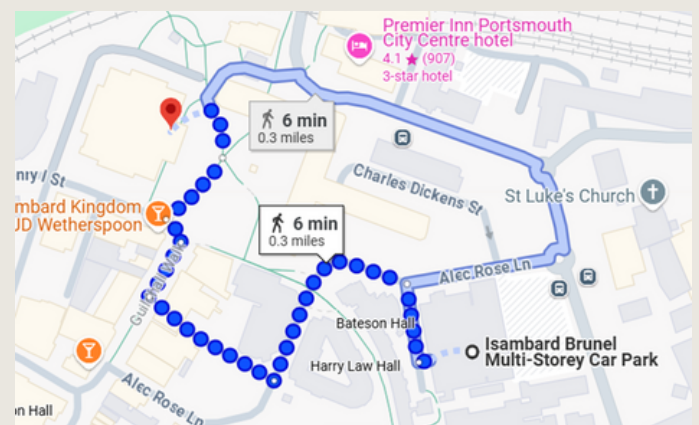https://www.firstbus.co.uk/

BY CAR:

Portsmouth is easily accessible from junction 12 of the M275, with links to the M3 and A3

PARKING OPTIONS:

Blue Badge holders are exempt from pay and display charges in Portsmouth City Council owned carparks when you display your badge. Please note that this is NOT the case for any NCP owned carparks or the Isambard Brunel Multi Storey.
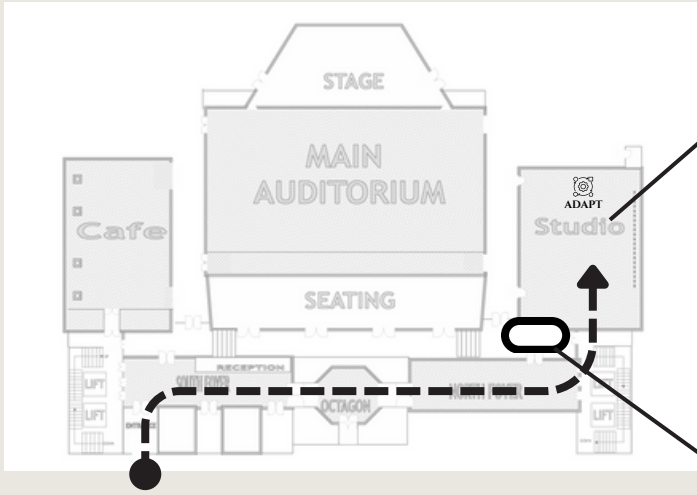
Isambard Brunel Multistorey Carpark - Discounted parking available from the Guildhall. Swap your carpark entry ticket at the Guildhall Box Office (before 5 pm) for a carpark exit ticket at only £4.50. This is the closest Blue Badge parking. See map below for the wheelchair accessible route to the venue (Google Maps defaults to a route including stairs).

Station Street Carpark, PO1 1BE - all day = £6
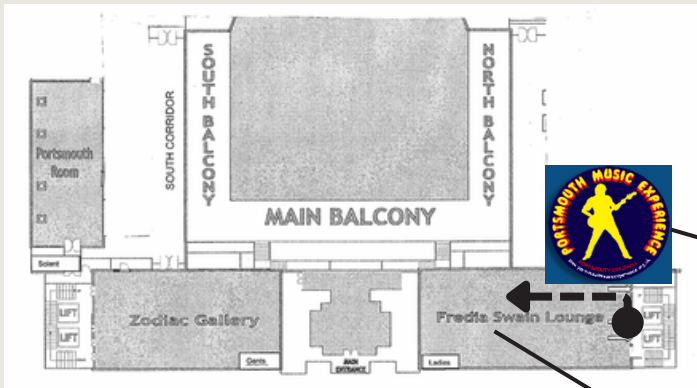
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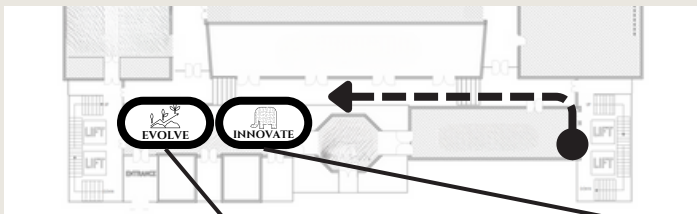

ADAPT

The Lens Studio

CHILL OUT

A space to chill, decompress, and escape the overwhelm. This room will have low lighting, comfy seats, and be a space for quiet (Nb. no phone calls in here please).

1ST FLOOR

PORTSMOUTH MUSIC EXPERIENCE EXHIBITION

LUNCH & POSTERS

Freda Swain Lounge

3RD FLOOR

EVOLVE

Meeting Room 1

INNOVATE

Meeting Room 2

USEFUL INFORMATION

Fidget Toys

Available in each break out room for all to use. Fidget toys can help to improve concentration. Give it a try, but please return them when you are done.

Need help?

All SCDTP staff and organising committee will be wearing a yellow lanyard.

southcoastdtp.ac.uk ✕ SC.DTP.

The Portsmouth Music Experience Exhibition

Dedicated to the musical influences on Portsmouth, the Portsmouth Music Experience Exhibition is located inside the Guildhall and is FREE to wonder around.
Further information can be found here:
http://www.portsmouthmusicexperience.org.uk/

Sustainability

Recycling stations are provided throughout the building, please recycle.
All plastic glasses used at the venue have been replaced with Oxo-Biodegradable Flexy Glass – an eco-friendly option.
LED is lighting is used throughout the building.
More information regarding sustainability can be found here:
https://www.portsmouthguildhall.org.uk/about-guildhall/about-us/sustainable-guildhall/

Wireless Internet

Network ID - GHT GUEST

ORGANISING COMMITEE

Michelize van Heerden
UNIVERSITY OF CHICHESTER

I am a PhD student at Chichester University, researching the Longitudinal Impact of the Women's Sport Leadership Academy (WSLA). My academic journey includes a Master's in Sport Business and Leadership, where I focused on women's career trajectories in leadership within motorsport, and a Bachelor's in International Sport Management and Business. Beyond academia, I have extensive experience in event management, having worked on major projects like the EURO 2024, production for London Lions Basketball, and campaigns for PUMA. Most recently, a campaign I was involved in won an award at the Football Content Awards 2024, showcasing my passion for impactful and innovative work in the sports industry.

Cheryl Williams
UNIVERSITY OF Portsmouth

As a first-year PhD student, I am researching a virtual reality intervention for chronic pain management. I earned a BSc in Psychology from the University of Portsmouth in 2004 and subsequently worked as a data analyst for a national energy company. My passion for fitness led me to retrain as a coach in strength and conditioning, biomechanics, and yoga, helping individuals manage pain. I completed a MResSc in Physical Activity, Health & Rehabilitation (2022) at UoP, exploring the impact of mood on running biomechanical asymmetry, and an MSc in Social Research Methods (2024) from the University of Southampton. I aim to promote health and wellbeing through my research.

Rachel Thomson
UNIVERSITY OF Portsmouth

I am a first-year PhD student investigating how differences in African elephant cognition and personality influence crop-raiding behaviour in Botswana. I hold a BSc in Biology from the University of Manchester, a MRes in Neuroscience from Newcastle University, and a MSc in Social Research Methods from the University of Southampton. In between my degrees I have worked on blue whale migration in Spain, baboon cognition in Namibia, Asian elephant spatial-use in Thailand and howler monkey personality in Paraguay! My PhD fieldwork will entail interviewing farmers, observing elephants with novel objects, and cognitive testing of crop-raiding individuals using puzzle boxes! I aim to develop strategies to mitigate human-elephant conflict.

ORGANISING COMMITEE

Tora Giacomelli
UNIVERSITY OF PORTSMOUTH

I am a first-year PhD student researching health literacy in young children. I have a background in Health Psychology, having previously worked as a Research Assistant for an EU-Funded project on sexual health in older adults, and as Evaluation Officer for the children's health charity Anna Freud.
My PhD will focus on understanding how and why health literacy develops in the critical early childhood period, as well as understanding key influences such as parents, teachers and peers. The outcomes will include an increased understanding, conceptualisation and operationalisation of health literacy in early childhood.

Clare Phillips
UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHAMPTON

I completed a BSc in Biology at the University of Southampton in 2005 (!) and subsequently moved to London where I trained to be a nurse at King's College. In 2016, I returned to studying and completed an MSc in Global Health at Brighton and Sussex Medical School. This got me really interested in research and the enormous scope it has to influence change. I continue to work clinically, as an alcohol nurse specialist, alongside my PhD (part-time). My research aims to explore the experiences of Polish migrants to the UK accessing care and support for alcohol use disorder and alcohol-related liver disease.

Alice Bell
UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHAMPTON

I am a first-year PhD student in Economics. I am studying cooperation around common pool resources with tipping points. I previously completed a BSc and an MRes in Economics at the University of Southampton. I hope to use experiments to examine the underlying mechanisms for coordination around common pool resources with tipping points. I am particularly interested in their application to climate change and cooperation around avoiding uncertain and risky tipping points that will cause irreversible damage to our environment.

THANK YOU

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