Sahithyan Sivakumaran

PhD Student · Cognition & Perception · New York University

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Pronouns: he/him/his

Education

PhD in Cognition and Perception — Aug 2024 - present
Department of Psychology, NYU — New York, USA
- Advisor: Catherine Hartley

M.Sc Cognitive Sciences — 2018 - 2020
Centre of Behavioural and Cognitive Sciences (CBCS), University of Allahabad — Allahabad,India
- Advisor: Narayanan Srinivasan

Semester Abroad Program — Jan - June 2017
Umeå University — Umeå, Sweden

B.Tech in Computer Science and Engineering — 2014 - 2018
Department of Computer Science, SRM Institute of Science & Technology — Chennai, India

Research Experience

Centre for Neuroscience, Indian Institute of Science — Aug 2021 - July 2024
Project Associate | Emotion and Cognition Lab — Bangalore, India
- PI : Srikanth Padmala

Centre for Neuroscience, Indian Institute of Science — Dec 2020 - July 2021
Project Associate | Space Lab — Bangalore, India
- PI : Sachin Deshmukh

Publications:

- **Role of contingency in reward-emotion interactions during the categorization of emotional facial expressions**
  Journal: Cognition and Emotion
  DOI: doi.org/10.1080/02699931.2025.2542920
  *Authors: A Krishnan, **S Sivakumaran** & S Padmala *, 2025*

- **Role of contingency in reward-emotion interactions during the categorization of emotional facial expressions**
  Journal: Motivation Science
  DOI: doi.org/10.1037/mot0000330
  *Authors: **S Sivakumaran**, L Chakravarthula & S Padmala*, 2024*

Teaching & Mentoring

Course Assistant — Fall 2026
MA Statistics - NYU

Teaching Assistant — March 2023
Workshop on Cognitive Neuroimaging, CBCS, University of Allahabad

Posters & Presentations

- **(Poster) | Neural mechanisms underlying valence bias in reinforcement learning and episodic memory across development** Aug 2026
  CCN,
  New York, NY
- **(Poster) | Neural mechanisms underlying valence bias in reinforcement learning and episodic memory across development** Nov 2025
  Society for Neuroscience,
  San Diego, CA
- **(Poster) | Neural mechanisms underlying valence bias in reinforcement learning and episodic memory across development** Oct 2025
  Society for Neuroeconomics,
  Boston, MA
- **(Talk) | The role of positive and negative outcomes in shaping memory** April 2025
  TELL GSAS doctoral research series
  Graduate School of Arts & Science, NYU
- **(Poster) | Role of contingency in reward-emotion interactions** Dec 2023
  10th Annual Conference of Cognitive Science
  IIT-Kanpur, India
- **(Talk) | Intertemporal choice under uncertainty** Jan 2021
  Indian Institute of Science,
  Bangalore, India

Technical & Analytical Skills

- **Programming & Scripting:** *Expert* - Java (10 yrs), C (8 yrs), C++ (8 yrs); *Advanced* - MATLAB (6 yrs), Python (4 yrs); *Intermediate* - R (2 yrs); *Foundational* - JavaScript, HTML/CSS, Docker, Linux shell
- **Experimental-Design Platforms:** Psychtoolbox, PsychoPy, EPrime, Gorilla, Pavlovia, Qualtrics
- **Neuroimaging Acquisition:** MPRAGE (structural) & EPIBOLD (functional)
- **Neuroimaging Analysis:** SPM, FSL, AFNI; preprocessing, wholebrain & ROI GLM, generalized PPI, beta-series correlation, MVPA, network analysis, brainbehaviour correlations
- **Statistical Software:** R, SPSS, JASP
- **Databases:** Oracle, MySQL, SQL (schema design, query optimisation)
- **Visualisation & Documentation:** Adobe Illustrator, Adobe Photoshop, LaTeX
- **Cloud & HPC:** SLURM, GNU Parallel (cluster job orchestration)
- **Histology:** Embedding, sectioning, Nissl & immuno-staining (rat brain)

Honors, Awards & Scholarships

- **UGC Merit-based Scholarship for Master's Studies** July 2018 - May 2020
  Associated with Centre of Behavioural and Cognitive Sciences (CBCS),
  University of Allahabad
- **Tuition Waiver for Semester Abroad from SRM Institute of Science & Technology** Jan - June 2017
  Received a tuition waiver for a semester at Umeå University, Umeå, Sweden

Service & Outreach

- **Local Committee Member, Cognitive Computational Neuroscience (CCN) 2026** — Aug 2026
  New York, USA
- **Volunteer teacher work** — Summer 2022
  Teaching out-of-school children, Bangalore
- **Student coordinator for semester abroad program** — 2016 - 2018
  SRM Institute of Science & Technology, Chennai, India
- **Summer trainee at CSIR-CEERI** — Summer 2016
  Central Electronics Engineering Research Institute, Chennai, India
- **Volunteer & Student member of Institution of Engineering and Technology (IET)** — 2015 - 2016
  Chennai (Madras), India
- **Volunteer at Blue Cross - India** — 2012 - 2016
  Chennai (Madras), India
- **Volunteer & Member of World Wildlife Foundation (WWF)** — 2008 - 2012
  Chennai (Madras), India

Industry Experience

Research Intern — Jan - June 2018
Philips India ltd, Philips Innovation campus — Bangalore, India

Workshops & Short Courses

- **Summer School: Neurohackademy 2025** — July 2025 - August 2025
  University of Washington, Seattle
- **NYU Science Communication Workshop** — Feb 2025 - March 2025
  Arthur L. Carter Journalism Institute - NYU
- **Short-Term Course: Advances in Medical Imaging** — March 2021
  Indian Institute of Technology (BHU), India
- **Workshop on Cognitive Neuroimaging** — Feb 2020
  Centre of Behavioural and Cognitive Science, India
- **Brain Computation Learning Workshop** — June 2019
  Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore, India
- **Machine Intelligence and Brain Research Winter Course** — Jan 2019
  Indian Institute of Technology, Madras, India

Languages

- **English:** Native or Bilingual proficiency
- **Tamil:** Native or Bilingual proficiency
- **German:** Completed A1 level German Language course from Goethe Institute (7- Jan - 2016)

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