

Irena Arslanova
Leverhulme Early Career Fellow • BSc. PhD Cognitive Neuroscience

irena.arslanova@gmail.com • +44 (0) 7301016552 • irenaarslanova.com • [Google Scholar](https://scholar.google.com/citations?user=irenaarslanova) • [ORCID](https://orcid.org/irenaarslanova)

Experimental psychologist and cognitive neuroscientist developing an independent research programme on how brain-body dynamics shape perception, attention and information processing. Leverhulme Early Career Fellow with a strong first-author publication record, competitive grant success, and extensive expertise in EEG, ECG and experimental psychophysiology. Research-led educator with experience designing and delivering cognitive-neuroscience and research-methods teaching, assessing undergraduate work, supervising dissertations and funded student projects, and mentoring students through academic and career decisions.

145+ citations
h-index = 6

Current Biology
1st author paper

£145k+
external research funding

Student-nominated
Ed. Excellence Award

100k+
TEDx talk views

APPOINTMENTS

Leverhulme Early Career Fellow • Royal Holloway, University of London

Mar 2024 – Present

Competitive 3-year independent fellowship: *In search of experienced time: how heart-brain coupling supports time perception*

- Two first-author publications, with one further manuscript under-review and three in preparation
- Two recurring specialist MSc lectures to cohorts of ~ 60 & 20 students; 10 final-year undergraduate dissertation students; nominated by the students for the Education Excellence Award
- £3,000 EPS Undergraduate Research Bursary for a 10-week student project developed into a full EEG study and co-authored manuscript in preparation
- Postdoctoral Representative in the department, plus on the organising committee for Pint of Science Egham festivals delivered to near-capacity general-public audiences
- NPR interview, four invited academic talks, one invited career talk, plus two conference presentations

Postdoctoral Researcher • Royal Holloway, University of London

Apr 2021 – Mar 2024

Supervised by Prof Manos Tsakiris; interoception and social cognition

- Three first-author publications, including in *Current Biology*
- €54,000 BIAL Foundation Grant to fund two EEG studies and a research assistant
- TEDx talk which now has 100k+ views and has been selected for TED's official platform
- CBS Primetime interview, plus two podcast talks
- Invited by City St George's students to present a keynote at the *Undergraduate Psychology conference*
- Helped establish the inaugural Pint of Science Egham festival
- Mind-Body-Brain Young Investigator Award to fund a three-month research visit to Max Planck Institute

EDUCATION

PhD in Cognitive Neuroscience • University College London

2017 – 2021

Supervised by Prof Patrick Haggard

Thesis: Sensory and cognitive factors in multi-digit touch, and its integration with vision.

- PhD resulted in three published manuscripts
- Research visit to NTT Communication Science Laboratories in Japan to apply tactile-visual integration in the context of haptic technology
- PhD Representative in the department and research assistant for UCL Organisational Development team to help improve the training provision for PhD students across the whole institution
- Sully Scholarship for best PhD Upgrade
- Best Poster award at ResearchINTouch workshop and EPS Grindley conference travel grant

BSc Psychology, 1st class • City St George's, University of London

2014 – 2017

Supervised by Prof Bettina Forster

Dissertation: Searching for Bodies: Electrophysiological Evidence for Independent Somatosensory Processing during Attentional Selection of Body Postures

- Dissertation resulted in a first-author publication
- £3,000 EPS Undergraduate Research Bursary to conduct an independent research project with EEG
- EPS / British Science Association Undergraduate Project Prize
- British Psychological Society Best Student Award

TEACHING & SUPERVISION

Undergraduate dissertation supervision Lead supervisor for **10 final-year** BSc Psychology students across two cohorts at Royal Holloway (2024–2026)

Postgraduate research mentoring Primary day-to-day supervisor of Magdalena Jaglinska as postgraduate research assistant on the BIAL Grant (2024); now serve on her PhD Committee in Experimental Psychology at UCL, monitoring doctoral progress and formally assessing her PhD upgrade.

Funded student research Supervisor for Aimee Parish (EPS Bursary, 2025) and Edwina Siji (RHUL Bursary, 2026)

Research internships Supervisor for Keying Wang (voluntary UCL research intern, 2019)

MSc lecturer, Royal Holloway Designed and delivered *Emotion II: Emotion Regulation* annually from 2023–2025; cohort approximately 60 students

MSc lecturer, Royal Holloway Designed and delivered *What Can Your Heart Tell You About Your Brain?* annually from 2024–2025; cohort approximately 20 students

Research Methods demonstrator, Birkbeck Delivered weekly practical workshops across introductory, Level 1 and Level 2 provision, teaching SPSS/R and supporting laboratory reports (2021–2023)

Academic tutor, UCL BSc Psychology Year 3 Academic Tutorials (2021–2023); UCL Writing Lab tutor (2020–2021)

Assessment and marking BSc Psychology dissertation marking; exam marking for PS2021: Cognitive Psychology, assessment marking for PS2120: How can psychology change the world: Clinical and Neuroscience perspectives

GRANTS, FUNDING & AWARDS

Leverhulme Trust Early Career Fellowship 3-year salary support of £78,000, plus £18,000 research allocation (2024–2027)

Royal Holloway Education Excellence Award, nominated (2026)

BIAL Foundation Grant (co-PI) €54,000 (2023–2024)

Experimental Psychology Society Undergraduate Research Bursary (supervisor) £3,000 (2025)

Mind-Body-Brain Young Investigator Award (2022)

MRC iCASE PhD studentship (2017–2021)

Experimental Psychology Society / British Science Association Undergraduate Project Prize (2017)

Experimental Psychology Society Undergraduate Research Bursary (student applicant) £3,000 (2016)

INVITED TALKS & SELECTED PRESENTATIONS

Career talk: Roehampton Research & Innovation Summit Roehampton University, May 2026

Keynote: Division of Cardiovascular Sciences PGR Showcase University of Manchester, May 2025

Body and Space lab meeting Birkbeck, Apr 2025; invited by Dr Denise Cadete

Minds and Moments: An Interdisciplinary Workshop on Cognition, Brain and Time Berlin, Sep 2024; invited by Prof. Ayelet Landau

Time Research Forum Virtual Journal Club Sep 2024; invited by Prof Martin Wiener

Keynote: Undergraduate Psychology Conference City St George's, Feb 2022

Time Momentary Emotion Elicitation and Capture virtual workshop Oct 2022; invited by Dr Monica Perusquía-Hernández

Selected conference talks: Association for the Scientific Study of Consciousness (oral, Heraklion, 2025); Timing Research Forum (oral, Tokyo, 2025); British Association of Cognitive Neuroscience (oral, London, 2024); Brain-Body Waves Symposium (oral, Salerno, 2024).

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT & IMPACT

TEDx talk How your heartbeat shapes your experience of time (Feb 2024); over 100,000 views [link](#)

NPR TED Radio Hour Interview on the science of time perception (May 2025) [link](#)

CBS Primetime Interview about the results of the Current Biology paper (July 2023) [link](#)

Pint of Science Organiser, speaker and host (2023, 2024, 2026) [link](#)

Podcasts Brain Space Time podcast ([link](#)), The Encourager podcast ([link](#))

Media coverage of our research Scientific American ([link](#)), Psyche ([link](#)), Vice ([link](#))

SELECTED SERVICES

Postdoctoral Representative, Royal Holloway Represent postdoctoral researchers in the department and contribute to departmental Board meetings

Peer review Current Biology; Journal of Cognitive Neuroscience; Quarterly Journal of Experimental Psychology; Psychophysiology; Experimental Brain Research; iScience; Cognition; Human Brain Mapping; Communications Psychology; Social Cognitive and Affective Neuroscience; Consciousness and Cognition

Research culture Co-organiser of Pint of Science Egham; regular contributor to departmental seminars, journal clubs and research events

Mentoring Volunteer mentor, IntoUniversity, London (2014–2017); regular one-to-one academic and career guidance and references for former supervisees

RESEARCH SKILLS

Physiology & neuroscience EEG/ERP, ECG and skin conductance; simultaneous EEG-ECG; psychophysiological experimental design; EEG component, time-frequency and cardiac-locked analyses

Experiments MATLAB, Psychtoolbox and Gorilla; laboratory and online behavioural paradigms; event-triggered stimulation; task development for perception, attention, decision-making and time perception

Analysis R, MATLAB, SPSS; EEGLAB, FieldTrip and MVPA-Light; mixed-effects modelling, psychometric modelling, cluster-based permutation tests, multivariate decoding and reproducible analysis pipelines

Open science Preregistration, transparent reporting, and open sharing of data, materials and code via the OSF

PUBLICATIONS

Nine peer-reviewed articles; h-index 6, 145+ citations (Google Scholar, August 2026).

Arslanova, I., Jaglinska, M., & Tsakiris, M. (2026). **Dissecting emotional and cardiac contributions to duration perception: Evidence from two EEG experiments.** *Neuropsychologia*. [DOI / paper](#)

Arslanova, I., Dalton, P., & Tsakiris, M. (2025). **The heart in attention: Evidence for cardiac phase effects in alerting but not executive control.** *Biological Psychology* [DOI / paper](#)

Takamuku, S., Arslanova, I., Gomi, H., & Haggard, P. (2024). **Multidigit tactile perception II: Perceptual weighting during integration follows a leading-finger priority.** *Journal of Neurophysiology* [DOI / paper](#)

Arslanova, I., Meletaki, V., Calvo-Merino, B., & Forster, B. (2023). **Perception of facial expressions involves emotion-specific somatosensory cortex activations shaped by alexithymia.** *Cortex* [DOI / paper](#)

Arslanova, I., Kotsaris, V., & Tsakiris, M. (2023). **Perceived time expands and contracts within each heartbeat.** *Current Biology* [DOI / paper](#)

Arslanova, I., Galvez-Pol, A., Kilner, J., Finotti, G., & Tsakiris, M. (2022). **Seeing through each other's hearts: Inferring others' heart rate as a function of own heart-rate perception and perceived social intelligence.** *Affective Science* [DOI / paper](#)

Arslanova, I., Takamuku, S., Gomi, H., & Haggard, P. (2022). **Multidigit tactile perception I: Motion integration benefits for tactile trajectories presented bimanually.** *Journal of Neurophysiology* [DOI / paper](#)

Arslanova, I., Wang, K., Gomi, H., & Haggard, P. (2020). **Somatosensory evoked potentials that index lateral inhibition are modulated according to the mode of perceptual processing: Comparing or combining multidigit tactile motion.** *Cognitive Neuroscience* [DOI / paper](#)

Arslanova, I., Galvez-Pol, A., Calvo-Merino, B., & Forster, B. (2019). **Searching for bodies: ERP evidence for independent somatosensory processing during visual search for body-related information.** *NeuroImage* [DOI / paper](#)

Manuscript under review: [Arslanova, I.](#) & Tsakiris, M. **Self-prioritisation in arbitrary shape-label associations is not sufficient to distort duration perception.** [DOI / preprint](#)

ADDITIONAL

Languages: English, Russian, Estonian (native) · French (basic)

Hobbies: Strength training, running, literature, art