



STUDENT NEWSLETTER

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SOCIETY FOR PSYCHOPHYSIOLOGICAL RESEARCH

Join us for the SPR 2026 Annual Meeting in Halifax, Canada!

October 14 - October 17, 2026

Halifax Convention Centre, Halifax, Canada

The 66th Annual Meeting of SPR will feature a collection of symposia, workshops, poster sessions, and talks spanning across the field of psychophysiology.

Invited speakers include Michael J. Frank, PhD (Brown University), known for computational modeling of learning and decision-making; Wendy Berry Mendes, PhD (Yale University), recognized for work on how social contexts and stress affect psychophysiology; and Beatriz Luna, PhD (University of Pittsburgh), whose work focuses on cognitive neurodevelopment.

SEE YOU AT HALIFAX!



Michael J. Frank, Ph.D
Brown University, USA



Wendy B. Mendes, PhD
Yale University, USA



Beatriz Luna, PhD
University of Pittsburgh, USA

CALL FOR ABSTRACTS

Poster Abstracts ([Submit Here](#))

March 24th - April 28th, 2026

Posters with a student first author (graduate/undergraduate student or pre-doctoral research assistant/associate) are eligible for a Student Poster Award!

First-author trainees who are current SPR members can also opt to have their submission considered for inclusion as a Faces of the Future talk.

Late-Breaking Student Posters ([Submit Here](#))

June 3rd - July 1st, 2026

First-authors for late-breaking posters must be undergraduate students at the time of submission.

Big Idea Symposia ([Submit Here](#))

March 24th - April 28th, 2026

Submit your abstract for a single talk related to a "Big Idea" for selection by the Program Committee to maximize the breadth of theoretical perspectives, methods, measurement approaches, and diversity of presenters. The Big Ideas for the 2026 conference are to be announced soon in early March!

2026 GRANTS

SPR Research Training Grant ([Learn More](#))

Deadline: June 01, 2026

This award will allow students or postdocs to obtain mentorship/training in psychophysiological assessments/analysis from experts in the field. This could involve travel to a remote site or travel expenses for a remote mentor to visit the applicant's lab. Each applicant may include a budget of up to \$5,000.00 U.S. Look out for more information from SPR soon.

& AWARDS

SPR Travel Award ([Learn More](#))

Deadline: July 14, 2026

This award is meant to support the ability of early career members (students, post-baccs, post-docs) to participate in the Society's Annual Meeting. The SPR Travel Awards specifically aim to assist members who would not be able to attend the meeting without funding from the Travel Awards program. More information will be available soon on the SPR website.

Any award-related questions can be directed to info@sprweb.org.



SPR Family Care Grant ([Learn More](#))

Deadline: July 28, 2026

(Application form will be available April 2026)

This grant is meant to support SPR members who need care due to disability or illness or who have dependents who require childcare, elder care, or care due to disability or illness. It is available to support financial need, to help offset the costs of wrap-around care at home accrued during in-person conference attendance, and/or during preparation time directly involved in participating in the conference. The grant can provide support up to \$500 per family.

2025 TRAINEE AWARD RECIPIENTS

Trainee Poster Award winners:

Katherine Boere

*NEUROPHYSIOLOGICAL ADAPTATIONS TO EXTREME PHYSICAL STRESS:
EEG EVIDENCE FROM A 50 KM ULTRA-MARATHON*

Félix Duplessis-Marcotte

CORTISOL CLOUDS THE GUT FEELING IN DECISION-MAKING UNDER STRESS

Claudia Becker

*A BRIEF POSITIVE-AFFECT INTERVENTION FOR WORRY: PREDICTION OF
TREATMENT OUTCOME USING THE LPP*

Jourdan Pouliot

REVERSAL LEARNING IN THE PUPIL AND VISUAL BRAIN

Alexandra Argiros

*NEURAL RESPONSES TO SOCIAL REWARDS ARE ASSOCIATED WITH
ADOLESCENTS' DAILY AFFECT IN RESPONSE TO SOCIAL EVENTS*

Mateja Perovic

*BEHAVIOURAL AND NEURAL DYNAMICS OF CATEGORY LEARNING ACROSS
THE MENSTRUAL CYCLE*

Abigail Szkutak

*GASTRIC MYOELECTRICAL ASSOCIATIONS WITH AUTONOMIC AND CENTRAL
NERVOUS SYSTEM ACTIVITY DURING STATE NEGATIVE EMOTIONALITY AND
PERSEVERATIVE NEGATIVE THINKING: A TWO-STUDY INVESTIGATION*

Sarah Pieper

*NEURAL CORRELATES OF WORKING MEMORY SUBPROCESSES IN CHILDREN
WITH AND WITHOUT ADHD*

2025 TRAINEE AWARD RECIPIENTS

Trainee Poster Award winners:

Kaia Sargent

AN OSCILLATORY HIERARCHY ACROSS THE BRAIN AND BODY

Christoph Frühlinger

SLEEPINESS BUT NEITHER FLUID NOR CRYSTALLIZED INTELLIGENCE CAN BE PREDICTED FROM RESTING-STATE EEG - EVIDENCE FROM THE LARGE SCALE COSCIENCE EEG-PERSONALITY PROJECT

Trainee EDI Poster Award winners:

Darcianne K. Watanabe

PSYCHOLOGICAL COSTS OF DISTRACTION ACROSS SEX:
ETHNIC DIFFERENCES BY HRV

Alice Onyango-Opiyo

NEIGHBORHOOD OPPORTUNITY DISPARITIES PREDICT BRAIN FUNCTION IN
YOUNG CHILDREN

Research Training Grant recipients:

Martino Schettino, University of Roma

Emilia Cárdenas, Vanderbilt University

Abigail Szkutak, Columbia University

Matthew Rocha Hammerstrom, University of Victoria

2025 AWARD FEATURES

Claudia Becker,

Texas A&M University

2025 Trainee Poster Award Recipient



I am a third-year graduate student in Texas A&M's Clinical Psychology PhD program working with Dr. Annmarie MacNamara in the Multimethod and Cognition (MAC) Lab and Dr. Israel Liberzon in the Liberzon Lab. My research is focused on studying neurobiological and cognitive-affective processes underlying fear-based pathology (with a particular interest in generalized anxiety disorder and post-traumatic stress disorder) to inform personalized treatment approaches.

I have been a member of SPR for two years. I appreciate how small and friendly the community is as well as the high-quality psychophysiological research presented every year at the conference. Attending SPR not only inspires new ideas for my research projects but also motivates me to be a better scientist in general.

1. What is your project about?

Our project used electrocortical processing of negative, positive, and neutral pictures to predict treatment response to a brief positive emotion up-regulation treatment—Short Term Methods for Increasing Life's Enjoyment (SMILE). We found that participants with blunted late positive potential amplitudes—a neural index of attention and emotion regulation—to negative pictures responded best to SMILE with the largest reductions in worry over treatment.

2. What specific strategies do you use to design and present your poster in a way that communicates your key takeaways effectively?

When designing my poster, I try to minimize unnecessary text and rely predominantly on figures to illustrate my points. My advisor and labmates always provide feedback on my poster and I make sure to practice my presentation plenty of times prior to my poster session. Moreover, when presenting, I try to tailor my presentation to the knowledge of my audience. To do this, I always ask my audience about their prior familiarity with the subject before I begin. Finally, when presenting I try to relax and have fun

3. What is one piece of advice you would give to trainees who will be presenting for the first time at the upcoming SPR 2026 Annual Meeting?

Be confident! SPR is an excellent place to receive feedback on your work and generate new ideas from some of the leading researchers in the field. Also, everyone I have interacted with at SPR has been extremely kind and encouraging.

4. What are the next steps for this project (or your career) that you are most excited about?

I am excited to begin incorporating new methodologies in my research, such as startle, to continue learning more about neural predictors for symptom progression and the treatment of these symptoms.

2025 AWARD FEATURES

Abigail Szkutak

Columbia University

**2025 Research Training Grant
Recipient**



My name is Abigail (“Abby”) Szkutak, and I am a fifth-year Clinical Psychology Ph.D. candidate at Teachers College, Columbia University. I work in Dr. Douglas Mennin’s Regulation of Emotion in Anxiety and Depression (READ) Lab, where I focus my research on understanding why and for whom treatments work for adults with transdiagnostic emotional distress.

I have been a student member of SPR since 2022. What I enjoy most about SPR is the sense of community. The first time I attended the annual SPR conference, I was struck by the opportunity to connect with like-minded researchers who are trailblazers in translational neuroscience and psychophysiology, and who are deeply invested in mentoring the next generation of scholars.

1. What is your project about?

My project leverages EEG/ERPs to examine attentional and metacognitive mechanisms before and after self-directed interventions targeting emotional distress in adults. This project draws from an ongoing three-arm randomized controlled trial of digital, skills-based, self-directed interventions with weekly coach support for adults with clinically elevated perseverative cognition (e.g., worry, rumination, self-criticism) and at least one current psychiatric disorder.

2. How did you (or how do you plan to) utilize the award funds? In what ways has receiving the SPR Research Training Grant supported your research goals or professional development?

The award funds helped defray the cost of travel to and from Montréal for the 2025 SPR Annual Meeting and provided partial coverage of my summer stipend, allowing me to devote 50% of my time to training activities. This support was instrumental in enabling hands-on training in EEG/ERP data processing and analysis, as well as fostering mentorship and collaboration through conference attendance. Overall, the award meaningfully advanced both my methodological expertise and professional development within the SPR community.

3. What strategies did you use to make your proposal stand out?

I focused on clearly articulating how my proposed training aligned with SPR's mission to advance translational research. I was intentional about specifying concrete training goals, the skills I aimed to acquire, and how these skills would directly strengthen my ongoing and future research program. I also emphasized mentorship and highlighted how the proposed work bridged clinical science with neuroscience in a way that was rigorous and feasible.

4. What is one piece of advice you would give to fellow trainees who are interested in applying for this award this year?

My biggest piece of advice is to be explicit about how the award will meaningfully shape your development as a researcher. Clearly connect your training plan to your long-term scientific goals, and don't be afraid to show how the award fills a specific gap in your skillset. Additionally, I found it helpful to seek feedback early from mentors and peers. Having others review my proposal greatly strengthened the clarity and focus of the proposal.

SPR STUDENT COMMUNICATIONS

The CPSI Student Communications Committee is excited to announce our new communication platform for SPR trainees and post-docs. In August 2026, we will be launching a Discord server where SPR members can communicate during the Annual Meetings, and beyond. Members can facilitate roommate matches, plan group meet-ups, share recommendations for places to visit in Halifax, and more. It will also be a way to connect with other researchers outside of the Annual Meeting. If you're interested in joining, please fill out this [brief survey](#); we would love to hear your ideas! We'll be in touch about our latest updates.

SPR STUDENT EXCHANGE FORUM

Interested in working with psychophysicists abroad? Check out the Students Exchange Forum at sprweb.org/Exchange_Forum! Our forum currently includes SPR labs from the United States, United Kingdom, and Germany. These labs are happy to host students and postdocs who want to learn new psychophysiological methods. We are here to assist you in establishing connections with these SPR labs.

JOIN THE C P S I !

Interested in putting these student initiatives together? Join and take on a student role in the SPR Committee to Promote Student Interests.

For more information, please contact [Dr. Anna Finley](#) or [Dr. Elizabeth Paitel](#)



Prepared By:

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Anna Finley and Elizabeth Paitel of the SPR
Committee to Promote Student Interests.

This newsletter is sent to current student and
general members. Please forward to any
interested students or colleagues!

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