

Nazia Jassim, PhD

Post-Doctoral Research Associate, Dept of Psychology, University of Cambridge, Cambridge, UK

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EDUCATION

PhD in Psychiatry (Science) , Autism Research Centre, University of Cambridge, UK <i>Thesis title: "The neurocognitive mechanisms of perceptual inference in autism"</i> <i>Supervisors: John Suckling & Simon Baron-Cohen; Advisor: Rebecca Lawson</i>	Oct 2018 - Dec 2022
MSc Cognitive Neuroscience (<i>Sehr gut/ Excellent</i>), Freie Universität Berlin, Germany	Oct 2015 - Apr 2018
MSc Neurobiology (First Class), Institute of Basic Medical Sciences, University of Madras, India	July 2010 - May 2012
BSc Zoology (Distinction), Women's Christian College, University of Madras, India	July 2007 - May 2010

ACADEMIC POSTS

Post-Doctoral Research Associate , Uni of Cambridge, UK Prediction & Learning Lab, Dept of Psychology (PI: Rebecca Lawson)	Oct 2023 - present
Parke-Davis Post-Doctoral Exchange Fellow , Brown University, USA Host: Dept of Psychology, Uni of Cambridge (PI: Rebecca Lawson) Visit: Carney Institute for Brain Sciences, Brown University (PI: Frederike Petzschnner)	Oct 2022 -Sept 2023
Visiting Master's Student , Uni of Cambridge, UK Dept of Psychiatry (Supervisor: John Suckling)	Nov 2017 - Apr 2018
Student Research Assistant , LMU Munich, Germany Dept of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry (Supervisor: Belinda Platt)	May - Oct 2017
Research Internship , Technical University of Munich, Germany TUM-Neuroimaging Center (Supervisors: Christian Sorg, Felix Brandl)	Jan - May 2017
Research Internship , Charité Medical University of Berlin, Germany Stress and Affective Disorders Lab (Supervisors: Katja Wingenfeld, Julianne Fleischer)	Sept - Dec 2016
Research Internship , National Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences, India Transpsych Lab (Supervisors: G Venkatasubramanian, Sunil Kalmady)	May - July 2012

PUBLICATIONS [see also [Google Scholar](#)]

*First author

Peer-reviewed:

1. **Jassim, N.***, Waade, P.T., Parsons, O., Petzschnner, F.P., Rua, C., Rodgers, C.T., Baron-Cohen, S., Suckling, J., Mathys, C., Lawson, R.P. (2025) Computational signatures of uncertainty are reflected in motor cortex excitatory neurochemistry. *Nature Communications*. doi.org/10.1038/s41467-025-64702-6
2. **Jassim, N.***, Hagan, C., Holt R., Goodyer, I., Suckling, J. (2025). Differential precuneus and frontal activity associated with facial emotion processing in adolescent depression. *Psychiatry Research: Neuroimaging*. doi.org/10.1016/j.psychresns.2025.112019
3. **Jassim, N.***, McCoy, B.*, Yip, E.W., Allison, C., Baron-Cohen, S., Lawson, R.P. (2025). The "Tetris effect": autistic and non-autistic people share an implicit drive for perceptual cohesion. *Molecular Autism*. doi.org/10.1186/s13229-025-00654-4
4. Falter-Wagner, C.M., Gernert, C., Noreika, V., **Jassim, N.**, Streicher, J., Bekinschtein, T (2024). Protocol of Stress in Autism (STREAM): The Role of Circadian Activity, Sleep Quality and Sensory Hyper-Reactivity. *Plos One*. doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0303209

5. **Jassim, N.***, Owen, A., Lawson, R.P., Suckling, J., Baron-Cohen, S., & Parsons, O. (2022). Perceptual decision-making in autism as assessed by “spot the difference” visual cognition tasks. *Scientific Reports*. doi.org/10.1038/s41598-022-19640-4
6. Procyshyn, T., Lombardo, M., Lai, M., **Jassim, N.**, Auyeung, B., Crockford, S., ... Bethlehem, R. A. (2022). Oxytocin enhances basolateral amygdala activation and functional connectivity in autistic women while processing emotional faces. *Social Cognitive and Affective Neuroscience*. doi.org/10.1093/scan/nsac016
7. Brandl F., Weise B., Bratec S.M., **Jassim N.**, Hoffmann D.A., Bertram T., Ploner, M., Sorg C. (2022). Common and specific large-scale brain changes in major depressive disorder, anxiety disorders, and chronic pain: A transdiagnostic multimodal meta-analysis of structural and functional MRI studies. *Neuropsychopharmacology*. doi.org/10.1038/s41386-022-01271-y
8. **Jassim, N.***, Baron-Cohen, S., & Suckling, J. (2021). Meta-analytic evidence of differential prefrontal and early sensory cortex activity during non-social sensory perception in autism. *Neuroscience & Biobehavioural Reviews*. doi.org/10.1016/j.neubiorev.2021.04.014

AWARDS, GRANTS, & SCHOLARSHIPS

British Association for Psychopharmacology (BAP) Postdoc Travel Bursary to attend annual meeting in Manchester, UK - £300	2025
Charles Slater Travel Award to attend Federation of European Neurosciences Societies (FENS) Forum in Vienna, Austria - £400	2024
Guarantors of Brain travel award to attend FENS Forum in Vienna, Austria -£600	2024
International Society for Autism Research (INSAR) travel award to attend annual meeting in Melbourne, Australia - \$2000	2024
British Association for Psychopharmacology (BAP) Postdoc Travel Bursary to attend annual meeting in Manchester, UK - £300	2023
Parke-Davis Postdoctoral Exchange Fellowship (one year) to visit Carney institute of Brain Sciences, Brown University, USA- £34,909	2022
Guarantors of Brain travel award to attend Organization for Human Brain Mapping (OHBM) meeting in Glasgow, UK - £400	2022
Grindley award for research (PhD extension), Dept of Psychology, Uni of Cambridge - £3535	2021
INSAR Travel Award (<i>cancelled due to COVID 19</i>)- \$2000	2020
Newnham College Graduate and Research Support Award to attend Computational Psychiatry Course in Zurich, Switzerland - £750	2019
April Trust PhD studentship, Newnham College, fully-funded PhD at Uni of Cambridge - £134,857	2018
Erasmus+ Mobility Grant to conduct a six-month Master's project at Uni of Cambridge - €2,600	2016
Indian Academy of Sciences Summer Research Award for a two-month internship at National Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences (NIMHANS), Bangalore, India - ₹ 15,000	2012

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

Jassim N., Waade P.T., Parsons O., Petzschn F.H., Rua C., Rodgers C.T., Baron-Cohen S., Suckling J., Mathys C., Lawson R.P. (2025). Region-specific glutamate+ glutamine levels predict volatility beliefs: A 7-Tesla Magnetic Resonance Spectroscopy and computational modelling study of uncertainty and trait anxiety. Oral and poster presentation at *BAP Summer Meeting 2025*, Manchester, UK.

Jassim N., Waade P.T., Parsons O., Petzschn F.H., Rua C., Rodgers C.T., Baron-Cohen S., Suckling J., Mathys C., Lawson R.P. (2025) Neurochemical markers of uncertainty processing in humans. Oral presentation (flash talk) at *Exploring Interdisciplinary Frontiers: Cognitive Science, Computational Modeling, and Artificial Intelligence 2025*, Cambridge, UK.

Jassim, N., Petzschnner, F.H., Rua, C., Baron-Cohen, S., Suckling, J Lawson, R.P. (2024). Examining the causal links between autistic traits, occipital GABA, and perception in humans. Poster presentation at *BAP Summer Meeting 2024*, Birmingham, UK.

Jassim, N., Petzschnner, F.H., Rua, C., Baron-Cohen, S., Suckling, J Lawson, R.P. (2024). Autistic traits mediate the relationship between occipital GABA and perceptual choice in a target detection task. Poster presentation at *FENS Forum 2024*, Vienna, Austria.

Jassim, N., McCoy, B., Yip, E.W., Allison, C., Baron-Cohen, S., Lawson, R.P., (2024). The relationship between autism, autistic-like traits, and the perception of "possibility". Poster presentation at *INSAR annual meeting 2024*, Melbourne, Australia.

Jassim, N., Baron-Cohen, S., Rua, C., Parsons, O., Suckling, J., Lawson, R.P. (2023). The links between statistical learning, uncertainty, and neurotransmitters in humans. Oral and poster presentation at *BAP Summer Meeting 2023*, Manchester, UK.

Jassim, N., Baron-Cohen, S., Rua, C., Parsons, O., Lawson, R.P., Suckling, J.(2022). Probabilistic learning, sensorimotor GABA, & autistic traits. Data blitz (short talk) and poster presentation at *Cambridge Neuroscience Seminar 2022: New Horizons*, Cambridge, UK.

Jassim, N., Baron-Cohen, S., Rua, C., Parsons, O., Lawson, R.P., Suckling, J.(2022). Sensorimotor learning and expectations in adults with varying levels of autistic traits. Poster presentation at the *OHBM annual meeting 2022*, Glasgow, UK.

Jassim, N., Parsons, O., Rua, C., Baron-Cohen, S., Lawson, R.P., Suckling, J. (2022). Sensorimotor learning, expectations & autistic traits: A "7T"-easer. Data blitz (short talk) and poster presentation at *Cambridge Imaging Festival 2022*, Cambridge, UK.

Jassim, N., Baron-Cohen, S., & Parsons, O. (2021). Visual cognition in autism: Autistic adults are better at "spotting the difference". Poster presentation at the *INSAR annual meeting 2021* (virtual due to COVID-19).

Jassim, N., Baron-Cohen, S., & Suckling, J. (2020). Non-social sensory perception in autism: An fMRI ALE meta-analysis. Poster presentation at the *OHBM annual meeting 2020* (virtual due to COVID-19).

Jassim, N., Villa, L., Goodyer, I., Holt, R., & Suckling, J. (2018). Emotional brain processes in adolescent depression. Poster presentation at the *Cambridge Neuroscience Seminar 2018*, Cambridge, UK.

INVITED TALKS

"How the brain handles uncertainty — and what that means for mental health", keynote speaker at <i>Annual Newnham Graduate Conference</i> , Newnham College, Cambridge, UK	June 2025
Learning and decision-making in mental health and neurodiversity", <i>Wednesday Lunchtime Seminar Series</i> , MRC Cognition and Brain Sciences Unit, Cambridge, UK	Oct 2024
"Perceptual decision-making in autism: From neurochemistry to cognition", <i>ARClub Talks</i> , Autism Research Centre, Uni of Cambridge, UK	May 2024
"The cognitive neuroscience behind sensory perception and learning in autism spectrum conditions", <i>Newnham College Alumnae Event</i> , Pitts Museum, Oxford, UK	March 2023
"Learning and perception in autism", <i>Autism Research (ARCH) Seminar Series (virtual)</i> , ReSpect Lab, King's College London, London, UK	June 2022
"Meta-analytic evidence of differential prefrontal and early sensory cortex activity during non-sensory perception in autism", <i>Cambridge Neuroscience Society Seminars</i> , Cambridge University Neuroscience Society, Cambridge, UK	May 2021
"How do autistic individuals process sensory information? Findings from cognitive neuroscience", <i>Newnham Pudding Seminar Series</i> , Newnham College, Cambridge, UK	May 2021
"Non-social sensory perception in autism", <i>Autism Journal Club (virtual)</i> , Uni of Glasgow, UK	Sept 2020

TEACHING & SUPERVISION

Lecturer , Psychology and Medical Sciences undergraduate degree programmes, Uni of Cambridge <i>Topics: Mental Health and Neurodevelopment: Depression and Anxiety</i>	2024 - 2025
Research supervision , Psychology undergraduate dissertations, Uni of Cambridge <i>Topics: Visual cognition in autism (co-supervised with Rebecca Lawson)</i>	2024 - present
Small-group teaching , Psychology and Natural Sciences, various Colleges, Uni of Cambridge <i>Topics: Psychological Enquiry & Methods, Cognitive Neuroscience/ Experimental Psychology, Computational Theories of Autism.</i>	2019 - present

NON-TEACHING ACADEMIC ROLES

Undergraduate admissions interviewer (Psychology), Clare College, Uni of Cambridge	2022 - 2024
Examination assessor (Psychology, Neurobiology & Human Behaviour), Uni of Cambridge <i>Topics: Experimental Psychology, Neurobiology, Mental Health, Autism.</i>	2023 - present
Dissertation-marking (Psychology, Biological & Biomedical Sciences), Uni of Cambridge <i>Topics: Computational models of autism.</i>	2023 - present

AFFILIATIONS, MEMBERSHIPS, & COMMITTEE POSITIONS

Department, College, & University	
Postdoc Representative, Dept of Psychology, Uni of Cambridge	2023 - present
Postdoc Representative, Information Committee, Dept of Psychology, Uni of Cambridge	2023 - present
Honorary Research Associate, Autism Research Centre, Dept Psychiatry, Uni of Cambridge	2022 - present
College Research Associate, Clare College, Cambridge	2023 - 2024
Cambridge Philosophical Society member, Cambridge	2019 - 2023
Welfare Officer, Newnham College Postgraduate Students MCR, Cambridge	2019 - 2020
National/ International Society Membership	
British Association for Psychopharmacology (BAP)	2023 - present
Women in Cognitive Science (WICS+)	2024 - present
Federation of European Neurosciences Societies (FENS)	2023 - 2024
International Society for Autism Research (INSAR)	2019 - 2024
British Neuroscience Association (BNA)	2020 - 2024
Organization for Human Brain Mapping (OHBM)	2019 - 2022

ACCESS, OUTREACH, & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Cambridge Seren Residential organised by the Government of Wales and Churchill College <i>Speaker: Introductory talk on psychology and neuroscience for students from state-maintained schools in Wales</i>	April 2025
Patient and Public Involvement (PPI) workshops on lived experiences of anxiety <i>Facilitator, Note-taker: Discussions on research priorities and study design with experts by experience</i>	2024 - present
Cambridge Access to Mental Health and Psychology Summer School <i>Mentor: Supervised undergraduate psychology student from University of Dundee, Scotland, on research proposal-writing and postgraduate applications</i>	July 2021

EVENTS ORGANISED

Psychology Research Symposium, Dept of Psychology, Uni of Cambridge	June 2025
PPI workshop (virtual) on uncertainty and anxiety	March 2025
Social events for postdoctoral researchers, Dept of Psychology, Uni of Cambridge	2023 - present
Social/welfare events for postgraduate students, Newnham College, Uni of Cambridge	2019 -2021

PEER REVIEW

Ad-hoc reviewer for *Autism Research*, *BMC Psychology*, *Brain and Cognition*, *Brain Imaging and Behavior*, *Molecular Autism*, *Neurodiversity*, *Scientific Reports*