

Research Assistant Position in Cognitive Psychology/Neuroscience in the Cognitive Neuropsychology Laboratory

Our research explores the structure of our knowledge of everyday concepts and categories. For example, some properties of objects are directly observable (e.g. what it looks like) while others are not (e.g. who it belongs to or what its worth). Are there differences in how the brain represents observable and non-observable knowledge? Further, we can recognize many objects: we know what they are for, where to find them, and how to use them. How are these aspects of object knowledge related to each other and how are they organized in the brain? At the foundation of our knowledge lies our ability to see order in the chaos of sensory experience: what are the mechanisms that allow us to recognize that radically different sensory inputs (such as two different views of an object or a person's face and her voice) correspond to a same object? We use both behavioural and fMRI methodologies to explore these questions.

Description of Role

You will be involved in all aspects of the research process: critically reading the literature, designing experimental paradigms, creating stimuli, creating experimental tasks, collecting and analyzing behavioral and fMRI data, and presenting your research findings. You will also be invited to participate in our lab seminars, with opportunities to practice presenting research findings.

Several of the above tasks involve computer programming. Programming skills are not absolutely required, but willingness to learn them is a prerequisite to participating in these aspects of research (eg, fMRI data analysis). However, there are both programming and non-programming roles available in our lab.

Research takes place in William James Hall and in Northwest labs. The position is on a credit or volunteer basis, with an expected commitment of 10 hours per week.

Supervisors and Applying

The Principal Investigator of the lab is Alfonso Caramazza. Your direct supervisors will be Anna Leshinskaya (grad student), Talia Konkle (post-doc), Costi Rezliescu (post-doc) or Katie Porter (grad student), depending on the match between your interests and ours.

Please contact Anna (aleshins@fas.harvard.edu) to apply. Briefly state (1) why you are applying (what aspects interested you and what you hope to gain from the experience) and (2) what kinds of skills and experiences you can bring to the role. We look forward to hearing from you!