

LUIS SEBASTIAN CONTRERAS-HUERTA

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EDUCATION

- 2021 **PhD in Experimental Psychology, University of Oxford, United Kingdom.**
Supervisors: Dr. Matthew Apps, Dr. Molly Crockett and Dr. Geoffrey Bird.
- 2012 **MSc in Neuroscience (High Achievement Academic Award), University of Queensland, Australia.** Supervisor: Dr. Ross Cunnington
- 2008 **BSc in Psychology (Maximum Distinction), Universidad de Valparaíso, Chile.**
Supervisor: Dr. Adrián Palacios.
- Psychologist (professional qualification). Universidad de Valparaíso, Chile.**

ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE

- 2023 - **Assistant Professor. School of Psychology, Universidad Adolfo Ibáñez, Chile.**
- Principal Investigator, Emotions and Social Decisions Lab (ESD Lab)
 - Researcher, Centre for Social and Cognitive Neuroscience (CSCN)
 - Academic member, PhD and MSc. in Social and Cognitive Neuroscience programs
 - Academic member, Master in Psychology program
 - Lecturer in undergraduate and postgraduate courses
 - Academic Coordinator, B.A. in Psychology curriculum
 - Member, Ethics Committee of the School of Psychology
 - Public engagement and science communication activities
- 2024 - **Adjunct Researcher. Center of Social Conflict and Cohesion Studies (COES), Chile.** Conducts transdisciplinary research on group and individual interactions, bridging basic and applied science to address social conflict and promote cohesion
- 2021 - 2023 **Postdoctoral Research Fellow. Centre for Human Brain Health, School of Psychology, University of Birmingham, United Kingdom.** Research on social decisions in complex environments using fMRI and computational modelling
- 2015 – 2016 **Academic Director of the MSc programme in Social Neuroscience. School of Psychology, Universidad Diego Portales, Chile**
- 2013 – 2016 **Associate lecturer and researcher. School of Psychology, Universidad Diego Portales.** Lectures at undergraduate and postgraduate courses, associate researcher at the Laboratory of Cognitive and Social Neuroscience, and at the Centre for the Study of Argumentation and Reasoning.

- 2013 – 2014 **Research assistant. School of Psychology, Universidad de Santiago de Chile.**
Research on positive psychology using psychophysiological measures
- 2009 – 2010 **Research assistant. The Interdisciplinary Centre for Neuroscience of Valparaíso, Universidad de Valparaíso, Chile.** Research on memory, learning and synaptic plasticity using rodent models

TEACHING

Main Lecturer

Universidad Adolfo Ibáñez

- 2024 - *Human Behaviour: Emotions and Cognition* (B.A. in Communication Science)
- 2023 - *Motivation and Creative Thought* (B.A. in Psychology)
Social Determinants of Behaviour (B.A. in Psychology)
- 2023 *Cognition, Emotion and Decision-Making* (B.A. in Psychology)

Universidad Diego Portales

- 2013 – 2016 *Neuroscience and Psychology* (B.A. in Psychology)
Research in Psychology (B.A. in Psychology)
Statistics (B.A. in Psychology)
Neural and Cognitive Bases of Decision-Making (B.A. in Psychology)
- 2015 - 2016 *Social Neuroscience* (seminar, MSc. in Social Neuroscience)

Universidad Valparaíso

- 2015 *Neuropsychology* (B.A. in Psychology)

Demonstrator/Tutorials

University of Oxford

- 2018 – 2019 *Core Practical in Social Psychology.* (B.A. Experimental Psychology)

Universidad de Valparaíso

- 2006 – 2008 *Philosophical and epistemological foundations of Psychology* (B.A. in Psychology)
Cognitive Processes (B.A. in Psychology)

SUPERVISION

Thesis Main Supervision

Universidad Adolfo Ibáñez

- 2025 - Pía Valdivia. MSc. in Social and Cognitive Neuroscience
- 2025 - José Bórquez. MSc. in Social and Cognitive Neuroscience
- 2025 - Fiorella Macchiavello. MSc. in Clinical Psychology.
- 2025 - Matías Carmarch. MSc. in Social Psychology

Thesis Co-Supervision

Universidad Adolfo Ibáñez

- 2025 - Emilio Recart. PhD in Cognitive and Social Neuroscience

University of Birmingham

2021–2022 Max Laverty. MSc. in Brain Imaging and Cognitive Neuroscience.

University of Oxford

2018 – 2020 Svenja Küchenhoff & Arno Gekiere. MSc. *Erasmus* students.

Thesis Committee

Universidad Adolfo Ibanez

2025 Antonia Zepeda. PhD in Cognitive and Social Neuroscience

2024 Paola Solano. PhD in Cognitive and Social Neuroscience.

Universidad Diego Portales

2019 Elizabeth Ibarra. MSc. in Social Neuroscience.

PUBLICATIONS (Google Scholar, <https://bit.ly/2ZV2AwO>; * denotes equal contribution)

1. Cutler, J.*, **Contreras-Huerta, L. S.***, Todorova, B., Nitschke, J. P., Michalaki, K., Koppel, L., ... Lockwood, P. (*in press*). Psychological interventions increase motivation to exert effort to mitigate climate change. *Communications Psychology*.
2. Zoh, Y., Yu, H., **Contreras-Huerta, L.S.**, Prosser, A.M.B., Apps, M.A.J., Sinnott-Armstrong, W., Chang, S.W.C., & Crockett, M.J. (*in press*). Instrumental harm and impartial beneficence distinctively frame cognitive representations of moral decision problems. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: General*.
3. **Contreras-Huerta, L. S.**, Yu, H., Prosser, A. M., Lockwood, P. L., Crockett, M. J., & Apps, M. A. (2025). Hypocritical blame is associated with reduced prosocial motivation. *Scientific Reports*, 15(1), 32811.
4. **Contreras-Huerta, L. S.**, Pisauro, M. A., Küchenhoff, S., Gekiere, A., Le Heron, C., Lockwood, P. L., & Apps, M. A. (2024). A reward self-bias leads to more optimal foraging for ourselves than others. *Scientific Reports*, 14(1), 26845.
5. Doell, K., Todorova, B., Vlasceanu, M., Bak-Coleman, ..., **Contreras-Huerta, L.S.**, ..., J., Van Bavel, J. J., & Pronizius, E. (2024). The International Climate Psychology Collaboration: Climate change-related data collected from 63 countries. *Scientific data*, 11(1), 1066.
6. Vlasceanu, M., Doell, K., Bak-Coleman, J., ..., **Contreras-Huerta L.S.**, ... & Van Bavel, J. J. (2024). Addressing Climate Change with Behavioral Science: A Global Intervention Tournament in 63 Countries. *Science Advances*, 10(6), eadj5778.
7. **Contreras-Huerta, L. S.** (2023). A cost-benefit framework for prosocial motivation–advantages and challenges. *Frontiers in Psychiatry*, 14, 1170150.
8. **Contreras-Huerta, L. S.**, Coll, M.P., Bird, G., Yu, H., Prosser, A., Lockwood, P.L., Murphy, J., Crockett, M.J. * and Apps, M.A.* (2023). Neural representations of vicarious rewards are linked to interoception and prosocial behaviour. *NeuroImage*, 269, 119881.
9. Yu, H., **Contreras-Huerta, L. S.**, Prosser, A., Apps, M. A., Hofmann, W., Sinnott-Armstrong, W.,

and Crockett, M. J. (2022). Neural and cognitive signatures of guilt predict hypocritical blame. *Psychological Science*, 33(11), 1909-1927

10. **Contreras-Huerta, L. S.**, Pisauro, M. A., & Apps, M. A. (2020). Effort shapes social cognition and behaviour: A neuro-cognitive framework. *Neuroscience & Biobehavioral Reviews*, 118, 426-439.
11. **Contreras-Huerta, L. S.**, Lockwood, P. L., Bird, G., Apps, M. A. *, & Crockett, M. J. * (2020). Prosocial behavior is associated with transdiagnostic markers of affective sensitivity in multiple domains. *Emotion*.
12. Cao, Y., **Contreras-Huerta, L. S.**, McFadyen, J., & Cunnington, R. (2015). Racial bias in neural response to others' pain is reduced with other-race contact. *Cortex*, 70, 68-78.
13. **Contreras-Huerta, L. S.**, Hielscher, E., Sherwell, C. S., Rens, N., & Cunnington, R. (2014). Intergroup relationships do not reduce racial bias in empathic neural responses to pain. *Neuropsychologia*, 64, 263-270.
14. Fuentes, M. A., Lavín, C., **Contreras-Huerta, L. S.**, Miguel, H., & Rosales Jubal, E. (2014). Stochastic model predicts evolving preferences in the Iowa gambling task. *Frontiers in computational neuroscience*, 8, 167.
15. **Contreras-Huerta, L. S.**, Baker, K. S., Reynolds, K. J., Batalha, L., & Cunnington, R. (2013). Racial bias in neural empathic responses to pain. *PloS one*, 8(12), e84001.
16. Lavin, C., San Martín, R., Bravo, D., **Contreras, L.**, & Isla, P. (2011). [Brain potentials related to feedback on the study of learning and economic decision making]. *Revista Latinoamericana de Psicología*, 43(3), 455-471. [In Spanish]. -
17. Muñoz, P. C., Aspé, M. A., **Contreras, L. S.**, & Palacios, A. G. (2010). Correlations of recognition memory performance with expression and methylation of brain-derived neurotrophic factor in rats. *Biological Research*, 43(2), 251-258.

PREPRINTS

18. Rojas-Thomas, F., Macchiavello, F., Soto, V., Rivera-Rei, Á., O'Byrne, D., Bórquez, J., Ruiz, C., Huepe, D. & **Contreras-Huerta, L.S.** (2025). A Validation Study of Mobile EEG for Empathy-for-Pain Research. *Authorea*
19. **Contreras-Huerta, L. S.**, Yu, H., Prosser, A. M., Lockwood, P. L., Rojas-Thomas, F., Crockett, M. J., & Apps, M. A. (2025). Neural signatures of harm aversion predict later willingness to exert effort for others rewards. *bioRxiv*, 2025-10.

GRANTS AND AWARDS

- 2025 – 2027 **National Fund for Scientific and Technological Development (FONDECYT 11250611). ~ USD 100,000.** National Agency for Research and Development (ANID). Government of Chile. Project “Neurocognitive Mechanisms of Prosocial Behaviour in Socioeconomically Vulnerable Populations”. (Principal Investigator)
- 2024 – 2026 **National Fund for Scientific and Technological Development (FONDECYT 1241087). ~ USD 300,000.** National Agency for Research and Development (ANID). Government of Chile. Project “Enactive empathy: a multimodal study of the relevance of the body, experience, and temporality in emotional connection with others.” (Co-Investigator).
- 2024 – 2025 **Varela Grant. USD 25,000.** Mind & Life Institute. Project: “Bridging Minds and Nature: Integrating Contemplative Wisdoms for Enhancing Nature-Connectedness, Pro- Ecological Behavior, and Well-being” (Co-Investigator).
- 2025 **High Impact Research Award.** Universidad Adolfo Ibáñez. Awarded to the researcher at Universidad Adolfo Ibáñez with the highest impact in scientific research.
- 2024 **Internationalisation Award.** Universidad Adolfo Ibáñez. Recognises the researcher with outstanding international collaboration and research impact.
- 2024 **Research Support Program, Center of Social Conflict and Cohesion Studies (COES) ~ USD 4,000.** “Perception of Insecurity in Socially Vulnerable Populations and Its Impact on Empathy and Prosocial Behaviour” (Principal Investigator).
- 2024 **Research Support Program, Universidad Adolfo Ibáñez ~ USD 5,000.** Project: “Impact of social vulnerability on behavior and social cognition: An approach from neuroscience” (Principal Investigator).
- 2016 – 2020 **Becas Chile PhD Scholarship. ~ USD 215,000.** National Agency for Research and Development (ANID). Government of Chile. *Graduate scholarship to pursue a PhD degree abroad.*
- 2019 **Wolfson College Travel Grant ~ USD 790.** University of Oxford. *Grant awarded to attend the 17th Society for Neuroeconomics Annual Meeting. October, Dublin, Ireland.*
- 2018 **Wolfson College Travel Grant ~ USD 790.** University of Oxford. *Grant awarded to attend Aegina Summer School 2018 “New Perspectives & Methods on Social Cognition”. June, Aegina, Greece.*
- 2018 **Grindley Grant ~ USD 100.** Experimental Psychology Society, United Kingdom. *Grant awarded for the attendance of the Experimental Psychology Society Meeting.*
- 2014 – 2016 **National Fund for Scientific and Technological Development (FONDECYT 1140114). ~ USD 270,000.** National Agency for Research and Development (ANID). Government of Chile. Project “Fluid Intelligence, Social Cognition, and Perspective Flexibility as Predictors of Psycho-social adaptability” (Co-Investigator).
- 2011 – 2012 **Dean’s Commendation Award for High Achievement.** University of Queensland, Australia. *Recognition for exemplary academic performance during MSc in Neuroscience studies.*
- 2011 - 2012 **Becas Chile MSc Scholarship ~ USD 100,000.** National Agency for Research and Development (ANID) Government of Chile. *Graduate scholarship to pursue a MSc degree abroad.*

- 2004 - 2008 **Juan Gómez Millas. BA Scholarship ~ USD 10,000.** Ministry of Education, Government of Chile. *Full coverage of undergraduate studies fees*
- 2004 - 2008 **Juan Araya Villarroel' BA Scholarship.** Universidad de Valparaíso, Chile. *Annual financial aid during undergraduate studies.*

SELECTED TALKS AND CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

- 2025 **Understanding the Neural Mechanisms of Prosocial Motivation.** Invited talk at the Karolinska Institute. June, Stockholm, Sweden.
- 2024 **Perception of Insecurity in Socially Vulnerable Populations and Its Impact on Empathy and Prosocial Behaviour.** XI Annual Meeting of the Center of Social Conflict and Cohesion Studies (COES). November, Vina del Mar, Chile.
- 2022 **Affective and neural underpinnings of prosocial motivation.** Webinar organised by the translational neuroscience research group at The Hong Kong Polytechnic University. September, virtual meeting
- 2022 **An ecological framework for prosocial behaviour: Foraging for others' rewards.** Computational Properties of the Prefrontal Cortex Meeting. March, Oxford, United Kingdom
- 2021 **Interoceptive sensitivity is associated with neural representation of others' rewards.** European Society for Cognitive and Affective Neuroscience (ESCAN) Annual Meeting. June, virtual conference.
- 2021 **Common mechanisms underlie prosocial behaviour in multiple domains.** European Society for Cognitive and Affective Neuroscience (ESCAN) Annual Meeting. June, virtual conference.
- 2020 **Interoceptive sensitivity modulates prosocial behaviour for others' rewards.** Society for Neuroeconomics Annual Meeting. October, virtual conference.
- 2019 **Prosocial behaviour is associated with transdiagnostic markers of affective sensitivity in multiple domains.** Society for Neuroeconomics Annual Meeting. October, Dublin, Ireland.
- 2018 **Computational mechanisms of social decision-making in sub-clinical personality disorder.** Experimental Psychology Society meeting. April, Leicester, United Kingdom.
- 2017 **Understanding empathy and prosocial behaviour in healthy and psychiatric population: A social neuroscience perspective.** Symposium on Neuroscience and Psychology organised by the School of Psychology at Universidad Diego Portales. December, Santiago, Chile.

INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH VISITS

- 2025 **University of Vienna.** Visiting researcher at the Social, Cognitive and Affective Neuroscience Unit, collaborating on studies of empathy and social decision-making.
- 2024 **University of Birmingham.** Visiting researcher at the Centre for Human Brain Health, conducting research on moral decision-making and prosocial behaviour.
- 2023 **University of Birmingham.** Visiting researcher at the Centre for Human Brain Health, conducting research on moral decision-making and prosocial behaviour.

ACADEMIC SERVICE

Journal Reviewing: E-Life, Communications Psychology, Psychological Science, Cortex, NeuroImage, Social Cognitive and Affective Neuroscience (SCAN), Psychiatry Research, Biological Psychology, Journal of Alzheimer's Disease, Psychophysiology, Human Brain Mapping, Journal of the Royal Society, Journal of Environmental Psychology, Scientific Reports, PLOS Biology

Grant Reviewing: National Fund for Scientific and Technological Development (FONDECYT). Chilean National Research and Development Agency (ANID).

SELECTED PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT AND SCIENCE COMMUNICATION

- 2023 - **Talks on Motivation, Social Behaviour and Decision-Making at different public and private organisations (e.g. General audience, Armada de Chile, Nestle, IST, Social Clubs, etc).**
- 2025 Expert opinion at the piece "Scientists are 'most trusted' source of climate information in global-south survey" published in the UK online journal *Carbon Brief* https://www.carbonbrief.org/scientists-are-most-trusted-source-of-climate-information-in-global-south-survey/?utm_content=buffer8b65c&utm_medium=social&utm_source=twitter.com&utm_campaign=buffer
- 2025 **Column "El cerebro como brújula de políticas públicas".** El Mercurio de Valparaíso (national newspaper). Column on how neuroscience should have impact on public policy.
- 2024 **Panellist at Congreso Futuro.** Panel: Neurosciences and New Intelligences, with Stanislas Dehaene, Patricio Orio and Jorge Gaona. *Annual event on scientific dissemination.*
- 2023 **Column "Ayudar hace bien".** La Segunda (national newspaper). Column on how prosocial behaviour is beneficial for social cohesion and individual health.