

# Randy Ellis

1249 Park Avenue, New York, NY, 10029  
randy.ellis@icahn.mssm.edu | (954) 260-9891  
[randalljellis.github.io](https://randalljellis.github.io) | [@randalljellis](https://twitter.com/randalljellis)

---

## Education

### Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai, New York, NY

Doctor of Philosophy, Biomedical Science

*Focus: Behavioral and molecular neuroscience, computational biology, biomedical informatics*

*Thesis Advisor: Yasmin L. Hurd, PhD*

August 2017-  
September 2022

### Florida Atlantic University (FAU), Boca Raton, FL

Bachelor of Science, *cum laude*, Neuroscience & Behavior

Minor, Psychology

August 2010-  
December 2014

---

## Research Experience

### Graduate student, Friedman Brain Institute at Mount Sinai

*Laboratory of Yasmin L. Hurd, PhD*

*Studying the clinical, behavioral, and molecular underpinnings of opioid use disorder*

July 2018-  
September 2022

### Graduate rotation student, Department of Pharmacology at Mount Sinai

*Laboratory of Avi Ma'ayan, PhD*

*Studying the application of machine learning to predict diagnosis of substance use disorders*

October 2017-  
June 2018

### Postbaccalaureate Intramural Research Training Award (IRTA),

National Institute on Drug Abuse, Baltimore, MD

*Laboratory of Michael Michaelides, PhD*

*Studying the identification of molecular targets of cocaine and the application of machine learning to decoding natural scenes from neuronal calcium responses*

August 2015-  
August 2017

### Undergraduate Research Assistant, Center for Complex Systems and Brain Sciences at Florida Atlantic University

*Laboratory of Robert P. Vertes, PhD*

*Studying the effects of midline thalamic lesions on odor/texture discrimination and the effects of dextromethorphan on depressive-like phenotypes*

August 2013-  
January 2015

### Undergraduate Research Assistant, Center for Complex Systems and Brain Sciences at Florida Atlantic University

*Laboratory of J.A. Scott Kelso, PhD*

*Studying human-machine motor coordination*

January 2013-  
April 2013

---

## Research Grants

08/09/2021 – 08/08/2024

NIH F31DA051183 (NIDA)

Role: PI (Ellis)

Project Title: Opioid effects on cognition and addiction: Molecular underpinnings

07/18/2019 – 06/30/2020

NIH T32GM062754 (NIGMS)

Role: Trainee

07/01/2020 – 06/30/2021 (Reappt.)

Project Title: Teaching Biomedical and Pharmacological Trainees to Produce FAIR Data for AI & ML Applications

---

## Publications

[Google Scholar](#) | [ORCID](#)

**Ellis, R. J.** Questionable research practices, low statistical power, and other obstacles to reproducibility: why preclinical animal research would benefit from registered reports. *Eneuro*, 9(4) (2022).

**Ellis, R. J.**, Sander, R., Limon, A. Challenges in Machine Learning Research: A Primer for Clinicians. Invited commentary for Special Issue on Challenges in Machine Learning Research, *Intelligence-based Medicine*, 100068 (2022).

Ferland, J.-M. N., **Ellis, R. J.**, Rompala, G., Landry, J. A., Callens, J. E., Ly, A., Frier, M. D., Uzamere, T. O., Hurd, Y. L. Dose mediates the protracted effects of adolescent THC exposure on reward and stress reactivity in males relevant to perturbation of the basolateral amygdala transcriptome. *Molecular Psychiatry*, 1-11 (2022).

**Ellis, R. J.\***, Bara, A.\* , Vargas, C. A.\* , Frick, A. L., Loh, E., Landry, J., Uzamere, T. O., Callens, J. E., Martin, Q., Rajarajan, P., Brennand, K., Ramakrishnan, A., Shen, L., Szutorisz, H. & Hurd, Y. L. Prenatal  $\Delta^9$ -tetrahydrocannabinol exposure in males leads to motivational disturbances related to striatal epigenetic dysregulation. *Biological Psychiatry*, 92(2), 127-138 (2022).

Gomez, J. L., Bonaventura, J., Keighron, J., Wright, K. M., Marable, D. L., Rodriguez, L. A., Lam, S., Carlton, M. L., **Ellis, R. J.**, Jordan, C. J., Bi, G., Solis, O., Pignatelli, M., Bannon, M. J., Xi, Z.-X., Tanda, G. & Michaelides, M. Synaptic  $Zn^{2+}$  potentiates the effects of cocaine on striatal dopamine neurotransmission and behavior. *Translational Psychiatry* 11, 570 (2021).

**Ellis, R. J.**, Rahman, T., Sherman, J. & Hurd, Y. L. SnapShot: Neurobiology of opioid use disorder. *Cell* 184, 1648-1648.e1 (2021).

Suprun, M., **Ellis, R. J.**, Sampson, H. A. & Suárez-Fariñas, M. bbeaR: an R package and framework for epitope-specific antibody profiling. *Bioinformatics* 37, 131–133 (2021).

Egervari, G., Akpoyibo, D., Rahman, T., Fullard, J. F., Callens, J. E., Landry, J. A., Ly, A., Zhou, X., Warren, N., Hauberg, M. E., Hoffman, G., **Ellis, R.**, Ferland, J.-M. N., Miller, M. L., Keller, E., Zhang, B., Roussos, P. & Hurd, Y. L. Chromatin accessibility mapping of the striatum identifies tyrosine kinase FYN as a therapeutic target for heroin use disorder. *Nature Communications* 11, 1–15 (2020).

**Ellis, R. J.**, Wang, Z., Genes, N. & Ma'ayan, A. Predicting opioid dependence from electronic health records with machine learning. *BioData Mining* 12, 3 (2019).

Michaelides, M., Miller, M. L., Egervari, G., Primeaux, S. D., Gomez, J. L., **Ellis, R. J.**, Landry, J. A., Szutorisz, H., Hoffman, A. F., Lupica, C. R., Loos, R. J. F., Thanos, P. K., Bray, G. A., Neumaier, J. F., Zachariou, V., Wang, G.-J., Volkow, N. D. & Hurd, Y. L. Striatal Rgs4 regulates feeding and susceptibility to diet-induced obesity. *Mol Psychiatry* 25, 2058–2069 (2018).

**Ellis, R. J.** & Michaelides, M. High-accuracy Decoding of Complex Visual Scenes from Neuronal Calcium Responses. *bioRxiv* 271296 (2018).

**Ellis, R. J.**, Michaelides, M. & Wang, G.-J. Neurodysfunction in Addiction and Overeating as Assessed by Brain Imaging. in *Processed Food Addiction: Foundations, Assessment, and Recovery* (CRC Press, 2017).

Gomez, J. L., Bonaventura, J., Lesniak, W., Mathews, W. B., Sysa-Shah, P., Rodriguez, L. A., **Ellis, R. J.**, Richie, C. T., Harvey, B. K., Dannals, R. F., Pomper, M. G., Bonci, A. & Michaelides, M. Chemogenetics revealed: DREADD occupancy and activation via converted clozapine. *Science* 357, 503–507 (2017).

---

## Reviewer Experience

---

**Editorial Board member of Intelligence-Based Medicine (Elsevier)** September 2020-present  
Reviewed 75+ papers on clinical machine learning

Reviewed for Annals of Medicine, Nature Scientific Reports, eNeuro

---

## Professional Experience

---

**Teaching Assistant**, Neuromatch Academy Computational Neuroscience July 2021  
*Facilitated ten graduate, undergraduate, and postdoctoral students through three weeks of online tutorials and group projects*

**Freelance grant consultant** on NIH grants involving neuroscience, 2020-2021  
computational biology, and machine learning

**Instructor**, two 6-week Python courses for middle school students Summer 2020, 2021

**Private tutor**, Python and machine learning for data scientists, postdocs, and 2018-2020  
students at graduate, undergraduate and high school levels

**EEG Neurofeedback Technician**, Caron Renaissance, Boca Raton, FL January 2015-  
*Conducted EEG neurofeedback as part of a clinical team treating addiction August 2015*  
*and other psychiatric and behavioral disorders*

---

## Awards & Honors

---

GENEWIZ NextGenSeqers Grant, \$5000 for next-generation sequencing	May 2021
Interviewed by the Allen Institute for Brain Science about work on decoding natural scenes from neuronal calcium responses ( <a href="#">video</a> )	November 2018
NIH Postbaccalaureate Intramural Research Training Award: Two-year fellowship at the National Institute on Drug Abuse under Michael Michaelides, PhD.	August 2015- August 2017
2nd Place in the Biological Sciences, Oral Presentation category at Florida Atlantic University's Undergraduate Research Symposium for "Antidepressant Efficacy of Dextromethorphan in the Forced Swim Test."	April 2015
Graduated Cum Laude – Florida Atlantic University	December 2014
Undergraduate Research Grant (April 2014) to assess the effects of an NMDA antagonist, dextromethorphan, on a pre-clinical depression assay, the Porsolt forced swim test.	April 2014
Phi Kappa Phi	2013-2014

---

## Oral Presentations

---

- Genomic prediction of alcohol and opioid use disorders using machine learning  
Ellis, RJ, Zhou, H, Galimberti, M, Kranzler, HR, Gelernter, J, Hurd, YL.
- NIDA Genetics and Epigenetics Cross-Cutting Research Team Meeting, March 2021
- Antidepressant Efficacy of Dextromethorphan in the Forced Swim Test  
Ellis, RJ, Vertes, RP.
- FAU's Fifth Annual Undergraduate Research Symposium, Boca Raton, FL, April 2015
- Frequency Coordination in Virtual Partner Interaction  
Ellis, RJ, Dumas, G, Tognoli, E, Kelso, JA.
- FAU's Third Annual Undergraduate Research Symposium, Boca Raton, FL, April 2013

---

## Posters

---

- Machine Learning Identifies SHISA7 as a Translational Target of Heroin Abuse Directly Relevant to Drug-Seeking and Reversal Learning  
Ellis, RJ, Ferland, JMN, Landry, JA, Callens, JE, Uzamere, TO, Pandey, G, Hurd, YL.
- Innovators in Neuroscience: From Molecules to Mind, Columbia/Mount Sinai, May 25-26, 2021
  - Friedman Brain Institute's 13<sup>th</sup> Annual Neuroscience Retreat, Mount Sinai, April 30, 2021
- Fyn Kinase Linked to Glutamatergic Related Synaptic Alterations and Tau Pathology in the Striatum of Human Heroin Abusers  
Ellis, RJ, Akpoyibo, D, Egervari, G, Landry, J, Callens, J, Roussos, P, Hurd, YL.
- Annual Neuroscience Retreat at Mount Sinai, New York, NY, May 2019

## High-accuracy decoding of complex visual scenes from neuronal calcium responses

Ellis, RJ, Michaelides, M.

- Society for Neuroscience Annual Meeting, San Diego, CA, November 2018

## Prediction of Substance Dependence Status from Electronic Health Records with Machine Learning

Ellis, RJ, Wang, Z, Genes, N, Ma'ayan, A.

- Intelligent Systems in Molecular Biology, Chicago, IL, July 2018
- BD2K-LINCS Data Science Symposium, Miami, FL, February 2018

## Visual Decoding of Neuronal Calcium Responses Using Deep Neural Networks

Ellis, RJ, Michaelides, M.

- Inaugural Conference on Cognitive Computational Neuroscience, Columbia University, New York, NY, September 2017

## Empirical validation of cocaine targets in the striatum identified using big data

Ellis, RJ, Gomez, JL, Rodriguez, LA, Michaelides, M.

- Society for Neuroscience Annual Meeting, San Diego, CA, November 2017
- NIH Postbac Poster Day, Bethesda, MD, June 2016, 2017
- NIDA Poster Day, Baltimore, MD, May 2016, 2017

## A bioinformatic pipeline for the discovery of translational targets relevant to cocaine abuse

Ellis, RJ, Gomez, JL, Rodriguez, LA, Michaelides, M.

- Society for Neuroscience Annual Meeting, San Diego, CA, November 2016

## The Cocaine Ignorome: Assessing Differential Gene Expression Predicted via Bioinformatic Analysis

Ellis, RJ, Gomez, JL, Rodriguez, LA, Michaelides, M.

- Johns Hopkins Behavioral Pharmacology Research Unit Symposia, July 2016

## Antidepressant Efficacy of Dextromethorphan in the Forced Swim Test

Ellis, RJ, Vertes, RP.

- Synapse Poster Session at Max Planck Florida Institute, Jupiter, FL, January 2015
- Florida Undergraduate Research Conference, Daytona, FL, February 2015

## Effects of Electrolytic Lesions of the Reuniens and Rhomboid Nuclei on Cognitive Behaviors Using the Intradimensional Extradimensional (IED) Task in Rats

Ellis, RJ, Pinedo, P, Linley, SB, Vertes, RP.

- FAU's Fourth Annual Undergraduate Research Symposium, Boca Raton, FL, April 2014