

## **Robert William Hickman**

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### **Education**

#### **2010-2013, St Hughs College, University of Oxford, BA Physiological Sciences**

2.i final classification. Focus on neuroscience, and the neural basis of decision making. Wrote second year dissertation on drug discovery pathways in depression focusing on Ketamine therapy. For my final dissertation spent a year in the lab of Prof. Andrew King analysing neural networks built in MATLAB to predict future auditory scenes (see [link to paper]).

#### **2013-2016, Institute of Molecular Pathology, Vienna Biocenter, PhD Molecular Biology**

Spent 3 years in the lab of Dr David Keays at the Institute of Molecular Pathology in Vienna studying the natural basis of animal magnetoreception, whilst also designing and building synthetic protein magnetoreceptors. I also mentored a Masters student on a project quantifying heavy metals in biological tissues. I left the PhD programme after 3 years without defending for personal reasons.

#### **2017-, Department of Physiology, Development, and Neuroscience, University of Cambridge, PhD Computational Neuroscience**

Working on a project to understand the neuronal basis of economic decision making. Wrote a software suit for simple economic decision tasks in MATLAB and trained non-human primates to complete said tasks. Operated on and recorded neurons from awake non-human primates during task performance. Modelled behaviour on tasks using multilevel regression models and modelled neuronal indicators of choices using reinforcement learning models. I also mentored a final year undergrad on a project looking at primate behaviour and auction theory. Expected to submit and defend my thesis, and publish this work, in late 2020.

### **Other Experience**

#### **2017 (June-October), Strategic Consulting Team, Amey Consulting, Data Science Intern**

Worked for 4 months in the Strategic Consulting team at Amey PLC. Worked in partnership with one other intern on two projects. One to build spatial regression models to predict fault points in the sewage system for the North West of England. The other, to write an algorithm to identify `cyclic tops` in the UK rail track infrastructure.

#### **2017 (January-May), Department of Experimental Psychology, Research Assistant**

Spent 4 months in the lab of Dr Chris Summerfield helping with experiments focused on understanding the neuronal computations underlying perception. My work focused on bug testing experiment code prior to MTurk deployment and writing pipelines for stimuli development. Code for generating 3D perceptual stimuli using python and Blender can be found [github link]

### **Awards**

#### **2013, Wellcome Trust, Masters Scholarship**

Won a £12,000 scholarship for the most promising applicant to the University of Oxford MSc degree in Pharmacology. Declined to take up my PhD position.

#### **2013, Vienna BioCenter PhD Fellowship**

Fully funded admission into the PhD programme at the Vienna Biocenter.

#### **2014, Boehringer Ingelheim Fonds, PhD Fellowship**

3 year PhD fellowship for outstanding junior scientists in biomedical research. Superseded Vienna Biocenter fellowship.

#### **2019, Cambridge Artificial and Biological Cognition Symposium, Poster Prize**

Won 1<sup>st</sup> prize for a poster presented with Dr Daniel Hill at the Cambridge Neuroscience Symposium on Artificial and Biological Cognition.

#### **Conferences and Publications**

Edelman, Nathaniel B., et al. "No evidence for intracellular magnetite in putative vertebrate magnetoreceptors identified by magnetic screening." *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 112.1 (2015): 262-267.

Meers, Zoe, Robert Hickman, and Thomas J. Leeper. "ggparliament: A ggplot2 extension for parliament plots in R." *The Journal of Open Source Software* 4 (2019): 1313.

Robert Hickman. "Considering defensive risk in Expected Threat models", *Statsbomb Conference White Paper in preparation*

#### **Skills**

Fluency in R, including experience teaching to both students and industry, developing analysis pipelines, and developing and publishing packages to CRAN.

Work in R published online, at my blog, as well as R user aggregation sites such as Rweekly and RBloggers.

Capable programmer in python for analysis

Experience using MATLAB in an academic setting to build neural network models of sensory systems and reinforcement learning models of animal behaviour.

{big data/spark – amey infrastructure data?}

{collaborative data work inc using git, documentation... - amey and various github packages}

{presenting projects – statsbomb, amey, lab meetings, abc meeting poster prize}

#### **Interests and Hobbies**

Outside of my work, I enjoy doing analysis of open-source datasets that interest me. Time permitting, I publish some of these on my blog at Robert-hickman.eu. From this work, I have also had articles published in online magazines, and also had the opportunity to present work on football data in a 30 minute talk to industry professionals.

When not sat at a computer, I also run and row to a highly competitive level and compete in academic quizzing championships. I also sometimes try to play the piano and accordion.