

Jeesung Ahn, Ph.D.

PSYCHOLOGIST | NEUROSCIENTIST | HEALTH RESEARCHER

Department of Psychology, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, PA, USA

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EDUCATION

Ph.D. in Psychology, University of Pennsylvania

Aug. 2019 - May 2024

COMMUNICATION NEUROSCIENCE LAB (ADVISOR: EMILY FALK, PH.D.), DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY

Philadelphia, PA, USA

- Thesis: Lonely mind, brain, and social networks: a holistic investigation into the correlates of loneliness (committee: Drs. Anna Jenkins, Dani S. Bassett, Emily Falk)

M.A. in Psychology, University of Pennsylvania

Aug. 2019 - Aug. 2021

COMMUNICATION NEUROSCIENCE LAB (ADVISOR: EMILY FALK, PH.D.), DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY

Philadelphia, PA, USA

- Thesis: Effects of message framing on neural responses to persuasive messaging and health behavior change

M.S. in Cognitive Science and Engineering, Yonsei University

Mar. 2016 - Feb. 2018

APPLIED BRAIN COGNITION LAB (ADVISOR: SANGHOON HAN, PH.D.), INTERDEPARTMENTAL COGNITIVE SCIENCE PROGRAM

Seoul, South Korea

- Thesis: Voxel-wise mapping of functional magnetic resonance imaging in impression formation (best thesis award)

B.A. in Psychology & B.S. in Brain and Cognitive Sciences, Korea University

Mar. 2011 - Aug. 2015

DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY, COLLEGE OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS

Seoul, South Korea

Exchange Student Program, Macquarie University

July 2013 - Dec. 2013

DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY

Sydney, Australia

ACADEMIC POSITIONS

Doctoral Researcher

Aug. 2019 - Present

COMMUNICATION NEUROSCIENCE LAB, DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY, UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA

Philadelphia, PA, USA

- Led 8+ multidisciplinary research projects in the fields of health psychology and neuroscience (research focus: health persuasion, health interventions, health behavior change, loneliness, social connections, brain networks, predictive modeling, machine learning)
- Collaborated with cross-functional teams of 70+ researchers from 10+ institutions; skilled at effectively visualizing and communicating complex scientific findings to diverse audiences
- Developed a lab-wide data processing pipeline for the streamlined analysis and visualization of complex multi-dimensional datasets (61TB), now actively used by global collaborators in 3+ countries

Teaching Assistant

Jan. 2021 - Dec. 2021

DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY, UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA

Philadelphia, PA, USA

- Mentored 100+ undergraduates in developing effective study strategies during the challenging times of COVID-19
- Created evaluation tools, graded student essays, and provided constructive feedback
- Introduction to Experimental Psychology (Spring 2021, Rebecca Waller, Ph.D.; Fall 2021, Anna Jenkins, Ph.D.)

Research Associate

April 2015 - Mar. 2019

APPLIED BRAIN COGNITION LAB, YONSEI UNIVERSITY & INTEGRATED NEUROCOGNITIVE FUNCTIONAL IMAGING CENTER, YONSEI

UNIVERSITY SEVERANCE HOSPITAL

Seoul, South Korea

- Designed and directed 7+ end-to-end behavioral and neuroimaging projects, resulting in 3 first-author publications, an award-winning Master's thesis, and 6 international conference presentations
- Collaborated with cross-functional teams to develop a mobile application for treating social anxiety; conducted behavioral and neuroimaging experiments, in-depth interviews, and supervised machine learning analyses to evaluate user experience and clinical efficacy
- Mentored junior researchers in project management, neuroimaging analyses, data quality control, and MATLAB scripting

Research Coordinator

Jun. 2017 - Feb. 2018

BRAIN KOREA 21+, NATIONAL RESEARCH FOUNDATION OF KOREA

Seoul, South Korea

- Managed research and travel funds for Yonsei Applied Brain Cognition Lab, ensuring the smooth operation of multiple ongoing projects
- Constructed lab's annual review reports, highlighting significant achievements and future directions

Research Coordinator

Mar. 2016 - Aug. 2016

INSTITUTE OF HUMAN BEHAVIOR, YONSEI UNIVERSITY

Seoul, South Korea

- Organized academic social events (e.g., guest speaker series), fostering collaboration within the Yonsei psychology department

Research Assistant

Nov. 2014 - April 2015

LABORATORY OF SOCIAL DECISION NEUROSCIENCE, KOREA UNIVERSITY (ADVISOR: HACKJIN KIM, PH.D.)

Seoul, South Korea

- Collected behavioral and neuroimaging data for an EEG hyperscanning experiment that investigated the neural mechanisms of teamwork

PUBLICATIONS

Ahn, J., Falk, E. B., & Kang, Y. (2023). Relationships between physical activity and loneliness: A systematic review of intervention studies. *In Press, Current Research in Behavioral Sciences*.

Cosme, D., Helion, C., Kang, Y., Lydon-Staley, D. M., Doré, B. P., Stanoi, O., **Ahn, J.,** Jovanova, M., McGowan, A. L., Kober, H., Mucha, P. J., Bassett, D. S., Ochsner, K. N., & Falk, E. B. (2023). Mindful attention to alcohol can reduce cravings in the moment and consumption in daily life. *PsyArXiv*. <https://osf.io/preprints/psyarxiv/7j4ey/>

Kang, Y., **Ahn, J.,** Cosme, D., McGowan, A., Mwilambwe-Tshilobo, L., Zhou, D., Jovanova, M., Stanoi, O., Mucha, P., Ochsner, K., Bassett, D., Lydon-Staley, D., & Falk, E. (2023). Frontoparietal functional connectivity moderates the link between time spent on social media and subsequent negative affect. *Scientific Reports*. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41598-023-46040-z>

Zhou, D., Kang, Y., Cosme, D., Jovanova, M., He, X., Mahadevan, A., **Ahn, J.,** Stanoi, O., Brynildsen, J. K., Cooper, N., Cornblath, E. J., Parkes, L., Mucha, P. J., Ochsner, K. N., Lydon-Staley, D. M., Falk, E. B., & Bassett, D. S. (2023). Mindful attention promotes control of brain network dynamics for self-regulation and discontinues the past from the present. *PNAS*, 120(2). <https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.2201074119>

Ahn, J., Nah, Y., Ko, I., & Han, S. (2022). Voxel-wise Mapping of Functional Magnetic Resonance Imaging in Impression Formation. *Korean Society for Emotion and Sensibility*, 25(4), 77–94. <https://doi.org/10.14695/KJSOS.2022.25.4.77>

Kang, Y., Cosme, D., Lydon-Staley, D., **Ahn, J.,** Jovanova, M., Corbani, F., Lomax, S., Stanoi, O., Strecher, V., Mucha, P. J., Ochsner, K., Bassett, D. S., & Falk, E. B. (2022). Purpose in life, neural alcohol cue reactivity and daily alcohol use in social drinkers. *Addiction*, 117(12), 3049–3057. <https://doi.org/10.1111/add.16012>

Cosme, D., Kang, Y., Tartak, J. C., **Ahn, J.,** Corbani, F. E., Cooper, N., Doré, B., He, X., Helion, C., Jovanova, M., Lomax, S., Mahadevan, A., McGowan, A. L., Paul, A., Pei, R., Resnick, A., Stanoi, O., Zhang, T., Zhang, Y., ... Falk, E. B. (2022). Study protocol: Social Health Impact of Network Effects (SHINE) Study. *PsyArXiv*. <https://doi.org/10.31234/osf.io/cj2nx>

Ahn, J., Lee, J., Han, J. H., Kang, M. S., & Han, S. (2018). Group analysis data representing the effects of frontopolar transcranial direct current stimulation on the default mode network. *Data in Brief*, 20, 1309–1313. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.dib.2018.08.164>

Ahn, J., Kim, H., Park, J., & Han, S. (2018). Interactivity of Neural Representations for Perceiving Shared Social Memory. *Korean Society for Emotion and Sensibility*, 21(3), 29–48. <https://doi.org/10.14695/KJSOS.2018.21.3.29>

WORKING PAPERS

Ahn, J., Cooper, N., Kang, Y., O'Donnell, M., Green, M., Samanez-Larkin, G., & Falk, E. B. (2023). Effects of framing on neural responses to persuasive messaging and physical activity. *Under Review*.

Ahn, J., Cosme, D., Kang, Y., Zachary, B., Ochsner, K., Mucha, P., Lydon-Staley, D., Bassett, D. S., & Falk, E. B. (2023). Segregation and integration of brain functional connectivity networks moderate craving-drinking relationships in daily life. *In Prep*.

Ahn, J., Kang, Y., Mwilambwe-Tshilobo, L., Cosme, D., Bassett, D. S., Zachary, B., Lydon-Staley, D., Mucha, P., Ochsner, K., & Falk, E. B. (2023). Task-evoked brain networks predict individual experiences of loneliness. *In Prep*.

Ahn, J., Mwilambwe-Tshilobo, L., Kang, Y., Cosme, D., Bassett, D. S., Zachary, B., Lydon-Staley, D., Mucha, P., Ochsner, K., & Falk, E. B. (2023). Longitudinal analysis of loneliness through task-evoked brain networks in times of social isolation. *In Prep*.

Ahn, J., Mwilambwe-Tshilobo, L., Kang, Y., Cosme, D., Bassett, D. S., Zachary, B., Lydon-Staley, D., Mucha, P., Ochsner, K., & Falk, E. B. (2023). The architecture of loneliness: How self-perception and social networks shape perceived social isolation. *In Prep*.

Zhou, D., **Ahn, J.,** Falk, E. B., Bassett, D. S., & Ruscio, A. (2023). Brain network dynamics predicting perseverance thoughts in clinical populations. *In Prep*.

PRESENTATIONS

INVITED TALKS

Mwilambwe-Tshilobo, L., **Ahn, J.**, Kang, Y., Stanoi, O., Speer, S., Tamir, D., Boyd, Z., Bassett, D., Ochsner, K., Lydon-Staley, D., Mucha, P., & Falk, E. (2023, April). Loneliness and functional brain connectivity through the lens of social networks. *Social and Affective Neuroscience Society 2023 Annual Conference, Santa Barbara, USA*.

Ahn, J., Cooper, N., Kang, Y., O'Donnell, M., Green, M., Samanez-Larkin, G., & Falk, E. B. (2022, May). Brain responses to gain- and loss-framed messages differ, and interact with baseline physical activity, to predict later behaviors. *Social and Affective Neuroscience Society 2022 Annual Conference, Virtual*.

Ahn, J., Richards, K., & Ortiz, T. (2021, April). Recommendations for an intelligent diet. *Wharton Data Science Live 2021, Virtual*. event-place: Virtual Conference

CONFERENCE POSTER PRESENTATIONS

Ahn, J., Mwilambwe-Tshilobo, L., Bassett, D., Boyd, Z., Lydon-Staley, D., Mucha, P., Ochsner, K., & Falk, E. (2024, April). Brain networks as individual-level predictors of longitudinal loneliness. *Social and Affective Neuroscience Society 2024 Annual Conference, Toronto, Canada*.

Ahn, J., Kang, Y., Mwilambwe-Tshilobo, L., Bassett, D., Boyd, Z., Lydon-Staley, D., Mucha, P., Ochsner, K., & Falk, E. (2023, May). Neural responses to peers' faces predict vulnerability to loneliness during COVID-19. *Annual International Communication Association Conference 2023, Toronto, Canada*.

Jovanova, M., Boyd, Z., Schwarze, A., Christensen, T., Cosme, D., Katch, K., **Ahn, J.**, Resnick, A., Cooper, N., Xie, H., Kang, Y., Lomax, S., McGowan, A., Mwilambwe-Tshilobo, L., Stanoi, O., Srivastava, P., Ochsner, K., Bassett, D., Lydon-Staley, D., ... Mucha, P. (2023, May). Integrating multimodal data and machine learning to predict individual differences in health behavior change. *Annual International Communication Association Conference 2023, Toronto, Canada*.

Kang, Y., **Ahn, J.**, Cosme, D., McGowan, A., Mwilambwe-Tshilobo, L., Zhou, D., Jovanova, M., Stanoi, O., Mucha, P., Ochsner, K., Bassett, D., Lydon-Staley, D., & Falk, E. (2023, May). Frontoparietal functional connectivity moderates the link between time spent on social media and subsequent negative affect. *Annual International Communication Association Conference 2023, Toronto, Canada (Promising Paper Award Winner)*.

Ahn, J., Kang, Y., Mwilambwe-Tshilobo, L., Cosme, D., Jovanova, M., Bassett, D., Boyd, Z., Lydon-Staley, D., Mucha, P., Ochsner, K., & Falk, E. (2023, April). Neural responses to peers' faces predict vulnerability to loneliness during COVID-19. *Social and Affective Neuroscience Society 2023 Annual Conference, Santa Barbara, CA, USA*.

Ahn, J., Cooper, N., Kang, Y., O'Donnell, M., Green, M., Samanez-Larkin, G., & Falk, E. B. (2022, May). Brain responses to gain- and loss-framed messages differ, and interact with baseline physical activity, to predict later behaviors. *Social and Affective Neuroscience Society 2022 Annual Conference, Virtual (Top Poster Award Winner)*.

Ahn, J., Cooper, N., Kang, Y., O'Donnell, M., Green, M., Samanez-Larkin, G., & Falk, E. B. (2022, May). Brain responses to gain- and loss-framed messages differ, and interact with baseline physical activity, to predict later behaviors. *Annual International Communication Association Conference 2022, Paris, France*.

Chan, H.-Y., Scholz, C., Cosme, D., Martin, R., Benitez, C., Cooper, N., Paul, A., **Ahn, J.**, Doré, B., Resnick, A., Carreras-Tartak, J., & Falk, E. B. (2022, May). Brain-based prediction of information virality: Evidence of cross-cultural validity from a pre-registered neuroimaging study. *Annual International Communication Association Conference 2022, Paris, France*.

Cosme, D., Scholz, C., Chan, H.-Y., Martin, R., Cooper, N., Paul, A., **Ahn, J.**, Doré, B., Resnick, A., Carreras-Tartak, J., & Falk, E. B. (2022, May). Does focusing on self or social relevance during news article exposure increase motivation to share content? *Annual International Communication Association Conference 2022, Paris, France*.

Ahn, J., Jun, S., Lee, J., Min, S., Lee, S.-K., Park, S. H., & Han, S. (2018, November). Altered emotional attention and brain functional connectivity networks of emotional laborers. *Society for Neuroscience 2018 Annual Conference, San Diego, CA, USA*.

Min, S., Jun, S., **Ahn, J.**, Lee, J., Lee, S.-K., Park, S. H., & Han, S. (2018, November). Intrinsic functional connectivity in emotion regulation network is altered in emotion laborers. *Society for Neuroscience 2018 Annual Conference, San Diego, USA*.

Lee, J., Lee, H. J., **Ahn, J.**, Lee, S.-K., & Han, S. (2018, June). Exploring the high-resolution EPI fMRI protocol to reduce susceptibility-related BOLD signal dropout. *The Organization for Human Brain Mapping 2018 Annual Meeting, Singapore*.

Ahn, J., Han, J. H., Kang, M. S., & Han, S. (2017, November). Frontopolar transcranial direct current stimulation changes intrinsic functional connectivity networks during resting-state fMRI. *Society for Neuroscience 2017 Annual Conference, Washington DC, USA*.

Ahn, J., Nah, Y., & Han, S. (2016, November). Voxel-wise mapping of the cingulate cortex in impression formation. *Society for Neuroscience 2016 Annual Conference, San Diego, CA, USA*.

Ahn, J., Nah, Y., & Han, S. (2016, April). Patterns of functional connectivity during preparation periods can predict the tendency to give up in following decision-making. *Cognitive Neuroscience Society 2016 Annual Conference, New York City, NY, USA*.

VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES & OUTREACH

Vice President of Consulting

May 2023 – Present

PENN GRADUATE CONSULTING CLUB

Philadelphia, PA, USA

- Managed 6 project managers and 30+ analysts for successful execution of pro bono consulting projects
- Established strong relationships with 5+ industry clients within the first 2 months of joining the board, doubling the number of secured pro bono projects compared to the previous term
- Revamped marketing strategies to recruit talented staffs, increasing project member applications by 300%
- Initiated structured training sessions for 30+ project managers and analysts on client expectations, high-quality deliverables, and presentations

Consultant

Sept. 2022 – Jan. 2023

PENN BIOTECH GROUP HEALTHCARE CONSULTING

Philadelphia, PA, USA

- Presented weekly deliverables to the CEOs of a biotechnology start-up as part of an 11-person graduate research team
- Evaluated 200+ company profiles and clinical trial data, identifying 4 partnership opportunities with the highest synergistic potential
- Interviewed 10 key opinion leaders in healthcare (e.g., physicians), synthesizing their insights into clear recommendations on clinical trial design
- Recognized for exceptional contributions and recruited as Vice President of Consulting by Penn Graduate Consulting Club

Data Scientist

Mar. 2022 – Mar. 2023

DIVERSITY AND EQUITY INITIATIVE IN MIND SCIENCES

Philadelphia, PA, USA

- Designed online surveys to assess the effectiveness of education outreach programs
- Visualized program outcomes using R (e.g., text-analyzed participant feedback) and delivered actionable insights to program organizers to enhance the overall participant experience

Data Scientist

Feb. 2022 – May 2022

PENN DATA SCIENCE GROUP

Philadelphia, PA, USA

- Synthesized air pollution and health data procured from 6 sources (100K+ data points) into an interactive heat map

UX Research Consultant

Mar. 2016 – Feb. 2018

TEAM QUANTUMLABS (START-UP)

Seoul, South Korea

- Directed research projects (A/B testing, surveys, lab experiments, and interviews) to assess user behavior and guide strategic product decisions for a novel neurostimulation device
- Communicated award-winning scientific insights with cross-functional stakeholders (venture capital funders, designers, engineers, and clinicians), acquiring \$100K+ in funding

INTERNSHIPS

Healthcare Platform Data Strategy Intern

July 2023

SAMSUNG LIFE INSURANCE

Seoul, South Korea

- Analyzed behavioral patterns and health conditions of Samsung healthcare app users (200K+ data points), driving substantial changes to the UI/UX design to reduce cognitive load and improve usability; led to a full-time return offer
- Curated engaging wellbeing content to facilitate user acquisition and retention, presently integrated into the app

Summer Intern

July 2014 – Aug. 2014

KB KOOKMIN BANK

Seoul, South Korea

- Received training in managing financial data and improving customer journeys at South Korea's largest commercial bank

Student Intern

Sep. 2013 – Dec. 2013

KOREAN CULTURAL CENTER, AUSTRALIA

Sydney, Australia

- Interfaced with customers visiting the center as a primary receptionist and provided translation services between English and Korean
- Monitored Korea-related media content broadcasted in Australia
- Organized cultural events, including K-pop dance and Korean speech contests

SCHOLARSHIPS

Penn Full-Ride Doctoral Fellowship (\$400K)

2019 - Present

SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SCIENCES, UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA

Kwanjeong Full-Tuition Graduate Scholarship (\$22K)

2016 - 2017

KWANJEONG EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION

<http://en.ikef.or.kr>

Brain Korea 21+ Graduate Scholarship

2016 - 2017

NATIONAL RESEARCH FOUNDATION OF KOREA

HONORS & AWARDS

Travel Award

2024

SOCIAL AFFECTIVE NEUROSCIENCE SOCIETY

- Awarded \$500 for a poster presentation titled 'Brain networks as individual-level predictors of changes in loneliness'

Comcast Applied AI Award

2023

PHILLY CODEFEST

- Managed a team of 2 software engineers to solve an AR/AI technology problem presented by Comcast; Came first place among 50+ teams
- Invited to present the AI solution to Comcast's CTO at its headquarters

Top Poster Award

2022

SOCIAL AFFECTIVE NEUROSCIENCE SOCIETY

- Presented findings at an invited talk titled 'Brain responses to gain- and loss-framed messages differ, and interact with baseline physical activity, to predict later behaviors'; Awarded among 300+ attendees

Best Master's Thesis Award

2018

YONSEI UNIVERSITY GRADUATE GROUP

- For the thesis titled 'Voxel-wise mapping of functional magnetic resonance imaging in impression formation'; Awarded among 1K+ theses across 91 departments

Interdisciplinary Research Initiative Award, Grand Prize

2017

INSTITUTE OF CONVERGENCE SCIENCE (ICONS)

- Collaborated with 3 electrical engineers to enhance medical image resolution using deep learning algorithms; Awarded \$5K in research funding

Start-up Challenge Award

2016

YONSEI ENTERPRISE SUPPORT FOUNDATION

- Presented A/B test findings for a novel neurostimulation device developed by a start-up; Awarded \$1K and office space; Led to \$100K venture capital funding

Dean's Honors

2011, 2013, 2014

DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY, COLLEGE OF INFORMATION & COMMUNICATIONS, KOREA UNIVERSITY

- For 5 out of 7 semesters; 2014, Fall Semester (GPA 4.25/4.5); 2014, Spring Semester (GPA 4.25/4.5); 2013, Spring Semester (GPA 4.0/4.5); 2011, Fall Semester (GPA 4.11/4.5); 2011, Spring Semester (GPA 4.37/4.5)