

DR SARUNE SAVICKAITE

PROFILE Early career researcher interested in Virtual Reality, Perception, Cognition, Creativity and Immersive Education.

EDUCATION

PHD | UNIVERSITY OF GLASGOW
2019 – 2024
Thesis on the use of Virtual Reality (VR) to understand the inner perceptual world of autism. ESRC funded PGR (1+3) with industrial partners (Edify.ac).
PhD has been listed as finalist for Innovate UK Tech Awards under UI/UX category.

MSC HONS | UNIVERSITY OF GLASGOW
2018-2019

BSC HONS | UNIVERSITY OF ST ANDREWS
2011- 2015
Dissertation on complex binocular depth perception. Graduated with a Commendation for Outstanding Contribution to Psychology.

DIPHE | BIRKBECK COLLEGE
2010- 2011
Life Sciences Allied to Medicine (Biology and Chemistry).

BA HONS | UNIVERSITY OF BEDFORDSHIRE
2006-2009
Illustration & Graphic Design

EXPERIENCE

TEACHING ASSISTANT (GRADE 6)
2023- present | School of Psychology and Neuroscience, University of Glasgow

VISITING LECTURER IN RESEARCH METHODS AND INTERNAL EXAMINER
2023- present | Centre for Counselling and Therapy Services
<https://www.centreoftherapy.org/>

POSTDOCTORAL RESEARCH ASSOCIATE (GRADE 7)
2023 | SEER (Scoping Extended Educational Realities) Project with Meta of Education, University of Glasgow

ASSOCIATE TUTOR (GRADE 8)
2022-2023 | School of Education, University of Glasgow

TUTOR (GRADE 7)
2022-2023 | Student Learning and Development Services, University of Glasgow

GRADUATE TEACHING ASSISTANT (GRADE 7)

2023 | MVLS Education Hub, University of Glasgow

EDUCATION RESEARCH MANAGER

2019 – 2023 | Edify (www.edify.ac)

TUTOR (GRADE 7)

2020 – 2023 | Lifelong Learning, University of Glasgow

GRADUATE TEACHING ASSISTANT (GRADE 7)

2019 – 2023 | School of Psychology & Neuroscience, University of Glasgow

PROJECT MANAGER

2016 – 2018 | John Lewis at Capita Ltd

RESEARCH ASSISTANT

2012 – 2015 | Vision Lab at the University of St Andrews

ILLUSTRATOR & GRAPHIC DESIGNER

2006-present | Freelance

AWARDS & GRANTS

INNOVATION IN PEDAGOGY AWARD 2022

International conference (iLRN2023)- ALIVE: Avatar Learning Impact assessment for Virtual Environments

INNOVATION IN PEDAGOGY AWARD 2023

International conference (iLRN2023)- Immersive Learning and Inclusivity: Raising Awareness, Identifying Opportunities and Challenges, and Adapting Practice

SEER (SCOPING EXTENDED EDUCATIONAL REALITIES) GROUP

2023 | 160k grant from Meta for 6 months. Lead Accessibility Work Package.

INNOVATE UK GRANT FOR 'ALIVE' PROJECT

2022 | 40k for 3 months. PI for the project on behalf of Edify.ac.

OVERSEES INSTITUTIONAL VISIT, SGSSS

2022 | Cognitive Developmental Robotics Lab, IRCN, University of Tokyo

STUDENT AND TRAINEE TRAVEL AWARD

2020 | INSAR (International Society for Autism Research) conference

SCHOLARSHIP FROM ASSOCIATION FOR COMPUTING MACHINERY

2021 | womEncourage conference

EPSRC SUMMER STUDENTSHIP AWARD

2013 | University of St Andrews

PUBLICATIONS

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CITATIONS 64

McDonnell, N., Hirsu, L., Rodolico, G., Savickaite, S., Latkovskis, I., & Chapronniere, L. (2024). XRed: Preparing for Immersive Education. Whitepaper.

Savickaite, S., Oyebisi, J., Stockman, T., & Bourguet, M. (2024). Instructional Design and Authoring of Accessible and Inclusive Extended Reality Learning Experiences – Instructor-Learner and Instructor-AI

Partnerships, Special issue of JAID on Designing Extended Reality (XR) Environments and Experiences for Authentic Learning (in pre-print).

Savickaite, S., McNaughton, K., Gaillard, E., Amaya, J., McDonnell, N., Millington, E., & Simmons, D. R. (2022). Exploratory study on the use of HMD virtual reality to investigate individual differences in visual processing styles. *Journal of Enabling Technologies*.

Savickaite, S., Morrison, C., Lux, E., Delafield-Butt, J., & Simmons, D. R. (2022). The use of a tablet-based app for investigating the influence of autistic and ADHD traits on performance in a complex drawing task. *Behavior Research Methods*, 1-23.

Savickaite, S., Husselman, T. A., Taylor, R., Millington, E., Hayashibara, E., & Arthur, T. (2022). Applications of virtual reality (VR) in autism research: current trends and taxonomy of definitions. *Journal of Enabling Technologies*.

Millington, E., Hayashibara, E., Arthur, T., Husselman, T. A., Savickaite, S., & Taylor, R. (2022). Neurodivergent participatory action research for Virtual Reality (VR). *Journal of Enabling Technologies*.

Savickaite, S., & Simmons, D. (2023). From Abstract to Concrete: How Immersive Virtual Reality Technology Enhances Teaching of Complex Paradigms. In *Immersive education: Designing for learning* (pp. 135-152). Cham: Springer International Publishing.

Taylor, R., Savickaite, S., Henderson, S., & Simmons, D. (2023). Using immersive virtual reality to recreate the synaesthetic experience. *i-Perception*, 14(3).

PREPRINTS

Savickaite, S. (2024). Blended XR Curriculum Approach: MIX (Multimodal Immersive eXperience) lesson plan flow chart and template development. <https://doi.org/10.31234/osf.io/eay2w>

Views: 49 | Downloads: 30

Savickaite, S., McNaughton, K., Gaillard, E., Amaya, I., McDonnell, N., Millington, E., & Simmons, D. (2021). Using HMD Virtual Reality to investigate individual differences in visual processing styles. <https://doi.org/10.31234/osf.io/g7d9c>

Views: 963 | Downloads: 471

Savickaite, S., McDonnell, N., & Simmons, D. (2022). Defining Virtual Reality (VR). Scoping Literature Review on VR Applications in Autism Research. <https://doi.org/10.31234/osf.io/p3nh6>

Views: 446 | Downloads: 3010

Savickaite, S., McDonnell, N., & Simmons, D. (2022). Data Extraction and Visualization from Three-dimensional Drawings Made in Immersive Virtual Environments. <https://doi.org/10.31234/osf.io/aetgr>

Views: 178 | Downloads: 304

Savickaite, S., Millington, E., Latkovskis, I., Failes, J., Kirkwood, N., & McDonnell, N. (2022). Virtual Reality (VR) Multi-User Lab for Immersive Teaching. <https://doi.org/10.31234/osf.io/3w4hv>

Views: 873 | Downloads: 488

Savickaite, S., Millington, E., Freeman, C., McMillan, R., McDonnell, N., & Khamis, M. (2022). ALIVE: Avatar Learning Impact assessment for Virtual Environments. <https://doi.org/10.31219/osf.io/rmeq8>

Views: 149 | Downloads: 52

Hayashibara, E., Savickaite, S. & Simmons, D. R. (2022). Creativity in Neurodiversity: Towards and Inclusive Creativity Measure for Autism and ADHD.

Views: 189 | Downloads: 1586

Savickaite, S., Quick, A., McDonnell, N. & Simmons, D. (2024). Using Immersive Virtual Reality to Explore Individual Differences in Animacy Perception: A Pilot Study.

<https://doi.org/10.31234/osf.io/y5dqr>

Views: 42 | Downloads: 59

Savickaite, S., Khalaf, H., Smith, E, Quick, A., McDonnell, N. & Simmons, D. (2024). Intentionality attribution during the Immersive Virtual Reality (VR) Animacy Task, Empathetic Responses and Autistic Traits. <https://doi.org/10.31234/osf.io/zwrf7>

Views: 75 | Downloads: 88

MEMBERSHIPS

BRITISH PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION (BPS)

2015- present

AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION (APA)

2020- present

ASSOCIATION FOR COMPUTING MACHINERY (ACM)

2021- present

INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR AUTISM RESEARCH (INSAR)

2018 – 2021

SCOTTISH AUTISM RESEARCH GROUP (SARG)

2020 – present

IMMERSIVE LEARNING RESEARCH NETWORK (ILRN)

2020 – present

IMPACT & ENGAGEMENT

BLOG POSTS

Immersive Education (Immerse UK)

<https://iuk.immersivetechnetwork.org/news/an-immersive-education/>

Immersive Reality: History and Current State of Affairs (theGist) <https://the-gist.org/2021/05/immersive-reality-history-and-current-state-of-affairs/>

Learning to Run Before we Walk: can Virtual Reality Help Recover Stereo Vision? (theGist) <https://the-gist.org/2021/10/learning-to-run-before-we-walk-can-virtual-reality-help-recover-stereo-vision/>

Per Aspera Ad Astra: My Journey to Academia (ACM Europe)

<https://acmweurope.acm.org/telling-our-stories-sarune-savickaite/>

Hypnotic World of Virtual Reality: Sensory Perception of Autism Explored in 3D (UofG PGR blog) <https://uofgpgrblog.com/pgrblog/2020/1/20/hypnotic-world-of-virtual-reality-sensory-perception-of-autism-explored-in-3d>

INVITED TALKS (2024)

PASCAL observatory and CR&DALL online panel- 'Advancing inclusive education through immersive technologies: key accessibility considerations'

University of Glasgow Gaming Lab panel- 'Accessibility in VR Gaming'

The Psychology of XR (short course) organized by the Australian Research Centre for Interactive and Virtual Environments- VR, Neurodiversity and perceptual differences (part of PSYCH5105 curriculum and my thesis)

Feature Speaker at iLRN24 (online) conference- 'Advancing Inclusive Education Through Immersive Technologies: Key Accessibility Considerations and Recommendations'

PRESENTATIONS (2024)

PERU research day 2024 (SPN)- 'Immersive Education'

ESLTIS 2024 (University of St Andrews)- 'Advancing inclusive education through immersive technologies: key accessibility considerations'

AI symposium 2024 (University of Glasgow)- 'AI for PGRs'

WORKSHOPS (2024)

Virtual Reality teaching labs (ARC XR) demo for staff at the School of Psychology and Neuroscience, University of Glasgow

Virtual Reality teaching labs demo with Clear Pixel for MVLS staff at the University of Glasgow

Interdisciplinary Workshops on Interoceptive Awareness: Bridging Research Across Cultures (3 workshops: 2 at the University of Tokyo and 1 at University of Glasgow, fully funded by the Great British Sasakawa foundation)

BOARD MEMBERSHIP

ADVANCED RESEARCH CENTRE (ARC XR) OPERATIONAL BOARD

2021 – present | University of Glasgow

ADVANCED RESEARCH CENTRE (ARC) STRATEGY BOARD

2021 – 2022 | University of Glasgow

POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH LIAISON COMMITTEE (COLLEGE)

2018 – 2021 | College of Science & Engineering, University of Glasgow

POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH LIAISON COMMITTEE (SCHOOL)

2019 – 2021 | School of Psychology & Neuroscience, University of Glasgow

CPD & TRAINING **ASSOCIATE FELLOW (AFHEA)**

2021 | Advance HE

NEURO-INSPIRED COMPUTATION

2024 | IRCN. The University of Tokyo and Chen Institute Joint course

INTRODUCTION TO ART THERAPY

2021 | Oxford College of Arts and Therapies

ART THERAPY FOUNDATION

2021 | Oxford College of Arts and Therapies

PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES

JOURNAL ROLES

Invited Special Issue Editor | Journal of Enabling Technologies: VR application for autism research special issue

Guest Editor | Journal of Learning Development in Higher Education

REVIEWER

Journal of Enabling Technologies

British Journal of Educational technology

Frontiers in Education

Cogent Education

CONFERENCE ORGANIZATION

AVRA (Application of Virtual Reality for Autism Research)- founder and organizer (2022 – 2024) <https://sites.google.com/view/avra2021/>

ILRN (Immersive Learning Network) conferences (2022 – present)- Opportunities and Inclusion chair since 2023. <https://www.immersivelrn.org/about/ilrn-overview/>

AWE EU 2020 (Munich)- volunteer <https://www.awexr.com/>