

LETTER TO PROSPECTIVE PHD STUDENTS

Thanks for your interest in joining us. *I am looking to admit a PhD student into the [Bailey Identity and Social Cognition \(BIAS\) Lab](#) during the 2026-2027 application cycle in the social program at the University of Edinburgh, that is, to start Fall 2027.* Below I include information about the research topics we are currently pursuing, our values, my mentorship style, and the application process.

The Lab

When you think of a "person," who comes to mind? Does your language influence how you think about different social groups? If you think of an identity as biologically caused versus socially constructed, does that matter? Why do children and adults tell more stories about boys than girls?

In the BIAS Lab, we investigate beliefs and biases about important social identities, including but not limited to gender, race, and sexual orientation, from a social cognitive perspective. Other topics we also address include concepts, essentialism, impression formation, and power. Our grounding motivations revolve around we can better understand how the *MIND* works to ultimately create a more inclusive and equitable society for all.

Currently, we study these issues using correlational and experimental approaches employing a range of methods from survey-based questionnaires to speeded response time tasks (e.g., the IAT) and “big data” tools from computational linguistics. Our lab is grounded in social psychology theory and methods. However, our work also often crosses area and disciplinary lines, and we frequently collaborate with cognitive psychologists, developmental psychologists, computer scientists, linguists, and philosophers. Our lab looks for opportunities to connect mentees with collaborators here and at other universities to help them develop their interests and build productive networks.

Representative Publications.

- Bailey, A. H., LaFrance, M., & Dovidio, J. F. (2019). Is man the measure of all things? A social cognitive account of androcentrism. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, 23(4), 307-331.
- Bailey, A. H., Williams, A., Cimpian, A. (2022). Based on billions of words on the internet, PEOPLE = MEN. *Science Advances*, 8(13), eabm2463.
- Bailey, A. H., Williams, A., Poddar, A., & Cimpian, A. (2025). Intersectional male-centric and White-centric biases in collective concepts. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*.
- Bailey, A. H., LaFrance, M., & Dovidio, F. (2020). Implicit androcentrism: Men are human, women are gendered. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 89, 103980.
- Bailey, A. H., Dembroff, R., Wodak, D., Ikizer, E., & Cimpian, A. (2025). People's beliefs about pronouns reflect both the language they speak and their ideologies. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: General*.
- Bailey, A. H., Dovidio, J. F., & LaFrance, M. (2022). “Master” of none: Institutional language change linked to reduced gender bias. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Applied*, 28(1), 237-248.
- Bailey, A. H., Knobe, J. (2023). Biological essentialism correlates with (but doesn't cause?) intergroup bias. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*.

Commitment to Open Science. As a lab, we are committed to transparency, integrity, and reproducibility in the conduct of our research. We therefore make the careful effort to thoughtfully preregister projects and post research materials, data and analytic code online via the [Open Science Framework](#). We expect all members of the lab to be committed to aligning scientific values with scientific practice in these ways.

Lab Values. As mentioned, we aim to reduce unfair social hierarchies and create a more inclusive, equitable society for all through our research. We strive to manifest these values to our lab as well. We endeavor to

create a welcoming, supportive, and collaborative environment embodying rigorous, ethical, and transparent research practices. We want individuals with diverse backgrounds and life experiences—including people of all gender identities, class backgrounds, sexual orientations, race/ethnicities, abilities, and religious beliefs—to feel valued and empowered to share their input on the challenging topics and societal issues we investigate. We are here to listen to students of all levels and support their research and career goals. Graduate students are actively involved in shaping the lab culture and while they receive mentoring from myself and each other, they also have the opportunity to provide meaningful mentorship to undergraduate students. It is therefore critical to value collaboration, embrace curiosity, and maintain humility.

Mentorship Style. My mentorship model of PhD students is somewhere in-between “hands off” and “hands on.” My goal is to give students enough autonomy to develop their own ideas and research program while ensuring students feel supported. Early and often, I discuss students’ career goals with them. We check-in regularly about their goals to ensure that students’ activities are aligned with their goals. In terms of research ideas, students and I develop ideas together. For some projects the initial spark of an idea comes from the student and for other projects the initial idea comes from me. Students usually lead project implementation, analysis, and drafting and are almost always first-author on resulting publications. As a mentor, I endeavor to provide tailored, growth-focused guidance to each student. I meet regularly with PhD students one-on-one for ~1-2 hours each week. I also meet with students during group lab meetings for ~1 hour fortnightly.

Application Process, Admissions, and Funding

Online Form: If you are interested in joining our lab, **I encourage you to reach out before applying by filling out this online form:** <https://forms.gle/E5X2gM3Aii14B8Nw9>

Spots and funding are very competitive. In the UK, it is typical for students to only apply for PhD programs with the support of a mentor.

Timing: I review inquiries on the form on a rolling basis and encourage students to reach out during the months of September and October if possible.

Where to ultimately apply and seek funding:

For more information about how to apply through the department, see [here](#).

For more information about how to apply through an NLP Center for Doctoral Training, see [here](#).

There are other specific funding schemes depending on your nationality status. For instance, see more [here](#).