

ECO-MIND - Enhancing pro-environmental behaviours and mental health through nature contact for urban youth:

A multi-country study using geographic ecological momentary assessment and mental models

Department: Human Geography and Spatial Planning

Research group: Urban Geography

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Project description

Urban youth are experiencing increasing mental health problems due to diverse personal, social, and environmental concerns. Youths' detachment from natural environments, including green and blue spaces, may intensify such issues further. Contact with nature can benefit mental health and promote pro-environmental behaviour. Yet, only a few studies assess these relationships among the youth usually ignoring effects of living in diverse urban contexts, and everyday nature experiences. ECO-MIND will investigate whether urban youth's dynamic nature exposure and their mental models about nature connectedness explain the associations between nature exposure, mental health, and pro-environmental behaviour in multiple urban contexts.

In this project, we will investigate how students interact with nature and how they perceive nature connectedness. We want to explore their mental models (or systems perceptions) concerning nature connectedness using a novel tool for mapping mental models: [M-Tool](#). We will also use ecological momentary assessment to assess participants' everyday experiences and exposure to nature.

For this project, we are looking for a student assistant who can help us with developing the research materials and collecting the data. The student assistant will also be invited to help with the data analysis and paper writing.

Job requirements

We are looking for a motivated student who wants to gain experience in conducting environmental psychology research. The applicant should have good communication skills and be a team player. Knowledge about mental models and/or ecological momentary assessment is welcomed.

Relevant literature

Hartig, T., Kaiser, F. G., & Strumse, E. (2007). Psychological restoration in nature as a source of motivation for ecological behaviour. *Environmental conservation*, 34(4), 291-299.

Markevych, I., Schoierer, J., Hartig, T., Chudnovsky, A., Hystad, P., Dzhambov, A. M., ... & Fuertes, E. (2017). Exploring pathways linking greenspace to health: Theoretical and methodological guidance. *Environmental research*, 158, 301-317.

Project proposal Bright Minds Assistantships March 2024

Martin, L., White, M. P., Hunt, A., Richardson, M., Pahl, S., & Burt, J. (2020). Nature contact, nature connectedness and associations with health, wellbeing and pro-environmental behaviours. *Journal of environmental psychology*, 68, 101389.