Postdoctoral Position: Spatial and nonspatial cognitive maps in the human brain

A postdoctoral position is available in the Epstein Lab in the Department of Psychology at the University of Pennsylvania (Philadelphia, PA, USA). The position will be supported from an NIH-funded project investigating the neural basis of spatial and nonspatial cognitive maps in humans. We wish to understand how cognitive maps are learned, how they are organized in memory, and how they are used to guide intelligent behavior during spatial navigation and other cognitive tasks. We are looking for an early-career scientist who will bring creative ideas of their own that fit under this general umbrella.

The studies will primarily involve cognitive behavioral testing and functional imaging (fMRI) on adult humans, though there may be opportunities to use electrocorticography data as well. Candidates are encouraged to look at the publications page of our lab website (www.psych.upenn.edu/epsteinlab/) to get a sense for our recent intellectual directions. The projects may involve collaboration with Prof. Nora Newcombe's spatial cognition lab at Temple University (https://sites.temple.edu/risc/) and Prof. Michael Kahana's computational memory lab (https://memory.psych.upenn.edu/).

The ideal candidate would have some combination of: (i) experience with fMRI or other cognitive neuroscience methods; (ii) strong computational and statistical skills; (iii) deep interest in spatial navigation, spatial memory, and/or the neural basis of cognition. However, candidates lacking some of these desiderata will be considered if the intellectual fit is otherwise strong. An established track record of research productivity is essential, as is a proclivity for independent thought.

The University of Pennsylvania has excellent facilities for cognitive neuroscience research. The Center for Functional Neuroimaging (www.cfn.upenn.edu) provides comprehensive technical support for fMRI acquisition and analysis using several state-of-the-art research-dedicated 3T and 7T Siemens scanners. Our lab is part of the Penn Brain Sciences Center (https://pennbrain.upenn.edu/) which is a lively, friendly, collaborative environment that is co-located with the Department of Psychology and the Computational Neuroscience Initiative (www.cni.upenn.edu). Philadelphia is a culturally vibrant, walkable, affordable city that has become one of best places to live on the East Coast. Penn has recently enhanced postdoctoral salaries and benefits to competitive levels above NIH standard rates.

To apply, send the following documents to Russell Epstein (epstein@psych.upenn.edu): (1) a brief cover letter describing you qualifications, research interests, and why this position is right for you; (2) CV; (3) pdfs of recent publications; (4) names and contact information for 3 references.

The University of Pennsylvania is an Equal Employment Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer.