Project details

Interoception – the felt sense of internal body state – is central to not only how we experience and monitor our physiological needs (hunger, thirst, temperature), but also our experience of affect states such as emotions and moods. The experiences of affective vs. physiological interoceptive states are often blurred in mental health problems such as anxiety and depression; for instance, in the somatisation of distress. This project seeks to elucidate these overlaps and address questions about how affective experiences emerge from interoceptive signals. For example, an initial study could apply multivariate analyses of fMRI paradigms measuring interoceptive state manipulations (e.g., hunger versus satiety) following induction of an affective state (e.g. anger/irritability) to assay the degree to which the neural encoding of physiological experience overlaps with affective experience (e.g. in experiences of feeling 'hangry'), and how this differs in those with mood and anxiety disorders.