

The ESRC Network for Integrated Behavioural Science is a partnership among the Universities of Nottingham, Warwick, and East Anglia. Visit us online at <http://www.behavioural-science.ac.uk>

Welcome to our New Starters

After a successful round of interviews, we are pleased to announce that three new Post Doc Researchers have been recruited to NIBS.

The first of these, who joined us in April, is Mengjie Wang. Mengjie completed her PhD “Essays on search behavior and procedure fairness” in 2017, and she will be based at UEA.

Expected to start in September will be Orestis Kopsacheilis at the University of Nottingham. Warwick Business School has also appointed and the post-holder is due to start in January. We also expect new PhD students to join us in September.

Details of all NIBS fellows and students will be available on [our website](#) once they are in post.

Upcoming Events

Our usual ‘internal workshop’ will take place this year from 17 to 19 September at the Orchard Hotel, Nottingham. This event is aimed at NIBS funded colleagues and close collaborators, and is primarily a vehicle for sharing our research, especially projects which have been directly funded by NIBS. As this will be our first NIBS2 workshop, it will also be the perfect opportunity for new colleagues (including our PhD students and Post Docs) to introduce themselves to the Network.

The programme is still being developed however, following a successful CCP/NIBS workshop with Ofcom (as part of a sponsorship scheme CCP has with seven major regulators) we plan to schedule time to discuss which NIBS topics would lend themselves to a similar regulatory workshop.

Our Progress

As our grant progresses, you will find details of the research undertaken by our Network listed on our website. We’ve divided our outputs into [papers/publications](#) and everything else including talks & lectures, workshops, publicity and media, which are listed under [other outputs](#). In future we plan to create a ‘features page’ which will enable us to showcase in more detail some of these achievements and activities.

Stay Connected

For updates in between newsletters you can find out what’s happening in the [news section](#) of our website. We also share behavioural science news and views via our Twitter page [@esrcnibs](#)

For information about upcoming seminars and news at a school-level check out our partners on Twitter:

[@UoNCeDEx](#) (Centre for Decision Research and Experimental Economics at Nottingham)

[@UoNEconomics](#) (School of Economics, University of Nottingham)

[@UEA Economics](#) (School of Economics at East Anglia, home of the Centre for Behavioural and Experimental Social Science)

[@WarwickBSchool](#) (Warwick Business School, home of the Behavioural Science Group)

[@warwickpsych](#) (Department of Psychology at University of Warwick)

[@NorwichBSchool](#) (Norwich Business School at University of East Anglia)

How do people repay their debt?

In this NBER working paper, authors John Gathergood, Neale Mahoney, Neil Stewart & Joerg Weber use information on credit card contract terms, monthly statements, and repayments for 1.4 million individuals in the United Kingdom over a two-year period, to study how individuals choose to allocate repayments across their credit cards.

Their findings show that individuals do not allocate repayments to the cards with the higher interest rates, which would minimize the cost of borrowing, but allocate their repayments using a balance-matching heuristic. This is where individuals match the share of repayments on each card to the share of balances on each card.

The results are important from a practical perspective because consumers following a balance-matching heuristic are likely to face a higher than necessary cost of borrowing.

For more information you can view a [copy of the paper](#) (published December 2017).

Showcasing two new books by NIBS authors.

The Mind is Flat: The Illusion of Mental Depth and the Improvised Mind by Nick Chater, was published by Allen Lane in March.

It's fair to say most of us assume our beliefs, fears and desires arise from within our minds, which some may call our subconscious. This leads to a desire to access this mysterious place in the hope of better understanding ourselves. In his book Nick debunks the myth that we have a hidden inner life. Drawing on multi-discipline research in neuroscience, behavioural psychology and perception, he argues that unconscious thought is a myth; there is no subconscious and we generate our ideas, motives and thoughts in the moment.

"This is one of those books that is a superb exposition of scientific findings, from which the author proceeds to draw highly polemical and speculative inferences." ([Review by Steven Poole, The Guardian 22 March 2018](#)).

The Community of Advantage: A Behavioural Economist's Defence of the Market by Robert Sugden is due to be published by OUP in July.

We will leave our NIBS international partner, Professor George Loewenstein of Carnegie Mellon University to tell you more, "In this book, behavioural economics insider Robert Sugden levels a powerful and erudite argument against the use of behavioural economics to justify paternalism. Adopting the contractarian perspective proposed by James Buchanan, Sugden draws on philosophy, historic and contemporary economics and political science to burnish the age-old idea that people should be given the freedom to chart their own course, and engage in free exchange with others who wish to do so. Even to readers who neither embrace Sugden's arguments nor accept his conclusions - a group among which I classify myself - this book is critical reading for those wishing to gain an understanding of the vigorous and vibrant debate taking place over the ethical and policy implication of behavioural economics."

Our Exchange Programme

Our exchange programme is designed to support early career researchers (PhD students and Post Docs) to make short visits between one of the UK centres and one of our international partners. We support visits in both directions.

We are delighted to have already supported a visit to the UK by David Hagmann of CMU (November 2017) and a visit to the University of Hamburg by Joerg Weber (February 2018).