

**Reg. No: 2015/18/E/HS6/00765; Principal Investigator: dr Robert Balas**

Evaluative conditioning (EC) is the mechanism that leads to an evaluative change in an initially neutral stimulus due to its repeated pairing with affective stimulus (positive or negative). EC is the mechanism responsible for acquisition and change of affective component of attitudes towards social objects, amongst other. Despite almost 30 years of research on EC its nature and underlying processes are still vividly debated. The proposed project will lead to our deeper understanding of how EC works and what are its basic psychological mechanisms, which in turn might contribute to more efficient practices of attitude change in clinical, persuasion, and advertising settings. This project has few specific objectives. First, it will investigate how induced changes in preference towards an unconditioned stimulus (US) lead to relevant changes in the attitude towards associated conditioned stimuli (CS). Secondly, we will see how the conditioning of one CS results in attitudinal changes towards other CS that have been previously associated with it. Third, the project aims at determining whether and how previously conditioned evaluative responses towards a given CS would be extinguished spontaneously or by induction. And finally, we will be able to see how the semantic relation between CS and US impacts conditioning effects.

Successful completion of this project will lead to better understanding of processes involved in the acquisition of attitudes as well as factors that might significantly contribute to attitude formation and change. Not only this project will have impact on how we theorize about evaluative conditioning (see associative vs. propositional theories) but also might be important for more applied domains, like clinical or persuasion.