

# SHARON MOZGAI

+1 (732) 266-4355 • smozgai@post.harvard.edu • [linkedin.com/in/sharonmozgai](https://www.linkedin.com/in/sharonmozgai)

## EDUCATION

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**Ed.M., Human Development and Psychology** 2010  
*Harvard University Graduate School of Education*

**B.A., Psychology** 2002  
*New York University*

- Independent Study, Geneva, Switzerland: Developmental Psychology
- Independent Study, Pretoria, South Africa: Violence, Trauma & Intervention in Post-Apartheid ZA
- Study Abroad, Florence, Italy

## TEACHING EXPERIENCE

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**Adjunct Lecturer** | *Endicott College (Graduate Level)* 2018–Present

- Courses taught: Child and Adolescent Development (2018–Present); Data Literacy (2019–Present); Fundamentals of Organizational Behavior (2020)
- Additional curriculum development: Talent Development; Negotiation and Conflict; Ethics and Social Responsibility; Literature Review I & II; Introduction to Qualitative Methods; Advanced Qualitative Methods

**Summer Research Institute Trainer** | *USC Institute for Creative Technologies* 2015–2017

- Developed curriculum and delivered training sessions for the Summer Research Institute
- Served as adult learning subject matter expert on CVIT — a distributed learning platform using virtual humans, casual games, AR, and narrative-driven experience

**Teaching Assistant** | *Harvard University* 2013–2015

- Why People Change: The Psychology of Influence (2014–2015)
- Trauma and Development (2013)

**Course Content Developer** | *Harvard Business School* 2011–2014

- Developed MBA elective content: Leading Teams (2nd-year elective) and Driving Performance through Talent Management (Executive Education)
- Co-authored Harvard Business School Case Teaching Notes on globalization and cross-cultural management (Transitions Asia; CDG: Managing in China's Economic Transformation)

## RESEARCH & PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

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**Director, Virtual Human Therapeutics Lab** | *USC Institute for Creative Technologies* 2023–Present

- Principal Investigator: [VITA OCS](#), [Battle Buddy](#), [CARE Program](#)
- Co-PI: Core Virtual Humans Integration Project, Personalized Avatar Testbed, System Integration for AI, CHLA Virtual Research Navigator (VRN)
- Projects: BRAVEMIND, VITA, CHLA VRN, RIDE, Virtual Human Toolkit, Battle Buddy, Virtual Human Fidelity Coalition (VHFC)

**Assistant Director, MedicalVR** | *USC Institute for Creative Technologies* 2019–2023

- Co-PI: [BRAVEMIND](#)

- VP, Content** | *HIA Technologies, Inc.* 2018–2019
- Applied cross-disciplinary expertise in NLP, virtual humans, AI, psychology, and UX to design and deliver virtual human products
  - Led an internationally distributed team under strict project timelines; built inclusive company culture
- Senior Research Analyst** | *Anticipant Speech, Inc.* 2017–2018
- Led human subjects research for product development and customer discovery; designed study methodology and IRB protocols
  - Supported NSF Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) grant development
- Research Analyst** | *USC Institute for Creative Technologies* 2015–2018
- Designed study methodology, authored assessment instruments, managed IRB applications, and conducted data analysis to evaluate virtual human efficacy
  - Authored and edited journal articles, conference papers, and grant submissions (NIH R01 NIAAA; NIH Smart and Connected Health)
- Researcher** | *Florida International University* 2014–2015
- Conducted comprehensive NSF-funded review defining the landscape of text annotation projects, workflows, and tools
- Research Associate, Organizational Behavior Unit** | *Harvard Business School* 2011–2014
- Managed all aspects of lab operations: IRB applications, study design, execution, data analysis, and publications
  - Conducted research on race, gender, trust, leadership, and global collaboration in organizations
- Text Analyst / Adjudicator, CSAIL** | *Massachusetts Institute of Technology* 2010–2014
- Executed computational linguistic annotation for a DARPA-funded research project on persuasion in propaganda
  - Led teams of semantic analysts; trained new hires on annotation software and lab protocol
- Psychology Technician GS-181-07** | *San Francisco VA Medical Center* 2007–2009
- Administered cognitive assessments and clinical interviews; counseled study participants through 12-session Telephone-Delivered Cognitive Behavioral Therapy
  - Built and maintained study database; independently programmed SF-12 Health Survey Scoring System distributed throughout the VA

## PUBLICATIONS

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- **Mozgai, S.**, Rabovich, L., Nguyen, C., Seymore, K., Kietz, T., Rao, S., & Angrisani, M. (2026). *Rapid judgment in the age of AI: A thin-slice study of virtual humans to support caregivers* [Manuscript under review]. Intelligent Virtual Agents Conference (IVA) 2026.
- Angrisani, M., Rabinovich, L., **Mozgai, S.**, & Fast, N. (2026). Public Attitudes Toward Artificial Intelligence and Conversational Technologies: Evidence from the Understanding America Study. 81st Annual Conference of the American Association for Public Opinion Research (AAPOR 2026).
- **Mozgai, S.**, Fast, K. K., Sookiassian, E., Leeds, A., & Hartholt, A. (2026). Rapid Personalized Doppelgänger Avatar Generation: Dyadic Evaluation of the TAC-Twin Virtual Human Pipeline. Human Interaction and Emerging Technologies (IHET-AI 2026).
- Rizzo, A., **Mozgai, S.**, Sigaras, A., Rubin, J. E., & Jotwani, R. (2025). Expert Consensus Best Practices for the Safe, Ethical, and Effective Design and Implementation of Artificially Intelligent Conversational Agent (i.e., Chatbot/Virtual Human) Technologies in Healthcare Settings. *Journal of Medical Extended Reality*, 2(1), 29941520251369450.
- Hartholt, A., Fast, E., Kim, K., Leeds, A., Sookiassian, E., & **Mozgai, S.** (2025). Multi-Platform Intelligent Agents with the Virtual Human Toolkit. Proceedings of the 25th ACM International Conference on Intelligent Virtual Agents (IVA '25).

- Lin, S., Jun, M., Rizk, B., Shieh, K., Fisher, S., & **Mozgai, S.** (2025). Optimizing SIA Development: A Case Study in User-Centered Design for Estuary, a Multimodal Socially Interactive Agent Framework. CHI '25.
- Lin, S., Rizk, B., Jun, M., Artze, A., Sullivan, C., **Mozgai, S.**, & Fisher, S. (2025). Estuary: A Framework for Building Multimodal Low-Latency Real-Time Socially Interactive Agents. IVA '25.
- **Mozgai, S.**, Kaurlo, C., Winn, J., Leeds, A., Beland, S., Sookiassian, A., & Hartholt, A. (2024). Accelerating Scoping Reviews: A Case Study in the User-Centered Design of an AI-Enabled Interdisciplinary Research Tool. CHI EA '24, pp. 502:1-502:8.
- Hartholt, A., Leeds, A., Fast, E., Sookiassian, E., Kim, K., Beland, B., Kulkarni, P., & **Mozgai, S.** (2024). Multidisciplinary Research & Development of Multi-Agents and Virtual Humans Leveraging Integrated Middleware Platforms. Intelligent Human Systems Integration (IHSI), Vol. 69.
- Rizzo, A. S., Hartholt, A., & **Mozgai, S.** (2024). Settling the Score: Virtual Reality as a Tool to Enhance Trauma-Focused Therapy for PTSD. In Handbook of Media Psychology: The Science and the Practice (pp. 187–213). Cham: Springer Nature Switzerland.
- **Mozgai, S.**, Kaurlo, C., Winn, J., Leeds, A., Heylen, D., Hartholt, A., & Scherer, S. (2023). Machine Learning for Semi-Automated Scoping Reviews. Intelligent Systems with Applications, 200249.
- **Mozgai, S.**, Rizzo, A., & Hartholt, A. (2023). Persuasive Technology for Suicide Prevention: A Virtual Human mHealth Application. 18th International Conference on Persuasive Technology. [Best Technical Demonstration Award]
- **Mozgai, S.**, Beland, S., Leeds, A., Winn, J., Kaurlo, C., Heylen, D., & Hartholt, A. (2023). Toward a Scoping Review of Social Intelligence in Virtual Humans. Workshop on Socially Interactive Human-like Agents (SIVA'23), IEEE FG 2023, pp. 1-6.
- Hartholt, A. & **Mozgai, S.** (2023). Creating Virtual Worlds with the Virtual Human Toolkit and the Rapid Integration & Development Environment. IHSI, Vol. 69.
- **Mozgai, S.**, Winn, J., Kaurlo, C., Leeds, A., Heylen, D., & Hartholt, A. (2022). Toward a Semi-Automated Scoping Review of Virtual Human Smiles. Workshop on Smiling and Laughter Across Contexts and the Life-Span, LREC '22.
- Hartholt, A., Fast, E., Kim, K., Leeds, A., Li, Z., & **Mozgai, S.** (2022). Re-Architecting the Virtual Human Toolkit: Towards an Interoperable Platform for Embodied Conversational Agent Research and Development. IVA '22.
- Hartholt, A., Fast, E., Leeds, A., Kim, K., Gordon, A., McCullough, K., Ustun, V., & **Mozgai, S.** (2022). Demonstrating RIDE: ECA and Multiagent Capabilities. AAMAS 2022 Demonstration Track.
- Hartholt, A. & **Mozgai, S.** (2022). Platforms and Tools for Socially Interactive Agent Research and Development. In The Handbook on Socially Interactive Agents: 20 Years of Research on ECAs, IVAs, and Social Robotics, Vol. 2. ACM.
- Rizzo, A. S., Hartholt, A., & **Mozgai, S.** (2021). From Combat to COVID-19: Managing the Impact of Trauma Using Virtual Reality. Journal of Technology in Human Services, 39(3), 314-347.
- Hartholt, A., McCullough, K., Fast, E., Reilly, A., Leeds, A., **Mozgai, S.**, Aris, T., Ustun, V., Gordon, A., & McGroarty, C. (2021). Rapid Prototyping for Simulation and Training with RIDE. I/ITSEC 2021. [Best Paper Award]
- **Mozgai, S.**, Leeds, A., Kwok, D., Fast, E., Rizzo, A. S., & Hartholt, A. (2021). Building BRAVEMIND Vietnam: User-Centered Design for Virtual Reality Exposure Therapy. IEEE AIVR 2021, pp. 247-250.
- Hartholt, A., Fast, E., Leeds, A., & **Mozgai, S.** (2021). Introducing VHMason: A Visual, Integrated, Multimodal Virtual Human Authoring Tool. IVA '21, pp. 109-111.
- **Mozgai, S.**, Femminella, B., Hartholt, A., & Rizzo, A. S. (2021). User-Centered Design Model for Mobile Health (mHealth) Applications: A Military Case Study in Rapid Assessment Process (RAP). CHI EA '21, pp. 1-11.
- Hartholt, A., McCullough, K., Fast, E., Reilly, A., Leeds, A., **Mozgai, S.**, Ustun, V., & Gordon, A. (2021). Introducing RIDE: Lowering the Barrier of Entry to Simulation and Training. SISO SIW 2021. [Best Paper Award]
- Rizzo, A., Hartholt, A., & **Mozgai, S.** (2021). Establishment of Clinical Virtual Reality Methodologies: From the Front Lines of Afghanistan to COVID-19. In Applied Virtual Reality in Healthcare: Case Studies and Perspectives. Eds. Greenleaf, Roberts, Fine.

- Mell, J., Lucas, G., **Mozgai, S.**, & Gratch, J. (2020). The Effects of Experience on Deception in Human-Agent Negotiation. *Journal of Artificial Intelligence Research*, 68, 633-660.
- Hartholt, A., Fast, E., Reilly, A., Whitcup, W., Liewer, M., & **Mozgai, S.** (2020). Multi-Platform Expansion of the Virtual Human Toolkit: Ubiquitous Conversational Agents. *International Journal of Semantic Computing*, 14(03), 315-332.
- Hartholt, A., Reilly, A., Fast, E., & **Mozgai, S.** (2020). Introducing Canvas: Combining Nonverbal Behavior Generation with User-Generated Content to Rapidly Create Educational Videos. *IVA '20*, pp. 1-3.
- **Mozgai, S.**, Hartholt, A., Leeds, A., & Rizzo, A. S. (2020). Iterative Participatory Design for VRET Domain Transfer: From Combat Exposure to Military Sexual Trauma. *CHI EA '20*, pp. 1-8.
- **Mozgai, S.**, Hartholt, A., Akinyemi, D., Kubicek, K., & Kipke, M. (2020). Development and Initial Feasibility Testing of the Virtual Research Navigator (VRN). *HCI 2020*, pp. 304-307.
- **Mozgai, S.**, Hartholt, A., & Rizzo, A. (2020). The Passive Sensing Agent: A Multimodal Adaptive mHealth Application. *IEEE PerCom Workshops 2020*.
- **Mozgai, S.**, Hartholt, A., & Rizzo, A. S. (2020). An Adaptive Agent-Based Interface for Personalized Health Interventions. *IUI Companion 2020*, pp. 118-119.
- Chu, V. C., Lucas, G. M., Lei, S., **Mozgai, S.**, Khooshabeh, P., & Gratch, J. (2019). Emotion Regulation in the Prisoner's Dilemma: Effects of Reappraisal on Behavioral Measures and Cardiovascular Measures of Challenge and Threat. *Frontiers in Human Neuroscience*, 13, 50.
- **Mozgai, S.**, Hartholt, A., & Rizzo, A. (2019). Systematic Representative Design and Clinical Virtual Reality. *Psychological Inquiry*, 30(4), 231-245.
- Hartholt, A., Fast, E., Reilly, A., Whitcup, W., Liewer, M., & **Mozgai, S.** (2019). Ubiquitous Virtual Humans: A Multi-Platform Framework for Embodied AI Agents in XR. *IEEE AIVR 2019*, pp. 308-3084.
- Hartholt, A., **Mozgai, S.**, Fast, E., Liewer, M., Reilly, A., Whitcup, W., & Rizzo, A. (2019). Virtual Humans in Augmented Reality: A First Step Towards Real-World Embedded Virtual Roleplayers. *HAI 2019*, pp. 205-207.
- Hartholt, A., **Mozgai, S.**, Thompson, R., & Rizzo, A. (2019). Virtual Job Interviewing Practice for High-Anxiety Populations. *IVA '19*, pp. 238-240.
- Mell, J., Lucas, G., **Mozgai, S.**, Boberg, J., Artstein, R., & Gratch, J. (2018). Towards a Repeated Negotiating Agent that Treats People Individually: Cooperation, Social Value Orientation, & Machiavellianism. *IVA '18*, pp. 125-132.
- Wu, J., Ghosh, S., Chollet, M., Ly, S., **Mozgai, S.**, & Scherer, S. (2018). NADiA: Neural Network Driven Virtual Human Conversation Agents. *IVA '18*, pp. 173-178.
- Arseniev-Koehler, A., **Mozgai, S.**, & Scherer, S. (2018). What Type of Happiness Are You Looking For? A Closer Look at Detecting Mental Health from Language. *CLPsych Workshop, ACL 2018*, pp. 1-12.
- Wu, J., Ghosh, S., Chollet, M., Ly, S., **Mozgai, S.**, & Scherer, S. (2018). NADiA: Towards Neural Network Driven Virtual Human Conversation Agents. *AAMAS 2018*, pp. 2262-2264.
- Neubauer, C., Chollet, M., **Mozgai, S.**, Dennison, M., Khooshabeh, P., & Scherer, S. (2017). The Relationship Between Task-Induced Stress, Vocal Changes, and Physiological State During a Dyadic Team Task. *ICMI 2017*, pp. 426-432.
- Ringeval, F., Schuller, B., Valstar, M., Gratch, J., Cowie, R., Scherer, S., **Mozgai, S.**, & Pantic, M. (2017). AVEC 2017: Real-life Depression and Affect Recognition Workshop and Challenge. *AVEC '17*, pp. 3-9.
- **Mozgai, S.**, Lucas, G., & Gratch, J. (2017). To Tell the Truth: Virtual Agents and Morning Morality. *IVA 2017*, pp. 283-286. Springer, Cham.
- Neubauer, C., **Mozgai, S.**, Chuang, B., Woolley, J., & Scherer, S. (2017). Manual and Automatic Measures Confirm: Intranasal Oxytocin Increases Facial Expressivity. *ACII 2017*, pp. 229-235.
- Neubauer, C., **Mozgai, S.**, Khooshabeh, P., Woolley, J., & Scherer, S. (2017). The Effects of Pre-task Team Collaboration on Facial Expression, Speech Entrainment, and Physiological Responses. *ICMI 2017*.
- Chua, R.Y.J., **Mozgai, S.**, & Lau, D. (2013). *Transitions Asia: Managing Across Cultures*. Harvard Business School Teaching Note 414-045.

- Carmody, T. P., Duncan, C. L., Huggins, J., Solkowitz, S. N., Lee, S. K., Reyes, N., **Mozgai, S.**, & Simon, J. A. (2012). Telephone-Delivered Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy for Pain Management Among Older Military Veterans: A Randomized Trial. *Psychological Services*.
- Chua, R.Y.J. & **Mozgai, S.** (2012). CDG: Managing in China's Economic Transformation. Harvard Business School Teaching Note 412-085.
- Carmody, T., Goldman, A., Reyes, N., **Mozgai, S.**, Huggins, J., Solkowitz, S., & Lee, S. (2010). Telephone-Delivered Cognitive Behavior Therapy for Chronic Pain: Participant Characteristics. *The Journal of Pain*, 11(4), S56.

## SELECTED TALKS

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- Panel Speaker — “Redefining Patient Privacy: AI, Immersive Data, and New Vulnerabilities,” Augmented World Expo USA (AWE), Long Beach, CA (upcoming June 2026)
- Panel Speaker — Mission Daybreak Panel, 2024 VA Immersive Summit, Washington, D.C. (2024)
- Tutorial Presenter — Virtual Human Toolkit 2.0 Tutorial, 23rd ACM International Conference on Intelligent Virtual Agents, Würzburg, Germany (2023)

## AWARDS & RECOGNITION

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- Best Technical Demonstration Award — Persuasive Technology for Suicide Prevention, Persuasive Technology 2023
- Best Paper Award — Rapid Prototyping for Simulation and Training with RIDE, IITSEC 2021

## WORKSHOPS & TUTORIALS

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- Virtual Human Toolkit 2.0 Tutorial — IVA '23 (23rd International Conference on Intelligent Virtual Agents)
- Creating Virtual Worlds with the Virtual Human Toolkit and RIDE — IHSI 2023
- Demonstrating RIDE: ECA and Multiagent Capabilities — AAMAS 2022

## SERVICE & PROFESSIONAL CONTRIBUTIONS

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- Demo Chair — 26th ACM International Conference on Intelligent Virtual Agents, Puebla, Mexico
- Poster Chair — 25th ACM International Conference on Intelligent Virtual Agents, Berlin, Germany
- Workshop Chair — 23rd ACM International Conference on Intelligent Virtual Agents, Würzburg, Germany
- Program Committee — 18th International Conference on Persuasive Technology, Eindhoven, Netherlands
- Program Committee — 17th International Conference on Persuasive Technology, Doha, Qatar
- Data Chair — 7th Annual Workshop on Audio/Visual Emotion Challenge, Mountain View, CA, USA
- Local Chair — 16th ACM International Conference on Intelligent Virtual Agents, Los Angeles, CA, USA