



# PROGRAM: 2ND INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON VIRTUAL REALITY IN MENTAL HEALTH – INTO THE REAL



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# Welcome to the 2025 VR in Mental Health Conference – Into the Real!

It is with great pleasure and anticipation that we welcome you to the VR in Mental Health Conference 2025.

This gathering brings together an extraordinary community of researchers, clinicians, developers, and innovators from across the world, united by a shared vision: to explore and advance the use of Virtual Reality in mental health care. The rapid evolution of immersive technologies is opening new frontiers in assessment, treatment, and rehabilitation—challenging us to think boldly, collaborate widely, and remain ethically grounded.

Throughout this conference, we will engage with pioneering research, cutting-edge clinical applications, and critical reflections on the possibilities and limitations of VR in mental health contexts. Whether you are here to present, learn, question, or connect, your participation contributes to shaping a field that holds both immense promise and profound responsibility.

May these days be filled with curiosity, creativity, and thoughtful exchange. We hope you leave not only with new knowledge, but also with a renewed sense of inspiration and connection.

Warmly,

*The VR in Mental Health Organizing Committee*

**Co-Chairs:** Märta Wallinius and Annika Gustafsson

**Conference Coordinator:** David Ivarsson

*on behalf of the Scientific Committee.*

## **Keynote speakers Thursday 12th of June**

*Professor Valmaggia's lab focuses on leveraging immersive reality technologies for pioneering research in youth mental health. Throughout her career, she has integrated her academic and clinical roles. Prof. Valmaggia's clinical practice at Orygen involves working with young individuals who have interacted with the criminal justice system. She has published extensively and has been named a Clarivate Highly Cited Researcher since 2019. She was the President of the IEPA - International Association for Early Intervention in Mental Health and is a Fellow of the British Association for Behavioural & Cognitive Psychotherapies. She received the 2021 British Psychological Society Presidents' Award for Distinguished Contributions to Psychological Knowledge. She is a Visiting Professor at KU Leuven and the Institute of Psychiatry, Psychology, and Neuroscience at KCL.*

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### **Lucia Valmaggia**



**Lucia Valmaggia is Professor in Clinical Psychology in Youth Mental Health at ORYGEN, Centre for Youth Mental Health, University of Melbourne, where she leads the Orygen Digital XR Innovation Lab (XR- Lab).**

### **Märta Wallinius**



**Märta is a clinical psychologist and head of the Psychology Department and Research Department at the Regional Forensic Psychiatric Clinic in Växjö, Sweden's largest maximum-security hospital.**

*Academically, Märta is associate professor in forensic psychiatry at Lund university and research group leader at Centre for Ethics, Law and Mental Health at Gothenburg university. Her emphasis is on applied research that can provide knowledge needed for the prevention, assessment and treatment of mental disorders and aggressive antisocial behaviours. In this, Märta has included developments of VR mental health innovations for clinical forensic settings (e.g., prisons, forensic psychiatry) and she is co-founder of the international, translational network FOReVR, dedicated to increasing the knowledge on, and implementation of, VR mental health innovations in forensic settings.*

## **Keynote speakers Friday 13th of June**

*Associate professor Birkedal Glenthøj leads the VIRTU Research Group which is dedicated to advancing the use of VR in the clinical assessment and treatment of mental health disorders. As PI on large-scale clinical trials, she investigates the effectiveness of VR-based interventions in treating a variety of psychiatric conditions including psychosis, eating disorders, autism, anxiety, as well as the application of VR in general clinical practice. She also explores the innovative use of VR-based eye tracking to support the diagnostic process for specific mental health disorders. Additionally, her research aims at identifying biomarkers, such as EEG and MRI, as potential predictors of therapy outcomes with the goal of improving the efficacy of VR-interventions.*

### **Louise Birkedal Glenthøj**



**Louise Birkedal Glenthøj is associate professor and psychologist at the Mental Health Center Copenhagen, University of Copenhagen, Denmark.**

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### **Philip Brey**



**Philip Brey is professor of philosophy and ethics of technology at the Department of Philosophy, University of Twente, the Netherlands.**

*In professor Brey's research, he investigates social, political and ethical issues in the development, use and regulation of technology. His focus is on artificial intelligence, extended reality and digital technologies. He was one of the first scholars to discuss the potential and social and ethical implications of virtual reality. Prof. Brey is former president of the International Society for Ethics and Information Technology (INSEIT) and of the Society for Philosophy and Technology (SPT). He currently leads the ten-year research program Ethics of Socially Disruptive Technologies that includes seven universities in the Netherlands and over one hundred researchers. Prof. Brey is winner of the 2022 Weizenbaum Award for excellence in the field of digital ethics.*

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## **Keynote speakers Friday 13th of June**

*Professor Riva is recognized as an internationally leading expert in the application of VR technology and serves as the Director of the Humane Technology Lab at the Catholic University of Milan, Italy, and holds a Full Professorship in General & Cognitive Psychology. Additionally, he directs the Applied Technology for Neuro-Psychology Lab (ATN-P Lab) at the Istituto Auxologico Italiano, Milan. Renowned for his extensive contributions to the field, Prof. Riva's work, which spans across prestigious journals like "Science", "Nature", "American Psychologist", "Cyberpsychology, Behaviour and Social Networking" and "Journal of Internet Medical Research", positions him as the most published scholar in VR research globally, according to Scopus and the ISI Web of Science. [www.giusepperiva.com](http://www.giusepperiva.com)*

### **Giuseppe Riva**



**Director of the Interactive Communication and Ergonomics of New Technologies (ICE-NET) Lab. at the Catholic University of Milan, Italy, and Head Researcher of the Applied Technology for Neuro-Psychology Laboratory – ATN-P Lab., Istituto Auxologico Italiano**

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| Subject tracks in the program               |  |
|---|--|
| VR in Forensic Settings                     |  |
| VR for Children and Youth                   |  |
| Technological Aspects of VR                 |  |
| VR in Mental Health Settings                |  |
| VR in Assessment and Treatment of Psychosis |  |

| Rooms   |           |
|---------|-----------|
| Hav 1-2 | 160 seats |
| Zee     | 40 seats  |
| Umi1    | 40 seats  |
| Umi2    | 40 seats  |
| Umi3    | 24 seats  |

| Thursday (12th of June)  |   |  |  |  |
|--|---|--|--|--|
| Registration opens<br>08.30  |   |  |  |  |
| Welcome<br>09.30 – 09.50<br>(Hav 1-2)  |   |  |  |  |
| Keynote 1: Lucia Valmaggia<br><br>Virtual Reality and Mental Health: Two Decades of Innovation<br><br>09.50 – 10.50<br>(Hav 1-2) |   |  |  |  |
| Break<br>10.50 – 11.30<br>(Posters, VR playground, Coffee)   |   |  |  |  |
| Parallel sessions 1<br>11.30 – 12.30   |   |  |  |  |
| (Hav 1-2)<br>Symposium   | VR Interventions for Psychosis: Advances in the Treatment of Paranoia, Auditory Verbal Hallucinations, Negative Symptoms and Social Functioning<br><b>Elise Van Der Stouwe, Wim Veling, Sara Breivik Soleim, Valentin Maximilian Donath</b> |  |  |  |
| (Zee)<br>Oral presentations<br>+ Pitch   | Virtual Reality Enhanced CFT Intervention for Severe Conduct Problems: CFT+VR study<br><b>Marko Manninen</b>  | Prerequisites for, and Outcomes of, Virtual Reality-Assisted Psychological Treatment of Aggression for Volent Offenders<br><b>Fernando González Moraga</b> | Journey Towards the Introduction of VR/AR Interventions Within a Forensic Mental Health and Intellectual Disability Service in Aotearoa, New Zealand<br><b>Mhairi seinfeld, Jeffrey Quina, Poia Moeahu</b> | Effect of VRAPT-ID in Reducing Aggression in Forensic Psychiatric Inpatients in the Netherlands and Belgium: A Multicenter Randomized Controlled Trial<br><b>Patricia Van Reekum</b> |
| Parallel sessions 1 continues, on the next page  |   |  |  |  |



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|--|---|--|--|---|
| <b>(Umi1)</b><br>Symposium                         | The Use of Virtual Reality to Assess and Improve Mental Health in Children and Adolescents<br><b>Catharina Bergwerff, Sheila van Berkel, Hanneke Creemers, Nina Krupljanin</b>                  |  |  |   |
| <b>(Umi2)</b><br>Oral presentations                | Framework for Conceptualizing VR Applications in Psychotherapy<br><b>Sofia Seinfeld Tarafa</b>  | VR Implementation in Mental Healthcare: A Marathon, Not a Sprint - Lessons from a Longitudinal Evaluation of a VR Training Program<br><b>Marileen Kouijzer</b> | Promoting Mental Health Literacy among Healthcare Workers: Illustration of How Qualitative Research can Support the Development of VR Training<br><b>Dominique Therrien, Evy Nazon</b> | A Randomized Controlled Trial of a Virtual Reality Group Intervention to Enhance Mentalisation in Healthcare Professionals<br><b>Veerle Andries</b> |
| <b>(Umi3)</b><br>Symposium                         | VR-Based Eye-Tracking for Psychiatric Assessment and Machine Learning-Driven Analysis<br><b>Dan Witzner Hansen, Alberte Cathrine Ehrhardt Jeppesen, Fatime Zeka, Ingrid Jakobi Wolff Madsen</b> |  |  |   |
| LUNCH<br>12.30 – 13.45<br>(Posters, VR playground) |   |  |  |   |
| The schedule continues, on the next page           |   |  |  |   |



| <b>Parallel sessions 2</b><br><b>13.45 – 14.45</b><br><b>(Rooms)</b> |   |  |   |   |
|--|---|--|---|---|
| <b>(Hav 1-2)</b><br>Symposium  | Virtual Reality-Assisted Therapy (VRT) for Distressing Voices in Psychotic Disorders and Eating Disorders: Exploring User and Therapist Experiences<br><b>Mads J. Christensen, Katrine Rasmussen, Nina Kappel Hansen</b>  |  |   |   |
| <b>(Zee)</b><br>Symposium  | Industry – Bridging the Gap: Bringing Research Innovations to Market – round table discussion<br><b>Sara Leander Persson, Marieke Jongsma, Annika Gustafson</b><br><br>Industry – Practical Applications of VR in Public Service – round table discussion<br><b>Filip Sterving, Daniel Kemppi, Annika Gustafson</b> |  |   |   |
| <b>(Umi1)</b><br>Symposium   | Normative Aspects of Extended Reality in Forensic Mental Healthcare: Results from the VIRTUETHIC Project <b>Matthé Scholten, Stefanie Solar, Liezl Launspach, Madleina Manetsch, Christoph Bublitz</b>  |  |   |   |
| <b>(Umi2)</b><br>Oral presentations                                  | Exploring the Impact of a Cardio-Visual Full-Body Illusion on Embodiment and Body Image<br><b>Fiammetta Zanetti</b>   | Switching Sides: The Effects of IVR Outgroup Embodiment on Cooperative Intergroup Decision-Making<br><b>Xenia Stieger</b>  | Virtual Reality in Children's and Adolescents' Mental Health: A Scoping Review.<br><b>Nina Krupljanin</b> | Physiological Activation and Interoceptive Training during Virtual Reality Slot Machine Gambling<br><b>Elena Gomis-Vicent</b>     |
| <b>(Umi3)</b><br>Oral presentations                                  | Facing Your Inner Critic: A RCT Investigating a Virtual Reality Intervention With and Without a Perspective Change for Excessive Self-Criticism<br><b>Marit Hidding</b>   | The Use of Immersive Virtual Reality in Sensory Sessions on an Older Peoples Mental Health Ward: Service Evaluation of Feasibility and Acceptability.<br><b>Felix Clay</b> | Virtual Calm Rooms as a Tool for Anxiety Reduction in Psychiatric Inpatient Care<br><b>Maria Ilioudi</b>  | Exploring Mixed Reality for Collaborative Gamified Therapeutic Interventions in Mental Health<br><b>Jose Luis Soler-Dominguez</b> |
| <b>The schedule continues, on the next page</b>                      |   |  |   |   |

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| <p><b>Break</b><br/> <b>14.45 – 15.30</b><br/> <b>(Posters, VR playground, coffee)</b></p>   |
| <p><b>Keynote 2: Märta Wallinius</b></p> <p><b>“Coming outside the walls while staying safe inside the walls” – VR in a transformation of forensic mental healthcare</b></p> <p><b>15.30 – 16.30</b><br/> <b>(Hav 1-2)</b></p> |
| <p><b>VR playground and drinks</b><br/> <b>16.30 -</b></p>   |
| <p><b>Dinner</b><br/> <b>19.00</b></p>   |
| <p><b>End of day 1</b></p>   |

| <b>Friday (13th of June)</b>   |  |
|--|--|
| Registration opens<br>08.30  |  |
| <b>Keynote 3: Louise Birkedahl Glenthøj</b><br><br><b>Immersive Realities: Advancing Psychosis Treatment Through Virtual Interventions</b><br><br>09.00 – 10.00<br>(Hav 1-2) |  |
| Break<br>10.00 – 10.45<br>(Posters, VR playground, coffee)   |  |
| <b>Keynote 4: Philip Brey</b><br><br><b>Well-Being and mental health in social VR</b><br><br>10.45 – 11.45<br>(Hav 1-2)  |  |
| LUNCH<br>11.45 – 13.00<br>(Posters, VR playground)   |  |
| The schedule continues, on the next page   |  |

| <b>Parallel sessions 3</b><br><b>13.00 – 14.00</b><br><b>(Rooms)</b> |   |   |   |  |
|--|---|---|---|--|
| <b>(Hav 1-2)</b><br>Oral presentations                               | Face Your Fears: Virtual Reality-Based Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (VR-CBTp) Versus CBTp for Paranoia in Patients with Schizophrenia Spectrum Disorders: Results of a Randomized Clinical Trial<br><b>Ulrik Jeppesen</b> | Lived Experience: "After 27 years, I'm finally voices free"<br><b>Vibeke Andersen</b>   | Reduced Sensitivity and Increased False Percepts Linked to Delusional Ideation in Virtual Reality Simulations of Visual Distortions<br><b>Fabian D. Mueller</b> |  |
| <b>(Zee)</b> Symposium   | Virtual Reality Applications in Forensic Psychiatry<br><b>Fedde Sappelli, Jill Lobbestael, Andrea Lockertsen-Pedersen, Lisa Klein Haneveld</b>  |   |   |  |
| <b>(Umi1)</b><br>Symposium   | Virtual Reality-based Cognitive Training in Mental Health<br><b>Johannes Andresen, Astrid Endrup Iversen, Andreas Elleby Jespersen</b>  |   |   |  |
| <b>(Umi2)</b><br>Symposium   | Virtual Reality Interventions to Promote Mental Health in Children and Families: Innovations Across Developmental Stages<br><b>Pia Enebrink, Camilla Söderberg, Livia van Leuven</b>                                      |   |   |  |
| <b>(Umi3)</b><br>Oral presentations + Pitch                          | Detection of visual-proprioceptive discrepancy as a direct measure of perceived self-location<br><b>David Antoš</b>   | ZenctuaryVR+: A Co-Designed VR Environment for Stress Reduction and Cognitive Support in Elderly Care<br><b>Ágnes Karolina Bakk</b> | Effects of virtual reality relaxation on physiological and self-reported stress in people with mental health conditions<br><b>Lisanne Robbemond</b>             |  |

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| <p><b>Break</b><br/> <b>14.00 – 14.45</b><br/> <b>(Posters, VR playground, coffee)</b></p>   |
| <p><b>Keynote 5: Giuseppe Riva</b></p> <p><b>Neuroscience of VR: Simulative technologies for hacking the brain</b></p> <p><b>14.45 – 15.45</b><br/> <b>(Hav 1-2)</b></p>   |
| <p><b>Poster awards ceremony</b><br/> <b>and</b><br/> <b>Panel discussion:</b><br/> <b>VR mental health interventions into the real – and forward</b></p> <p><b>Wim Veling, Philip Brey, Marieke Jongsma and Vibeke Andersen</b></p> <p><b>15.45 – 16.30</b><br/> <b>(Hav 1-2)</b></p> |
| <p><b>End of the Conference</b></p>  |

| Posters Day 1 (Thurs)  | Posters Day 2 (Fri)   |
|--|---|
| Virtual Reality (VR) for Neurodegenerative Disorders: Key Findings and Future Directions<br><b>Oscar Arturo Mayora Ibarra</b>  | The Impact of Immersive 3D VR Environments Combined with Background Music on Anxiety Symptoms Among Undergraduate Students at DAK University<br><b>Mishleen Marcos</b>                  |
| A Paradigm Shift in Psychological Support through Virtual and Real Interactions<br><b>Erica Santaguida</b>   | Feasibility, Acceptability and Effectiveness of Smartphone-Based Virtual Reality Relaxation for a Psychiatric Population: An Explorative Pilot Study<br><b>Sylvie Bernaerts</b>         |
| AI-Integrated VR and EEG Diagnostic Framework for Early Detection of Alzheimer's and Cognitive Impairments<br><b>Beyzanur Demirkaya, Umut Yilmaz</b>                                   | Non-Invasive Physiological Measures in Virtual Reality Stress Interventions: A Systematic Review<br><b>Lisanne Robbmond</b>   |
| From Research to Clinical Practice: Implementation of VR Relaxation in Ambulatory and Inpatient Mental Health Settings. <b>Bart Lestestuiver</b>                                       | PrevED MR: A Mixed Reality Intervention for Preventing Eating Disorders and Enhancing Emotional Regulation.<br><b>Aikaterini Ampatzoglou</b>  |
| Effectiveness of Mindfulness Skills Training in Virtual Reality (MST-VR) in Schizophrenia: Preliminary Results from a Controlled Trial. <b>Dawid Kruk</b>                              | Self-Criticism and Suicidal Ideations in Students and the Impact of Two Single-Session Virtual Reality Interventions<br><b>Marit Hidding</b>  |
| Virtual Reality Aggression Prevention Training: Feasibility Study of a New Module Focused on Arousal Regulation<br><b>Frank van den Boogert</b>  | In Search of Ambiguity: A Codesign Process to Develop Immersive Scenarios to Address Socio-Cognitive Biases of Forensic Patients with Schizophrenia.<br><b>Mathieu Dumont</b>           |
| Exploring the Effects of Sociodemographic and Clinical Factors on VR Aggression Treatment. <b>Kasja Woicik</b>   | Virtual Nature Exposure for Older Adults: A Multiple-Case Study on Nature Connectedness, Usability, and Cybersickness in Immersive VR <b>Aikaterini Ampatzoglou, Cristina Fernandez</b> |
| Data-Driven Identification of Areas of Interest in VR Eye Tracking<br><b>David-Levente Kovacs</b>  | Visual Characteristics of Children with ASD and/or ADHD During VR Classroom Viewing: An Analysis using Machine Learning-Based Image Classification<br><b>Ayako Ide-Okochi</b>           |
| Examining Self-Efficacy as a Predictor of Immersion and Enjoyment in Virtual-Reality Based Interventions Targeting Emotion Regulation in Adolescents.<br><b>Aikaterini Ampatzoglou</b> |   |

| VR playground   |  |
|---|--|
| Enhancing Early Alzheimer's Detection Through VR-Based Cognitive Assessments: A Scalable and Ecologically Valid Approach* | <b>Beyzanur Demirkaya,<br/>Umut Yilmaz</b>     |
| Experience BienVR: Training Workers in Psychological and Mental Health First Aid*   | <b>Dominique Therrien,<br/>Evy Nazon</b>       |
| Immersive Healing: Exploring Virtual Reality in Mental Health*  | <b>Sara Leander Pehrsson,<br/>Farah Shiraz</b> |
| <b>VR Relax</b>   |  |
| <b>GoesART</b>  |  |
| <b>Regional Forensic Psychiatric Clinic in Växjö, Region Kronoberg<br/>Clinical work with Social Worlds</b>               |  |
| <b>Jeannette Ginslöv ART</b>  |  |
| <b>Helsingborg City: Work with individuals with intellectual disabilities</b>   |  |

\*=workshop abstracts



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Thank you for attending!!



June 12-13, 2025,  
Helsingborg, Sweden



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Virtual Reality  
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