

DR.^{IN} LEONIE FIAN, MSc. BSc.

POSTDOCTORAL RESEARCHER & LECTURER


Sustainability, Climate Change & Human Behavior (SCCHuB)

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PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

05/2025 – CURRENT

POSTDOCTORAL RESEARCHER & LECTURER

University of Graz | Austria

Sustainability, Climate Change & Human Behaviour (Prof. Hermine Mitter)

Department of Environmental Systems Sciences

Associated Member of the Field of Excellence “Climate Change Graz”

05/2025 – CURRENT

SENIOR RESEARCH FELLOW

University of Vienna | Austria

Environmental Psychology Research Group (Prof. Sabine Pahl)

Department of Cognition, Emotion, and Methods in Psychology

04/2022 – 04/2025

PREDOCTORAL RESEARCHER

University of Vienna | Austria

Environmental Psychology Research Group (Prof. Sabine Pahl)

Department of Cognition, Emotion, and Methods in Psychology

Research Platform PLENTY (Plastics in the Environment and Society)

09/2024 – 10/2024

VISITING RESEARCHER

Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU) Trondheim | Norway

Citizens, Environment and Safety (CES) (Assoc.-Prof. Isabell Richter)

Department of Psychology

01/2022 – 03/2022

RESEARCH ASSISTANT

BOKU Vienna (University of Natural Resources & Life Sciences) | Austria

Institute of Mountain Risk Engineering (Dr. Thomas Thaler & Assoc.-Prof. Arne Arnberger)

WWTF funded project “The social equality of Nature-based Solutions to urban heat

stress” (SENSUS)

10/2021 – 12/2021

RESEARCH ASSISTANT

University of Vienna | Austria

Department of Cognition, Emotion, and Methods (Dr. Mathew White & Prof. Sabine Pahl)

Horizon 2020 funded project “Blue Health”

03/2021 – 06/2021

STUDENT ASSISTANT

University of Vienna | Vienna

Department of Cognition, Emotion, and Methods (Prof. Sabine Pahl & Dr. Mathew White)

EDUCATION

04/2022 – 04/2025	<p>PH.D., ENVIRONMENTAL PSYCHOLOGY University of Vienna Austria Pass with Distinction (Ø 1.0) Doctoral thesis: <i>Psychological perspectives on microplastics in food and drink – From risks to solutions</i> Department of Cognition, Emotion, and Methods in Psychology; Research Platform PLENTY (Plastics in the Environment and Society) Supervision: Prof. Sabine Pahl & Prof. Ulrike Felt</p>
10/2018 – 06/2021	<p>M.Sc., PSYCHOLOGY University of Vienna Austria Pass with Distinction (Ø 1.14) Master thesis: <i>The effect of self-esteem on the stress response to a psycho-social stressor and effects of the presence of others</i> Supervision: Prof. Urs Nater & Dr. Nadine Skoluda</p>
10/2015 – 06/2018	<p>B.Sc., PSYCHOLOGY University of Vienna Austria Bachelor thesis: <i>Parental care and a negative body image: The mediating role of attachment anxiety and media internalization</i> Supervision: Dr. Marlene Kollmayer</p>
01/2015 – 03/2015	<p>ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE College of Marin USA</p>

TEACHING & SUPERVISION

05/2025 – ONGOING	<p>LECTURER at the Department of Environmental Systems Sciences, University of Graz</p> <p>Teaching several courses on research methods, sustainable development, social competences for working in inter- and transdisciplinary teams, and supervising inter- and transdisciplinary student projects in the following programs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Joint Master's Programme in <i>Sustainable Development</i> - Master <i>Environmental Systems Sciences - Sustainability and Innovation Management</i> - Bachelor <i>Umweltsystemwissenschaften</i>
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PUBLICATIONS

PEER-REVIEWED PUBLICATIONS

- Köhler, J. K., **Fian, L.**, White, M. P., Nijssen, S. R. R., & Pahl, S. (2026). Actively distancing from climate radicals improves public support for moderate climate activists. *Communications Psychology*, 4, 55. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s44271-026-00412-z>
- Fian, L.**, Vaupotič, N., Richter, I., Koelmans, A. A., & Pahl, S. (2026). Communicating scientific uncertainties: Effects of message and audience characteristics in the context of microplastic health risks. *Public Understanding of Science*. Advance online publication. <https://doi.org/10.1177/09636625251410494>
- Bostrom, A., van den Broek, K. L., Böhm, G., Grünzner, M., Felipe-Rodriguez, M., **Fian, L.**, ... & Doran, R. (2025). Scientists' mental models of microplastics: Insights into expert perceptions from an exploratory comparison of research methods. *Microplastics and Nanoplastics*, 5, 36. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s43591-025-00141-w>

- Fian, L.,** Felt, U., Hofmann, T., White, M. P., & Pahl, S. (2025). Microplastics in food and drink: Predictors of public risk perceptions and support for plastic-reducing policies based on a climate change framework. *Journal of Environmental Psychology, 103*, 102583. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jenvp.2025.102583>
- Fian, L.,** Schmidlechner, L. M., Felt, U., Hofmann, T., White, M. P., & Pahl, S. (2024). Microplastics in food and drink: perceptions of the risks, challenges, and solutions among individuals in the 'farm-to-fork' food chain. *Journal of Risk Research, 27*(8), 986–1009. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13669877.2024.2431900>
- Fian, L.,** White, M. P., Thaler, T., Arnberger, A., Heske, A., & Pahl, S. (2024). Nature visits, but not residential greenness, are associated with reduced income-related inequalities in subjective well-being. *Health & Place, 85*, 103175. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.healthplace.2024.103175>
- Stehl, P., White, M., Vitale, V., Pahl, S., Elliott, L. R., **Fian, L.,** & van den Bosch, M. (2024). From childhood blue space exposure to adult environmentalism: The role of nature connectedness and nature contact. *Journal of Environmental Psychology, 93*, 102225. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jenvp.2023.102225>
- Fian, L.,** White, M. P., Thaler, T., Arnberger, A., Elliot, L. R., & Friesenecker, M. (2023). Inequalities in nature access and use for recreation are not universal: A country-level analysis in Austria. *Urban Forestry & Urban Greening, 85*, 127977. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ufug.2023.127977>

CONSORTIUM PUBLICATIONS

- Swami, V., Tran, U. S., Voracek, M., ... **Fian, L.,** ... & Stieger, S. (2025). Self-Compassion Around the World: Measurement Invariance of the Short Form of the Self-Compassion Scale (SCS-SF) Across 65 Nations, 40 Languages, Gender Identities, and Age Groups. *Mindfulness*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12671-025-02560-5>
- Swami, V., Stieger, S., Voracek, M., ... **Fian, L.,** ... & Tran, U. S. (2025). Life satisfaction around the world: Measurement invariance of the Satisfaction With Life Scale (SWLS) across 65 nations, 40 languages, gender identities, and age groups. *PLoS ONE 20*(1), e0313107. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0313107>
- Swami, V., White, M. P., Voracek, M., Tran, U. S., ... **Fian, L.,** ... & Stieger, S. (2024). Connectedness to nature and exposure to natural environments: An examination of the measurement invariance of the Connectedness to Nature Scale (CNS) and Nature Exposure Scale (NES) across 65 nations, 40 languages, gender identities, and age groups. *Journal of Environmental Psychology, 99*, 102432. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jenvp.2024.102432>
- Swami, V., Tran, U. S., Stieger, S., ... **Fian, L.,** ... & Voracek, M. (2023). Body appreciation around the world: Measurement invariance of the Body Appreciate Scale-2 (BAS-2) across 65 Nations, 40 languages, gender identities, and age. *Body Image, 46*, 449–466. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.bodyim.2023.07.010>

SUBMITTED AND WORKING PAPERS

- Browning, M. H. E. M., McAnirlin, O., Pearson, A., Corral, A., Bardhan, M., Ouer, G., Morassafar, S., ... **Fian, L.,** ... & Maddock, J. E. (submitted). *Establishing consensus on standardized survey measures of time outdoors in nature*. <https://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.5583864>
- Swami, V., Voracek, M., Stieger, S., ... **Fian, L.,** ... & Tran, U. S. (submitted). *Nature exposure is associated with subjective well-being via positive body image in 58 nations*.

COMMISSIONED REPORTS

- Heske, A., **Fian, L.,** Schwab, M., & Pahl, S. (2022). *Umweltpsychologische Empfehlungen für die Gestaltung von Etiketten für die Glassammelbehälter mit Fokus auf Motivation und Information der Bürger*innen zu sorgfältigem und richtigem Glasentsorgen*. Stadt- und Umweltpsychologie Universität Wien/AGR.

CONFERENCE CONTRIBUTIONS & TALKS

- Fian, L.,** Vaupotič, N., Richter, I., Koelmans, A. A., & Pahl, S. (2025, June 15-18). *Communicating scientific uncertainties: Effects of message and audience characteristics in the context of microplastics*. [Conference presentation]. International Conference on Environmental Psychology, Vilnius, Lithuania.
- Fian, L.,** Felt, U., Hofmann, T., White, M. P., & Pahl, S. (2024, September 26-27). *Eating and drinking microplastics: Predicting people's risk perception and policy support using a climate change framework*. [Conference presentation]. APA Division 34's Online Conference 'Psychology for a resilient future, virtual.
- Fian, L.,** Schmidlechner, L. M., Felt, U., Hofmann, T., White, M. P., & Pahl, S. (2024, September 11-13). *Psychological perspectives on microplastics in food and drink: Insights from qualitative and quantitative approaches*. [Conference presentation]. Alps-Adria Psychology Conference, Klagenfurt, Austria.
- Fian, L.,** Felt, U., Hofmann, T., White, M. P., & Pahl, S. (2024, July 2-5). *Microplastics in food and drink: Predicting risk perception and policy support using a climate change framework*. [Conference presentation]. International Conference Association People-Environment Studies, Barcelona, Spain.
- Fian, L.,** Felt, U., Hofmann, T., White, M. P., & Pahl, S. (2023, June 21-23). *Microplastics in food and beverages: Predicting people's risk perception and policy support using a climate change framework*. [Poster presentation]. International Conference on Environmental Psychology, Aarhus, Denmark.
- Fian, L.,** Schmidlechner, L. M., Felt, U., Hofmann, T., White, M. P., & Pahl, S. (2023, March 6–8). *From source to consumption: Involved groups' perceptions of microplastics in food and beverages*. [Poster presentation]. UNESCO – EU H2020 LimnoPlast Conference 'Diving into freshwater microplastic pollution: Connecting water, environmental and social sciences', Paris, France.
- Fian, L.,** Schmidlechner, L., M., Felt, U., Hofmann, T., White, M. P., & Pahl, S. (2023, February 2). *Microplastics in food and drinking water: Knowledge and perceptions of different relevant groups along the human food chain*. [Conference presentation]. VDS CoBeNe PhD Academy 2023, Vienna, Austria.
- Fian, L.** (2022, November 17). *Poster session chair*. Micro 2022: International Conference – Plastic Pollution from Macro to Nano, Lanzarote, Spain, virtual. https://www.micro.infini.fr/thursday-nov-17th-12h-12h57#Posters.17.3_Ma
- Fian, L.,** White, M. P., Thaler, T., Arnberger, A. (2022, June 16–17). *Inequalities in nature access and use for recreation are not universal: The case of Austria*. [Conference presentation]. APA Division 34's Online Conference 'Promoting a healthy & sustainable future', virtual.
- Suffill, E., & **Fian, L.** (2022, April 27–28). *Conference attendance and workshop contribution*. Science advice under pressure. A Conference by the European Commission's Scientific Advice Mechanism. Brussels, Belgium.
- Fian, L.,** Hibbe, L., König-Teshnizi, D., & Burger, C. (2021, July 18–23). *Procrastination, mindfulness and their relation to problematic Internet use in university students*. [Poster presentation]. International Congress of Psychology (ICP), Prague, Czech Republic, virtual.

INVITED TALKS & WORKSHOPS

- Fian, L.** (2023, June). *Psychological aspects of the climate crisis* [Talk and workshop]. Parents' Education Conference of the Austrian Federal Chancellery. Salzburg.
- Fian, L.** (2023, January). *Psychological aspects of the climate crisis* [Seminar lecture]. Seminar series 'Climate justice – Ethical reflection and transformative action', University for Continuing Education Krems.

SCIENCE OUTREACH

- Fian, L.** (2024, April). *Wir fragen Expert*innen zu ... Mikroplastik*. [Expert Social Media videos]. RESPECT Nature, Naturfreunde International.

- Fian, L.** (2023, December). *How important is nature for our well-being?* [Expert contribution on an online learning platform for students from 2nd to 8th grade]. <https://kinderuni.online/kurs/natur-und-wohlbefinden-forschungsprojekt/>
- Fian, L.** (2023, July). *Zur Psychologie der Klimakrise* [Expert article on the parent education website of the Austrian Federal Chancellery]. <https://www.eltern-bildung.at/expert-inn-entstimmen/was-hat-die-psychologie-mit-der-klimakrise-zu-tun/>
- Fian, L.,** Sessig, E., & Schwab, M. (2022, October). *SDG Wanderung „Der gesunde Wald als Therapeut“*. [Guided hike]. <https://www.nf-int.org/themen/wir-leben-sdgs/aktivitaeten/sdg-wanderung-der-gesunde-wald-als-therapeut-8oktober-2022>

MEDIA COVERAGE

My research has been featured in the media, including:

- TV interviews for documentaries on the Austrian ([ORF2](#)) and German media ([3sat](#))
- Online newspaper articles ([Austrian Press Agency](#), [ORF](#), [Salzburger Nachrichten](#), [Die Presse](#), Kurier)
- Popular science articles featured in [Forbes](#), [Utopia](#), [Focus](#), [Spektrum](#), [GEO Magazin](#), [DATUM](#), BILD
- Podcast recording („Hör mal wer die Welt verändert“ - [Podcast](#) of the ÖH at BOKU Vienna)

GRANTS

2025	STARTCLIM - Research on climate change & its effects in Austria (not awarded, ~20.000€) Austrian Ministry
2024	TRAVEL GRANT (1.000 €) Vienna Doctoral School in Cognition, Behavior, and Neuroscience, University of Vienna, Austria
2021	DOC Fellowship of the Austrian Academy of Sciences (not awarded, 147.240 €)

SERVICE

2025 – ONGOING	YOUNG SCIENCE AMBASSADOR OeAD
2023 – 2025	SOCIAL MEDIA MANAGER Environmental Psychology Group University of Vienna
2022 – 2025	AMBASSADOR OF “EARLY CAREER RESEARCHERS IN PSYCHOLOGY” University of Vienna Working group: Mental health among ECRs (Conducting an annual mental health survey among ECRs, organising and managing a coaching programme for ECRs, organising writing retreats and social events)
September 2023	Co-ORGANISER “AUSTRIAN ENVIRONMENTAL PSYCHOLOGY MEETING” University of Vienna Networking meeting of ~ 40 Austrian researchers and practitioners
2020 - 2023	ASSOCIATION “NETWORK PSYCHOLOGY AND ENVIRONMENT (NEPU)” Vice chair & Social Media Manager

ACADEMIC PEER REVIEW

Journal of Environmental Psychology, Environment International

KEY SKILLS

Open Science: Committed to open science practices via the publication of pre-registrations, data and methods for studies (Public profile available on OSF: osf.io/ea6wq)

Methods: Qualitative and quantitative social science methods (e.g., Surveys, Interviews, Experiments)

Technical Skills: Data analysis using R, SPSS, MAXQDA; Power calculations using GPower; Data collection using Qualtrics, LimeSurvey, M-Tool

Communication: Science communication targeting diverse audiences (e.g., general public, children, industry), Social Media content creation

Languages: German (native), English (academic proficiency in reading and writing), Italian (basics)