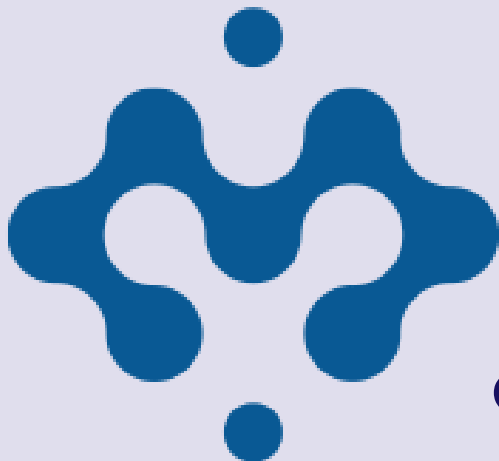


Lunedì 4 Marzo 2024  
ore 14.00 Sala lauree



Prof. Inga Jasinskaja-Lahti, PhD  
Dott.ssa Matilde Tassinari

University of Helsinki  
Helsinki, Finland



Exploring the **Contact Hypothesis** in **Virtual Reality**. Bridging social divides through immersive experiences

# Exploring the Contact Hypothesis in Virtual Reality: Bridging Social Divides through Immersive Experiences

**Lunedì 4 Marzo 2024 - ore 14.00 Sala laurea**

The Contact Hypothesis (Allport, 1954), posits that increasing contact between individuals from different social groups can reduce prejudice and foster mutual understanding.

In recent years, Virtual Reality (VR) technology has emerged as a promising tool to test and enhance the Contact Hypothesis. By simulating diverse environments and interpersonal interactions, VR has the potential to break down physical and social barriers, enabling users to engage with others in ways that challenge preconceived notions and biases.

Nevertheless, scientific results have also suggested that under certain circumstances VR contact can increase prejudice as well. In the present talk, we discuss these results in relation to the intergroup perspective (i.e., minority or majority) and target minority groups. An analysis of potential mediators and moderators will be also carried out. We will then identify and address the most pressing theoretical and methodological issues concerning VR as a method to reduce prejudice.

**Prof. Inga Jasinskaja-Lahti, PhD**  
**Dott.ssa Matilde Tassinari**

**University of Helsinki**  
**Helsinki, Finland**