Former APS President Suparna Rajaram has received a 2022 Guggenheim Fellowship in psychology in recognition of her research in cognitive psychology, specifically in human learning and memory.

A distinguished professor of psychology and former associate dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at Stony Brook University, Rajaram is among 180 scientists, writers, and scholars across 51 fields chosen for the Fellowship for their achievements and exceptional promise. The John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation selected this diverse group from a pool of nearly 2,500 applicants.

Rajaram’s major research focus is on the social aspects of memory and the transmission of memory in groups and social networks. A primary goal of her research is to build a better understanding of how social influences can shape our individual and shared memories, as well as the way we learn. In addition, her research group in the Social Memory and Cognition Lab studies the differences between implicit and explicit memory by investigating the neural and cognitive bases of memory functions.

Rajaram will be giving the APS-David Myers Distinguished Lecture on the Science and Craft of Teaching Psychological Science at the 2022 APS Convention. Read more about the Lecture and other special events APS has to offer.

“The Guggenheim Fellowship is a great honor and an incredible opportunity,” Rajaram told APS. “It
will provide me the time to freely pursue questions about the cognitive nature of collaborative remembering and collective memory. I intend to explore and narrate different streams of my research on these topics and advance an interdisciplinary conversation.”

After receiving her PhD in cognitive psychology from Rice University, Rajaram received an early-career FIRST Award from the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH). Her research has since been supported by NIMH, the National Science Foundation, the Russell Sage Foundation, and Google.

In addition to serving as APS president from 2017 to 2018, Rajaram has served as associate editor for the APS journal Psychological Science and currently serves on the advisory board for Current Directions in Psychological Science.

Rajaram is also a founding organizer of Women in Cognitive Science, an international group devoted to the advancement of women in the cognitive sciences, and a cofounder and co-organizer of the Psychonomic Society–affiliated Culture and Cognition Preconference, where she explores the influences of culture and diversity on memories and cognition.

View all of Suparna Rajaram’s APS Presidential Columns.

Given as one-time-only grants to midcareer individuals, Guggenheim Fellowships are intended to allow scholars, artists, and scientists the freedom and time to pursue their research or other projects. Other APS Members to receive the fellowship include Mesmin Destin and Seth Pollak (2021), Alison Gopnik (2020), former APS President Lisa Feldman Barrett (2019), and Fei Xu (2018).

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