

Dr Mara Steenhuisen

Mara Steenhuisen, PhD (2022) holds an MA from the Sophia Centre for the Study of Cosmology in Culture at the University of Wales Trinity Saint David, Wales. During her MA research, she examined the cultural implications of the orb phenomenon. Building on this foundation, her subsequent PhD work at the same university investigated spiritual experiences related to orbs and associated light phenomena. The findings are detailed in her forthcoming book, *Spiritual Experiences on Camera: Orbs, Lights and Luminous Beings*. She also holds a BHealth in pain management, having explored the relation between (altered states of) consciousness and chronic pain.

Samantha Treasure

Samantha Lee Treasure received a bachelor's degree in social science with anthropology from Birkbeck College, University of London, and a master's degree in medical anthropology from SOAS University of London, researching out-of-body experiences for both dissertations. Her work culminated in the book *Out-of-Body Experiences: Explorations and Encounters with the Astral Plane* (2025) and her forthcoming book *Phantom Media*. She is a volunteer research affiliate at the Division of Perceptual Studies (DOPS) at the University of Virginia, where she is undertaking a study on out-of-body experience entities. Her current interests lie at the intersection of extraordinary perceptions, biomedicine, and modern technology. She is based in South Korea.

Dr Jeffrey Dunne

Dr. Jeffrey Dunne is the President of the International Consciousness Research Laboratories (ICRL), a charitable research organization established in the late 1990's to build upon the foundation established by the Princeton Engineering Anomalies Research (PEAR) Laboratory. In this role, Dr. Dunne runs a variety of research and outreach activities focused on exploring the nature of consciousness, particularly as it relates to space, time, and language, as well as events for sharing such understanding with people from all backgrounds. In addition to his role with ICRL, Jeff is a researcher and Chief Scientist at the Johns Hopkins University, working over the past thirty years in a variety of fields ranging from acoustics, remote sensing, and cybersecurity to data science and artificial intelligence. He is also an award-winning author and playwright, with nearly two hundred plays performed over four continents. In his 2023 novel, *Nexus*, Jeff unites three decades of scientific experience with four decades of pursuits in philosophy and metaphysics to weave a story introducing the scientific principle of syntropy and its importance in finding balance at every scale – personal, societal, and global. Jeff's driving passion is to help transform our world such that materialism gives way to the recognition of the crucial role that consciousness plays in the formation of reality.

Dr Laura Patryas

Laura is a spiritual teacher, IFS therapist, and nonduality scholar with a PhD in Psychophysics. Alongside her research and teaching at the University of Manchester (UK), she teaches internationally on awakening, nondual IFS, and the transformational power of presence.

Reyhab Patel

Reyhab Mohmed Patel is a PhD candidate in Sociology at Carleton University. Her research explores how Muslim digital artists use artificial intelligence and speculative aesthetics to challenge Islamophobia and reimagine religious experience. She is also a scholar-artist with a Master's in Fashion from Toronto Metropolitan University and serves as the Community Director (Canada) for MIPSTERZ. Her work bridges digital religion, Muslim futurism, and visual storytelling to explore how marginalized communities use technology to archive memory, express spirituality, and envision new futures.

Dr Rizwan Virk

A graduate of MIT and Stanford, Rizwan Virk is a computer scientist, venture capitalist, bestselling author and video game industry pioneer. He was the founder of *Play Labs @ MIT*. Recently, he successfully defended his doctoral dissertation at Arizona State University's College of Global Futures, and teaches at ASU's Fulton Schools of Engineering. His research on technoscientific narratives, science fiction and innovation was done at the Center for Science and the Imagination at ASU. He is the bestselling author of *The Simulation Hypothesis*, *The Simulated Multiverse*, *Startup Myths & Models*, *Wisdom of a Yogi*, and *Zen Entrepreneurship*. He has appeared on the world's largest podcasts, including The Joe Rogan Experience and Armchair Expert, and has written for many publications, including for NBC News, CNN, Scientific American, The Telegraph, TechCrunch and FastCompany.