

BACKGROUND

Deficits in emotion regulation and inhibition, such as instable and unpredictable moods and impaired impulse control, are core features in conceptualizations of emotionally unstable personality disorder (EUPD), including the impulsive and borderline personality disorder (BPD) subtypes¹. Despite the central role of these deficits in EUPD, empirical investigations of emotion regulation and (dis)inhibition are rather scarce, especially studies using biological markers^{2,3}. Comparisons with other patient groups are lacking entirely.

Research questions addressed by this project funded by the FOR5187:

Do patients with EUPD differ in electrophysiological correlates of

- **emotional reactivity**,
- **emotion regulation**,
- and **inhibition**

from patients with internalizing disorders and healthy control participants?

STUDY DESIGN

Procedure & Sample

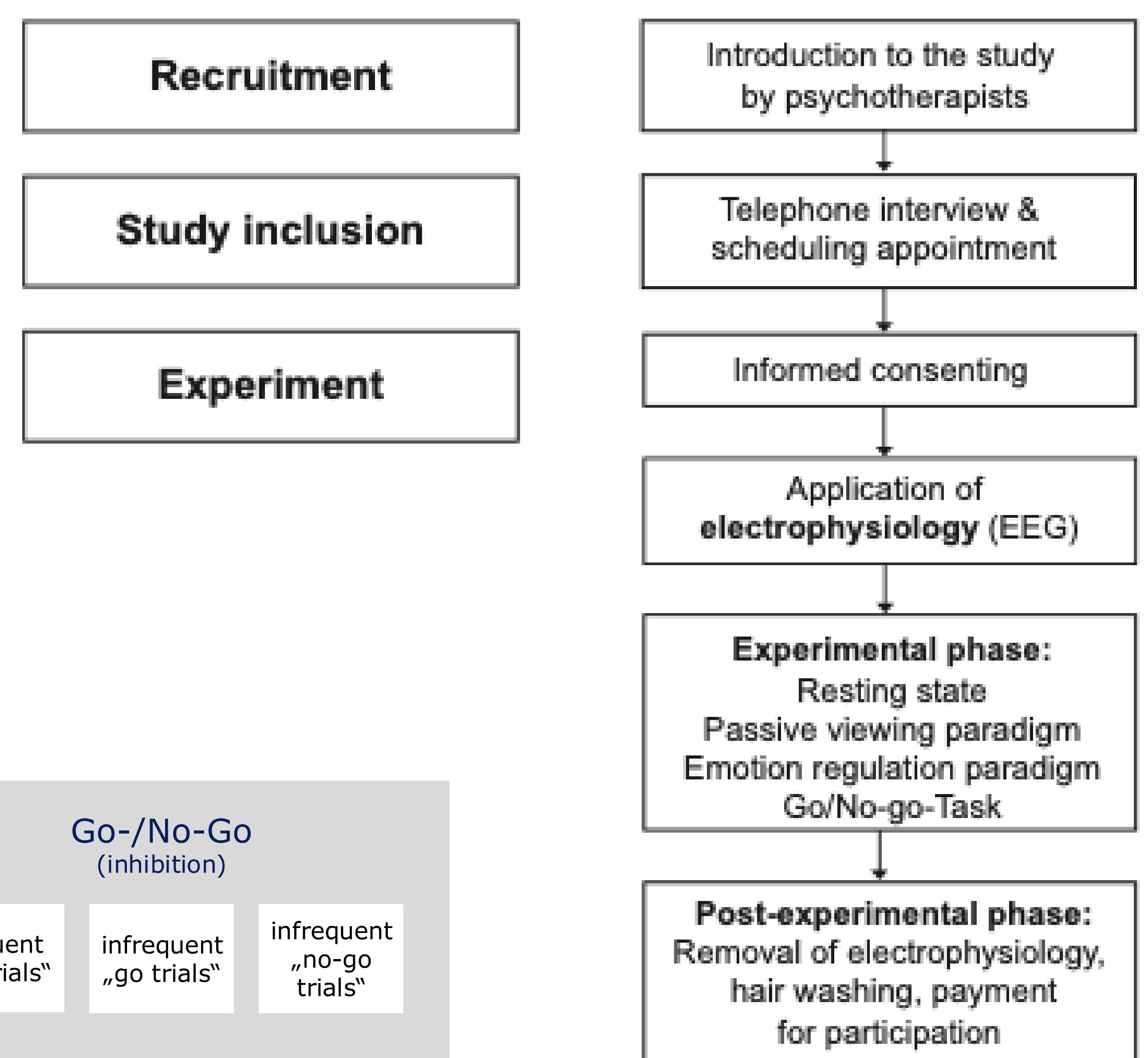
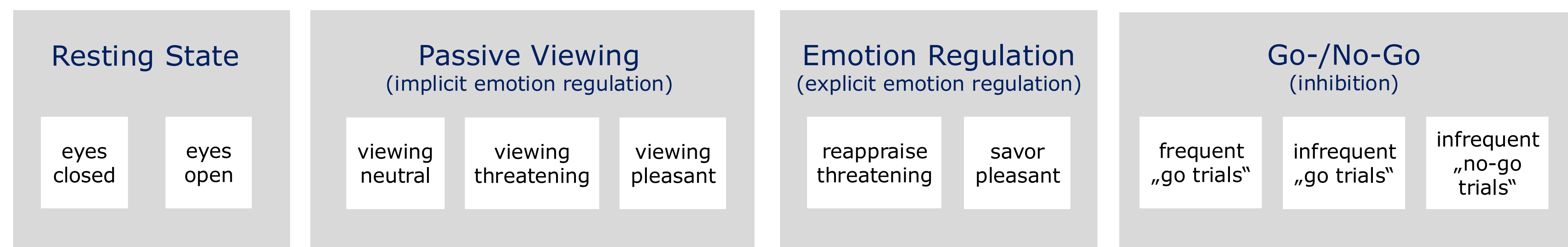
We plan to assess at least **35 patients** with EUPD who will be patients seeking treatment at the Zentrum für Psychotherapie am Institut für Psychologie der Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin (**ZPHU**).

Inclusion criteria:

- Diagnosis of EUPD (corresponding to ICD-10 **F60.30** & **F60.31**),
- Age ≥ 18 years and fully legally competent,
- No current diagnosis of moderate to severe substance use disorder (including regular use of benzodiazepines), normal or corrected-to-normal vision, no history of severe neurological disorders

Presence of other diagnoses will not lead to exclusion and EUPD does not have to be the primary diagnosis. Inclusion in the study will be possible over the whole course of treatment.

Experimental Protocol



EXPERIMENTAL TASKS

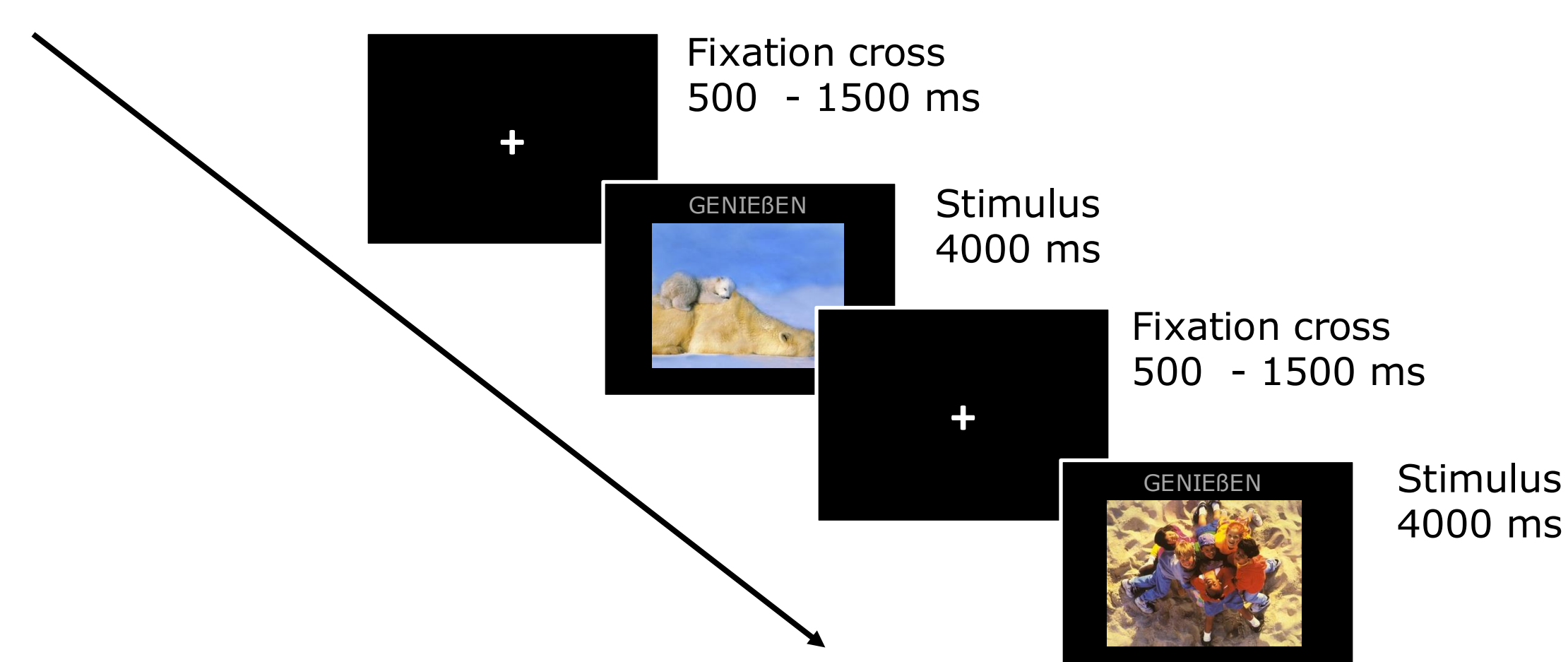
1. Resting State

Participants will be instructed to alternately keep their eyes open or closed for one-minute periods, as indicated by an auditory signal, for an overall duration of 4 minutes. Order of eyes-opened and eyes-closed periods will be counterbalanced across participants.

2. Passive Viewing & Emotion Regulation Paradigm

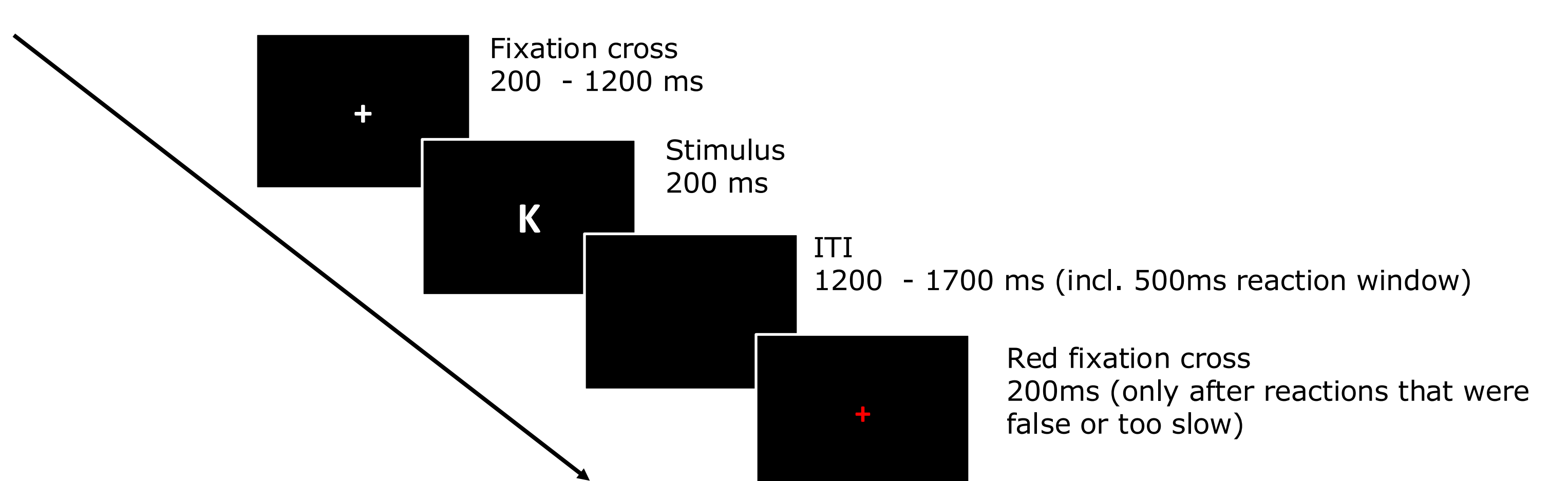
Participants will be instructed to maintain, reduce, or enhance emotional responses using passive viewing, reappraisal or savoring.

- **Stimuli:** Neutral, threatening and pleasant pictures (IAPS)⁴



3. Go/No-Go Task

Two of three letters will be associated with pressing a button (so called go-trials), one with refraining from any reaction (so called no-go-trials). 60% = frequent go-trials, 20% = infrequent go-trials, 20% = infrequent no-go-trials.



OUTLOOK

This study design will enable us to investigate—for the first time—**electrophysiological correlates of emotion processing** in patients with **EUPD**, and to replicate findings concerning correlates of inhibition.

Moreover, we will be able to **compare the correlates of emotion processing with exactly analogous data from the large transdiagnostic sample of the FOR5187 study** (estimated $n = 300$) and from a healthy control group (estimated $n = 80$).

REFERENCES

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