Title:

Fast Attentional Information Routing via High-Frequency Bursts in the

Human Brain

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Abstract

Brain-wide communication supporting flexible behavior requires coordination between

sensory and associative regions but how brain networks route sensory information at fast

timescales to guide action remains unclear. Using spiking neural networks and human intracranial

electrophysiology during spatial attention tasks, where participants detected targets at cued

locations, we show that high-frequency activity bursts (HFAb) serve as information-carrying

events, facilitating fast, long-range communications. HFAbs were evoked by sensory cues and

targets, dynamically linked to low-frequency rhythms. Notably, both HFAb responses following

cues and their decoupling from slow rhythms predicted performance accuracy. HFAbs were

synchronized at the network-level, identifying distinct cue- and target-activated subnetworks.

These subnetworks exhibited a temporal lead-lag organization following target onset, with cue-

activated subnetworks preceding target-activated subnetworks when the cue provided relevant

target information. Computational modeling indicated that HFAbs reflect transitions to coherent

population spiking and are coordinated across networks through distinct mechanisms. Together,

these findings establish HFAbs as neural mechanisms for fast, large-scale communication

supporting attentional performance.

Introduction

Prioritizing information from the external environment to guide ongoing behavior and upcoming

actions requires fast coordination of neural activity in large-scale networks distributed across

distant brain areas [1-7]. This coordination allows information to be routed selectively from sensory

to higher level executive brain networks [8-12]. Previous research, particularly in non-human

primates, has shown that selective information routing emerges through dynamically changing

neuronal interactions [3,13-15]. Such studies highlight the role of oscillatory dynamics and transient

changes in inter-areal coherence in enabling attentional selection and the flexible reconfiguration

of neural pathways according to task demands. Yet, most these prior investigations have focused

on pairwise interactions between a few brain areas, leaving open the question of how fast neural

dynamics emerge and enable flexible, large-scale information routing across distributed networks.

Investigating these questions in the human brain is challenging due to spatial or temporal

constraints of the techniques that have been employed. Studies examining network-level

interactions have largely been based on connectivity maps derived from functional magnetic

resonance imaging (fMRI). While fMRI studies provide valuable insights into functional networks,

the temporal resolution cannot capture sub-second routing dynamics in attention tasks [16–20].

Electroencephalography (EEG) and magnetoencephalography (MEG) offer high temporal

resolution but have limited spatial resolution. [21,22]. Lastly, single unit recordings provide both fine

temporal and spatial signals but lack the broad coverage for addressing questions of brain-wide

network communication [3,7,23].

Human intracranial electroencephalography (iEEG), offers a unique opportunity to address these

challenges by providing spatially localized and temporally precise neural signals obtained from

multiple brain regions [24,25]. High-frequency activity detected in iEEG signals correlates with

different cognitive functions, including attention [24–31], and has been reported to index aggregated

spiking activity, dendritic post-synaptic activity, state transitions into spiking regimes, or spike

current leakage to local field potentials (LFPs) [32–36]. Additionally, high-frequency activities show

long-range phase synchronization with different frequency bands, making them candidates for

studying fast brain-wide communications [27,37–40]. While these iEEG studies have advanced our

understanding of neural communication, they have predominantly focused on interactions between

high-frequency activities and low-frequency rhythms (fast-slow interactions), such as cross-

frequency coupling, which may not fully capture the dynamics of fast network interactions

between high-frequency activities themselves (fast-fast interactions) [27,37,41–45].

Here, we address this gap by identifying transient high-frequency activity bursts (HFAbs) in

human iEEG data from epilepsy patients performing spatial attention tasks, hypothesizing that

these discrete burst events support fast, large-scale network communications. HFAbs during

sensory cue processing predicted successful detection of upcoming targets. They were locally

coupled to slow rhythms (4-25 Hz), and transiently decoupled during cue and target processing,

with decoupling associated with correct performance. Across the brain, HFAbs interactions were

largely characterized by a zero-lag synchronized structure, constituting functionally specialized

subnetworks with distinct topographical and temporal organization. Specifically, cue-subnetwork

activity preceded target-subnetwork activity following target onset, when sensory cues conveyed

relevant information about the target location. Using computational modeling, we then showed

that HFAbs likely reflect state transitions in neural populations into a coherent spiking activity

state, characterized by bouts of elevated neuronal firing, suggesting HFAbs serve as neural

population-level signatures of information-encoding events.

Results

HFAbs track spatial attention and predict behavioral accuracy

We used human iEEG data recorded from epilepsy patients to quantify high frequency activity

dynamics to investigate fast information routing. We analyzed data from two spatial attention tasks

in which patients were cued either exogenously or endogenously to a spatial location to detect

visual targets (**Fig. 1a**, **Extended Data Fig. 1a**). Throughout the paper, the main figures mostly

present results of experiment 1, while the results of experiment 2 are presented as supplementary

information supporting reproducibility and generalization across attention tasks (for brain heatmap

plots, we combined both experiments to improve 3D rendering coverage).

In   experiment 1, patients performed a spatial attention task as described in [29]. Each trial

started with the presentation of two vertical or horizontal bar stimuli. Patients were instructed to

fixate their gaze at the center of the display. A transient spatial cue appeared at the end of one bar,

exogenously cueing an upcoming target location. Following a delay period, a target (i.e.,

luminance changes at perceptual threshold) appeared at the cued location or infrequently at equally

distant non-cued locations. Patients were required to respond if they detected the target (**Fig.**

1a). In experiment 2, patients were endogenously cued to a hemifield and reported a target if it

appeared in the cued hemifield (**Extended Data Fig. 1a**, see **Methods,** and for more details see [4]).

First, we used an adaptive method [7] and detected reliable bursts of high frequency activity at each

electrode (HFAbs, 65-115 Hz, intermittent high amplitude oscillatory events lasting more than 2.5

frequency cycles (> 25 ms), average burst length 36.2 ms; **Fig. 1b**). The frequency band was

selected based on average spectral peaks observed across subjects (91.2 ± 20.9 Hz , n = 12, see

Methods for further details). We then calculated the HFAb density (number of HFAb events per

unit of time) for each electrode to examine their evoked response during different task epochs.

HFAbs showed higher density averaged across all electrodes in response to both cue and target

(**Fig. 1c, Extended Data Fig. 1b**). We measured HFAb responses following cue and target onsets

across different trial outcomes (hit, reject, miss, and false alarm). At the population level, HFAbs

activated to cue onsets in correct hit and reject trials (Wilcoxon signed-rank test, $P < 0.001$) and

differed significantly from missed and false alarm trials (Kruskal-Wallis test, $P = 0.001$, Dunn's

test, $P = 0.008$ and $P = 0.01$, respectively; **Fig. 1d**).   Target responses were also significantly

different in correct hit trials compared to other outcome conditions (Kruskal-Wallis test, $P < 0.001$;

Dunn's test, P < 0.001; **Fig. 1d**, **Extended Data Fig. 1c**; see also **Extended Data Fig. 2a, 1d**).

Overall, $10.7 \pm 2\%$ of channels (n = 12) showed significant activation to cues, whereas $33.2 \pm 3\%$

of channels (n = 12) were responsive to targets (Wilcoxon signed-rank test, P < 0.05). Among

channels that responded to cues and/or targets, HFAb responses to targets were negatively

correlated with those to the cue (Spearman correlation, P < 0.001, R = -0.36, **Fig. 1e**), suggesting

distinct electrode populations process cues and targets. The topography of burst responses to cues

was largely confined to occipital and parietal regions, including areas in extrastriate cortex,

intraparietal sulcus (IPS), temporoparietal junction (TPJ), superior parietal lobule (SPL), and

inferior parietal lobule (IPL) (**Fig. 1f**), whereas target responses were more widely distributed

including superior, middle, and inferior frontal gyrus, precentral and postcentral gyrus, IPL, SPL,

and TPJ (**Fig. 1g**). This activation profile was evident only for correct trials both for cue- and target

responses (**Extended Data Fig. 2b**). HFAb responses for correct and incorrect trials also showed

topographic differences at the single subject level (**Fig. 1h**, see **Extended Data Fig. 1e, 2c** for

more individual examples; also see **Supplementary Table 1** for detailed electrode positions of

cue and target responsive channels for individual subjects).

We investigated the effect of cue validity (targets at cued vs uncued location) and laterality (visual

field ipsilateral versus contralateral to electrodes) on cue and target responses on a trial-by-trial

basis, using a Generalized Linear Mixed Effect (GLME) model (see **Methods**). Overall, there was

a main effect of outcome on both cue response (t = 2.8, P = 0.005) and target response (GLME, t

= 15.2, P < 0.001). Additionally, there was a main effect of cue validity on the target response

(**Fig. 1i**, GLME, t = 4.7, P < 0.001), and a main effect of the cue laterality on the cue response

(**Fig. 1j**, GLME, t = 5.1, P < 0.001). No significant main effect was observed for laterality on target

response (**Extended Data Fig. 3a**, P = 0.13), or validity on cue response (**Extended Data Fig. 3B**,

P = 0.32, See **Extended Data Fig. 3c,d** for the effect of laterality and cue validity on cue and target

response in experiment 2, as well as **Extended Data Fig. 3e,f** for the temporal profiles of HFAbs

around cue and target onsets in both experiments).

Given that HFAb activation to sensory cues was associated with outcome accuracy, we examined

if electrode burst density (Cue+ electrodes, see **Methods**) predicted whether participants

successfully completed a trial (correct hits and correct rejections). We trained a classifier on the

burst density using a sliding window of 350 ms around the cue onset. In Cue+ electrodes and

within 500 ms after the cue onset, the burst density predicted better than baseline and chance levels

if the trial was executed correctly (binomial test, FDR corrected for dependent samples, P < 0.05,

Fig. 1k, Extended Data Fig. 3g). This prediction was consistent across both experiments

(**Extended Data Fig. 3h**) and was not dependent on an individual subject (**Extended Data Fig.**

3i).

These findings indicate that HFAbs occur frequently in response to sensory cues and targets and

exhibit distinct spatial profiles across the brain. HFAbs predicted performance accuracy following

the cue-onset on a trial-by-trial basis. These results support a role for HFAbs in encoding spatially

relevant sensory information for subsequent target detection.

HFAbs are coupled to slow rhythms and decouple in response to cues and targets

High frequency activity dynamics in brain networks have been shown to be organized by theta

rhythms (4-8 Hz) [37]. Here, we asked whether HFAbs are coordinated with low-frequency rhythms,

and whether these cross-frequency dynamics were associated with task variables. For each

electrode, we extracted the LFP around the HFAb centers and measured both the HFAb-triggered

LFP average and the phase locking value (PLV) of HFAbs (peak time) to the low-frequency LFP

dynamics. HFAb-triggered LFP showed consistent evoked potentials with low frequency side-

lobes across all subjects (**Fig. 2a**). Spectral analysis revealed HFAb-triggered spectral peaks (**Fig.**

2b, top) and phase locking peaks (**Fig. 2b**, bottom) in theta (4–8 Hz), alpha (8–14 Hz), and beta

(15–25 Hz) frequency bands. Phase locking to local low-frequency field dynamics was evident in

most electrodes across all subjects (**Fig. 2c,** 9 ± 0.24 Hz**,** with significant peaks marked by black

dots; see **Fig. d, Extended Data Fig. 4c** for examples of individual electrodes showing phase

distributions of HFAbs locked to one or more frequency bands, also see **Extended Data Fig. 4a,b**

for topographic representations of the frequency of phase locking peaks at the group and individual

levels).

To examine whether sensory cues or target processing affected HFAb phase locking to low-

frequency rhythms, we analyzed PLV of HFAb relative to baseline following cue and target onsets.

HFAbs showed a transient decrease in their phase locking (decoupling) with the theta/alpha and

beta frequency bands after the cue onset and after the target onset (**Fig. 2e, Extended Data Fig.**

4d, randomization test, $P < 0.05$, FDR corrected for dependent samples). This decoupling was not

attributable to event-triggered potentials (**Extended Data Fig. 4e**, see **Methods**). Furthermore,

changes in HFAb coupling strength were only observed in correct trials, not in incorrect trials (**Fig.**

2f,g, number of bursts were controlled across trial conditions, see **Methods**, see **Extended Data**

Fig. 4f for individual examples).

Next, we examined whether alterations in HFAb coupling to low frequencies were related to HFAb

activation profiles in response to cues and targets. We calculated correlations between coupling

ratios and burst density for each subject (a coupling ratio measured changes in HFAb coupling to

low frequencies (< 25 Hz) after cues or targets relative to the baseline within 1000 ms before the

cue and target onset, see **Methods**). The coupling ratio at target and cue onsets was negatively

correlated with burst density for both cue and target onsets (**Fig. 2h,i**, Spearman correlation, R = -

0.22, P < 0.001, and R = -23, P<0.001). GLM models showed a main effect of cue response on the

coupling ratio following cue onset (**Fig. 2h** t = -6.17, P < 0.001), and a main effect of target

response on the coupling ratio following target onset (**Fig. 2i,** t = -5.05, P < 0.001). No significant

effect of cue response was found on the coupling ratio following target onset (**Extended Data Fig.**

4h, P = 0.15), and target response on the coupling ratio following cue onset (**Extended Data Fig.**

4i, P = 0.21).

Overall, HFAbs were predominantly coupled to the phase of theta, alpha, and beta rhythms.

However, their coupling strength to slower rhythms decreased during perceptual processing and

decision making.

HFAbs were coordinated brain-wide and their network-level synchronization identified

functionally specialized subnetworks

We found that HFAbs evoked by cue and target demonstrated different topographical distributions,

indicating that different brain regions are preferentially engaged during cue and target processing.

Additionally, the processing of cues and targets involved the decoupling of HFAbs from low-

frequency dynamics. The distinct spatial patterns and reduced low-frequency coupling suggest that

separate groups of brain areas (subnetworks) are coordinated via HFAbs for cue versus target

processing. Thus, we asked whether the brain-wide network could be organized into distinct

subnetworks, each characterized by unique high frequency coordination patterns.

We analyzed burst events outside the cue/delay and target/response periods to avoid stimulus-

driven coordination effects. We measured the power of high frequency activity (65-175 Hz, HFA,

to capture broader spectral contents) in one electrode aligned to the center of HFAb events in

another electrode (HFAb-triggered HFA). HFAb-triggered HFA between electrodes revealed

coordination in high frequency bands (**Fig. 3a**). This coordination was organized through low

frequency rhythms, with spectral peaks predominantly in the theta band (4-8 Hz) (**Fig. 3b**, top).

These patterns were consistent across subjects and experiments (**Fig. 3b**, bottom, **Extended Data**

Fig. 5a,b). HFAb coordination strength (the sharpness of HFAb-triggered HFA) was inversely

related to distance between electrodes, with closer sites showing stronger coordination (**Fig. 3c**,

S5e, Spearman correlation between coordination kurtosis and distance between electrodes, R = -

0.25, P < 0.001).

To extract temporal features of the high frequency coordination, we used Principal Component

Analysis (PCA) to reduce the dimensionality of HFAb-triggered HFA across electrode pairs. The

first component (PC1) showed zero-lag synchronized and near-symmetric distributions of high

frequency activity in all subjects, explaining more than 20% of the total variance (**Fig. 3d,**

Extended Data Fig. 5d,e). We projected HFAb coordination onto PC space and used a

resampling-based consensus K-means clustering technique to identify robust subnetworks of

electrodes based on their scores on the synchronized PC (**Extended Data Fig. 5f**, see **Methods**).

The clustering algorithm identified the most stable subnetworks (electrodes that were consistently

grouped together across multiple resampling runs) for each cluster number (K = 2-8, see **Extended**

Data Fig. 6a, **7a** for individual examples). We defined a series of accuracy metrics and determined

the optimal number of clusters through a voting poll over those metrics for each subject (the

cluster number that outperformed the other clusters in more of these metrics) (**Extended Data Fig.**

6b,c and **Extended Data Fig. 7b,c,** see **Methods**). An example clustering result with eight optimal

clusters is shown in **Fig. 3e** (see **Extended Data Fig. 8** for additional examples).

Next, we investigated whether these clusters were functionally specialized. All subjects (except

one excluded due to insufficient electrodes) showed clusters with distinct cue- and target-evoked

activation profiles (**Fig. 3f,** see **Extended Data Fig. 9** for activation profiles for different cluster

numbers for the individual shown in **Fig. 3e**, also see **Extended Data Fig. 6d** and **Extended Data**

Fig. 7d for additional examples). Clusters activated by cues and targets were labeled as *cue-* or

target-subnetworks, respectively (Wilcoxon signed-rank test, P < 0.05; FDR corrected for

dependent sample). Cue-subnetworks were predominantly located in occipital and parietal cortices

(e.g., IPS, TPJ, SPL, IPL), while target-subnetworks were more widely distributed across different

brain areas including parietal, motor, premotor, and frontal cortices (**Fig. 3g**, see **Supplementary**

Table 2 for locations of cue and target subnetworks for individual subjects).

Lastly, similar to **Fig. 1h**, we tested whether cue and target-subnetworks could predict trial

outcomes. The density of HFAb within 98-374 ms after sensory cues predicted successful

detection of upcoming targets (binomial test, P < 0.001, FDR corrected for dependent samples).

This prediction was only true for the cue-subnetwork (**Fig. 3h**) and was not driven by a single

subject (see **Extended Data Fig. 10** for more details on the classifier results in both experiments).

As a control, we re-referenced datasets from common average referencing to local composite

referencing (LCR, each electrode was referenced to its nearest neighbors, see **Methods**), This re-

referencing did not alter any of the main results. Together, these findings suggest that large-scale

brain networks are coordinated via HFAbs, with their synchronization identifying functionally

specialized subnetworks that exhibit distinct temporal dynamics. Furthermore, HFAbs in

subnetworks activated by sensory cues were predictive of performance accuracy following cue

onsets.

HFAbs in cue-subnetworks precede target-subnetworks

Our observation that HFAb responses in cue-subnetworks predict performance suggests that these subnetworks play a critical role for successful target detection. This finding raises a key question: do cue-subnetworks actively route information to target-subnetworks during target processing? If so, this would imply a directional flow of information between these subnetworks that facilitates attentional performance. To address this question, we examined information flow between cue and target-subnetworks. We only considered subjects whose electrode coverage included both cue- and target-subnetworks (n = 6). We used two different approaches. First, we quantified whether HFAbs exhibited any temporally ordered activity pattern during the target-to-response period between cue and target-subnetworks. Individual subjects showed stronger HFA in target-subnetworks within 150 ms after HFAbs in cue-subnetworks (**Fig. 4a, Extended Data Fig. 11a,** Wilcoxon rank-sum test, P < 0.05, the opposite pattern was observed in the other direction). On average, HFAbs in cue-subnetworks led the activity of target-subnetworks and target-subnetworks lagged cue-subnetworks during the target processing period (within 150 ms around the HFAb-triggered HFA, Wilcoxon rank-sum test, P < 0.001, **Fig. 4b).** For comparison, no lead-lag patterns were observed between cue- and target-subnetworks during the cue-to-target interval **(**P = 0.44, n.s., **Extended Data Fig. 11b).** We quantified the peak of these lead-lag relationships for individual subjects. The HFA in target-subnetworks showed an activity peak following HFAbs in cue-subnetworks, while the peak of HFA in cue-subnetworks preceded HFAbs in target-subnetworks (**Fig. 4c**, Wilcoxon rank-sum test, P < 0.05, 16 ± 7 ms; n = 6). For visualizing the lead/lag pattern in each individual, we averaged the time-lags between cue and target-subnetworks over different cluster numbers. We observed that the HFAbs in the occipital, posterior parietal, and frontal areas led over the

motor/premotor areas during target processing (**Fig. 4c**, see **Extended Data Fig. 11c** for more

examples).

Next, we used delayed mutual information (DMI) to further quantify how information was

directionally coupled between cue and target-subnetworks. DMI can inform about (i) when cue

and target-subnetworks shared the most information relative to target onset, and (ii) the specific

time-lags at which these two subnetworks showed maximum inter-predictability (see **Fig. 4e** for

an individual example).

The DMI between cue and target-subnetworks showed a peak up to 500 ms after target onset (**Fig.**

4f, 275 ± 22 ms; n = 6). Time-lag distributions of the maximum DMI between cue and target-

subnetworks showed that cue-subnetworks preceded the information in target-subnetworks during

the target processing period (**Fig. 4f,** Wilcoxon signed-rank test, $P < 0.001$; 67 ± 16 ms, n = 6).

This pattern was consistent for individual subjects (**Fig. 4e,g**, see **Extended Data Fig. 11d** for

more examples) as well as on an average group level (**Fig. 4f**). The information precession in cue-

subnetworks over target-subnetworks was only evident after the target onset. No significant time-

lag was observed around the cue onset, indicating this effect is not a reflection of visual hierarchy

activation (**Extended Data Fig. 11e**). This effect was limited to trials with a valid sensory cue,

where the target appeared as instructed by the visual cue (**Fig. 4g**).

Overall, these results suggest that brain subnetworks, identified by their network-level HFAb

synchronization, exhibit temporal lags during different functional states. Specifically, when the

cue provides valid spatial information about the target, HFAbs in cue-subnetworks precede those

in target-subnetworks following target onset.

Computational modeling of HFAbs through spiking neural networks

We developed a computational model using spiking neural networks [46] to gain mechanistic insights into HFAbs, their dynamic coupling to low-frequency rhythms, and their coordination across brain networks. We simulated two interconnected networks, each consisting of 1000 neurons (80% excitatory, 20% inhibitory; **Fig. 5a, Extended Data Fig. 12a,** see **Methods**). Each network was fed by external input currents primarily to the excitatory population.

We implemented two recording sites on top of each network measuring electrical field dynamics of postsynaptic and transmembrane potentials from all neurons in that network (**Fig. 5a**). A non-ohmic filter was used to attenuate higher frequencies in the iEEG signal (**Fig. 5b**, **Extended Data Fig. 12b,c** see **Methods**). Simulated iEEG signals showed low-frequency spectral peaks corresponding to network resonance frequencies and high frequency (65–115 Hz), consistent with experimental data (**Fig. 5c**). HFAbs were detected as transient oscillatory events of high amplitude at 65-115Hz (**Fig. 5d**).

To investigate the neural mechanisms underlying these HFAbs, we calculated the spike density for the population of neurons, and the HFAb density from each recording site. Burst density correlated with spike density as compared to bursts with random timings (randomization test, $P < 0.05$, **Fig. 5d**). This was further quantified by feeding the network different levels of external current coherence (**Extended Data Fig. 12c**). Increasing the input coherence to the network showed a linear increase in correlation between the HFAb density and the spike density (Spearman correlation, $R = 0.87$, $P < 0.001$, **Fig. 5e**). This observation is consistent with our experimental findings that HFAbs are evoked in response to cues and targets, suggesting that they may reflect large-scale information-carrying events emerging from transiently elevated excitation in local networks of neurons.

Next, we examined HFAbs coordination with slower rhythms. HFAb-triggered LFPs at each

recording site showed an evoked responses with low-frequency sidelobes (**Fig. 5f**), revealing

spectral peaks in low frequencies (< 25 Hz) as well as the burst frequency band (**Fig. 5g**). The

cross-spectral correlation was dependent on synaptic time constants, external input strength, neural

connectivity strength, and coherent input consistency (**Fig. 5g**). HFAbs also showed phase

locking to different frequencies in the theta, alpha and beta bands (4-25 Hz, **Fig. 5h**). These results

are consistent with the prominent local cross-spectral coupling observed in our experimental data,

supporting local neural network mechanisms underlying the coupling of high- and low-frequency

dynamics.

We also tested for possible network mechanisms underlying the decoupling following cue and

target processing. We modeled this scenario through feedforward networks and measured the time-

resolved PLV for both networks after feeding one with a brief input pulse (~50% of neurons

receiving in-phase inputs; **Fig. 5i, Extended Data Fig. 12e,f**). The external impulse

desynchronized both networks, resulting in a transient decoupling of HFAb from low-frequency

rhythms as compared to the baseline (Wilcoxon rank-sum test, P < 0.001, **Fig. 5i, Extended Data**

Fig. 12g,h). This desynchronization was accompanied with higher burst rate (**Extended Data Fig.**

12i).

Lastly, we examined HFAb coordination across networks. HFAb-triggered HFA showed different

rhythmically organized coordination patterns between networks depending on inter-network

connectivity and external inputs. Reciprocally connected networks and networks with correlated

external inputs showed synchronized high frequency activity (**Fig. 5j**), while feedforward

networks showed a lead-lag pattern within 150 ms following HFAbs (Wilcoxon rank-sum test, P

< 0.001, **Fig. 5k**). In addition to the internally generated rhythmic structure of HFAbs between

networks, external inputs may also contribute to these rhythmic coordination patterns. A rhythmic

input to either or both networks entrained its rhythm in the coordination of HFAbs between the

two networks (Spearman correlation, R = 0.83, P < 0.001, **Fig. 5l,m**).

In sum, our modeling results suggest that HFAbs reflect a transition in neural populations into a

state of coherent spiking activity. These HFAbs are phase locked to low-frequency rhythms, but

transient inputs disrupt this coupling. HFAbs are coordinated across interconnected networks or

networks as a function of task structure.

Discussion

Here we present a novel framework for understanding the mechanisms underlying large-scale

information routing in brain networks at fast timescales. By characterizing high-frequency

activities as discrete burst events (HFAbs), our study identified brain subnetworks with similar

coordination patterns, which tracked the encoding and communication of spatially relevant sensory

cue information within large-scale brain networks. We found that HFAbs were predominantly

synchronized across distributed brain networks in iEEG data, and their network-level

synchronization patterns revealed functionally specialized subnetworks for processing cues and

targets. Importantly, HFAbs in cue-subnetworks following sensory cues predicted trial-by-trial

performance accuracy, and temporally preceded the activity of target-subnetworks during

subsequent target processing, highlighting their role in dynamic attentional information routing.

Using computational modeling, we then showed that HFAbs can emerge as bouts of elevated

excitatory drive to local networks, functioning as fast communication units across the brain. These

findings demonstrate that HFAbs are involved in both forming a brain-wide representation of

sensory cues and fast communication of these sensory signals to associative brain networks for

detecting upcoming targets and decision-making processes.

High-frequency activity have been widely observed in human intracranial recordings and is

associated with a wide range of cognitive and circuit functions [24,25,27,31,37,38,44]. Instead of

continuous measures, we characterize these activities as discrete burst events, supported by

computational and animal electrophysiology studies emphasizing their circuit-level origins and

their essential roles in long range communications [7,47–53]. Through this quantification, we

demonstrated that HFAbs can leverage our understanding of fast attentional information routing

in large-scale brain networks. Previous studies investigating neural mechanisms of selective

attention have predominantly focused on pairwise interactions between brain regions, often

measured by coherence of neural signals in lower frequency bands [3,54]. This pairwise perspective

on neural communication does not fully capture the complexity of brain-wide network dynamics

essential for a detailed and mechanistic view of cognitive functions [20,55]. By utilizing HFAbs, our

results offer a large-scale account for understanding information routing and communication at

millisecond timescales at the network level, providing new insight into the mechanisms of

selective attention.

A main finding of our study revealed the synchronized inter-regional temporal structure of network

coordination through HFAbs. We found that the most prominent pattern of high frequency

dynamics in the brain network was zero-lag amplitude synchronization (**Fig. 3d**). This long-range

synchronization of HFAbs is consistent with previous studies showing phase locking of high

frequency dynamics in brain networks [38–40]. Zero-lag synchronization patterns in cortical networks

are thought to enhance large-scale information processing and facilitate representational states of

sensory information in the brain [2,56–58]. While our results cannot directly identify the origins of

these synchronized interactions, two different scenarios might be involved. One potential

synchronizing mechanism may rely on subcortical areas [59–63], particularly higher-order thalamic

nuclei [59,64–67]. Our modeling suggests that correlated inputs to distinct neural networks could drive

long-range synchronization (**Fig. 5l**). Such correlated inputs, if originating from subcortical

structures such as higher-order thalamic nuclei, can facilitate the long-range synchronizations

between separate or weakly connected cortical areas [59,68]. Another potential mechanism would

depend on direct long-range intracortical interactions. We found that cortical synchronization was

largely between areas with similar activation profiles during cognitive functions and spatially

neighboring regions (**Fig. 3, Extended Data Fig. 8**). Additionally, our modeling suggested that

reciprocally connected networks with similar connectivity strength can result in synchronized

dynamics (**Fig. 5j**). This zero-lag synchronization induced by reciprocal connections has been

observed experimentally in long-range neuronal interactions [56,57] as well as in network modeling

[69]. Recent findings in mice support this idea reporting that deep layer 6b neurons, which are

recipient of long-range cortical projection neurons [70], are involved in brain state shifting into a

spiking state, and strong high frequency activity (80–140 Hz); in brain networks [36]. While our

modeling and empirical results can support either of these mechanisms, future studies are needed

to explore the extent to which cortico-cortical versus thalamocortical interactions drive and

influence this high frequency synchronization in large-scale cortical networks.

We further showed that network-level baseline synchronization of high-frequency dynamics,

outside of task events, can reliably identify distinct functional brain subnetworks through a

resampling-based consensus clustering framework. While the baseline state did not contain cue or

target processing periods, it could identify subnetworks with unique activation patterns in response

to those behavioral events (**Fig. 3**). It is notable that this approach fundamentally diverges from

the most common ones taken to delineate brain network organizations or network-level

communications such as conventional fMRI that is primarily focused on low-frequency BOLD

signal fluctuations [71–73]. By leveraging high-frequency dynamics, we show a novel link between

baseline neural activity and task-induced network activation patterns, suggesting that intrinsic

network fluctuations can affect behavioral responses even at millisecond timescales. Identifying

these subnetworks at fast time scales is critical to capture rapid state transitions in brain networks,

which may underlie the temporal organization necessary for adaptive information routing during

behaviorally relevant events [74]. This capacity is reflected in our findings, which reveal that brain

subnetworks, identified by their fast, network-level synchronization, exhibit lead-lag interactions

during behavioral events. Specifically, cue-subnetworks led target-subnetworks during target

presentation when spatial cues provided relevant information about target locations (**Fig. 4**). These

observations uniquely bridge the gap between studies focusing on local and cross-regional

mechanisms of fast information routing [7,44,48,50,52,64,75] and those examining communication in

large-scale brain networks beyond pairwise interactions [20,76,77].

Another key observation in this study is the coupling dynamics of HFAbs and local low-frequency

activities. We found that the phase-locking of HFAbs to low-frequency dynamics can occur with

random external input patterns in the modeling, and this is a widespread phenomenon in iEEG

signals, consistent with previous studies [37,78,79]. However, our findings further suggest that HFAbs

transiently decouple from the phase of local low-frequency activities in response to both cue and

target events (**Fig. 2**). Our modeling supports this observation, showing that transient inputs,

whether directly fed into a network (e.g., a visually evoked response from subcortical structures)

or indirectly through a feedforward structure, can interrupt the default state coupling of HFAbs to

low frequencies (**Fig. 5i**). Network interferences, characterized by brief and strong responses, can

temporarily induce local cross-frequency decoupling possibly by increasing response

heterogeneity and disrupting the timing of inhibitory and excitatory neuron activation [80,81]. This

desynchronization can facilitate cognitive processes like selective attention, perception, and

memory retrieval by enhancing new information and suppressing internally regulated activity

states [80,82–86]. We observed that HFAb decoupling from low-frequency dynamics, accompanied by

increased HFAb density following cue and target events, resembling a desynchronized up-state,

which is a brain state with activated but desynchronized neural activity across cortical networks.

Importantly, this decoupling was more pronounced in correct trials during both cue and target

processing, further suggesting a role of desynchronization in facilitating accurate cognitive

performance (**Fig. 2g**).

In summary, our study provides a novel approach to understanding large-scale cortical

communications, showing that HFAbs act as fast communication units in the brain, supporting

long-range information processing, facilitating attentional information routing, and identifying

distinct and functionally specialized brain subnetworks.

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Original Draft, K.B.B.; Writing – Review & Editing, K.B.B., R.F.H., N.B., R.T.K., and S.K..;

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Data and code accessibility

Custom programming code for analysis and modeling is available upon publication and will be

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Fig. 1. HFAb activation profile predicts behavioral outcome on a trial-by-trial basis. a, A
schematic of experiment 1 task outline. Two bars appear on the screen. A transient cue informs
the subject of the most probable location of an upcoming target. A target at perceptual threshold
contrast change appears at a cued or infrequently at an equidistant uncued location after a variable
interval. Subjects report the change detection. **b,** An example trial of detected transient high-
frequency bursts (HFAbs, shown in red) around the cue onset. The brain shows localization of
electrodes across all subjects. **c,** Normalized HFAb density profiles for individual subjects and
averaged across participants aligned to the cue (left) and target onset (right). **d,** HFAb responses
to cues (left) and targets (right) grouped by trial outcome. (Each line represents one subject, with
thick lines showing group average, horizontal lines showing significant differences between
groups, and asterisks denoting non-zero responses). **e,** Correlation of HFAb responses evoked by
cue and target onset for channels with significant activation to either or both cue and target (each
point represents one channel, each line represents regression for one subject, the orange line shows
regression across all channels). (**e, g**) Group average heatmap 3D rendering of HFAb responses to
(**a**) cues and (**g**) targets for correct trials. **h,** An individual subject example of HFAb responses to
cue and target within 500 ms after the cue and target onset, respectively, for correct and incorrect
trials (black circles indicate electrode locations). **i,** HFAb responses to targets for valid and invalid

cue conditions. **j**, HFAb responses to cues ipsi- and contra-lateral to electrodes. **k**, Classifier accuracy in predicting trial outcome based on HFAb density around the cue onset for cue responsive electrodes and cue unresponsive electrodes (error bars indicate standard error of the mean across all realizations and cross validations). Red lines indicate significantly higher prediction accuracy than baseline and chance levels ($P < 0.05$, binomial test, FDR corrected for dependent samples).

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Fig. 2. HFAbs dynamically phase lock to low-frequency LFPs and decouple transiently after cue and target onsets. a, HFAb-triggered LFP averages across all electrodes for individual subjects (gray lines) and across all individuals (purple line). **b**, HFAb-triggered LFP spectrum (top) and phase locking values (PLV, bottom) across all electrodes (each line represents one subject). **c.** PLVs for individual electrodes (each row)**.** Black dots indicate the maximum peak of PLV for each electrode, and white dashed lines delineate results from individual subjects. **d**, Example of phase-frequency distribution of HFAbs for an electrode with theta phase locking (top) and beta phase locking (bottom). **e**, Time-resolved PLV analysis averaged across all subjects (top) aligned to cue (left) and target (right) onsets. The proportion of time points where phase locking dropped significantly below the baseline averaged across all electrodes (bottom, P < 0.05, random permutation test; thick lines indicate segments significantly different from the chance level, P < 0.05, binomial test, FDR corrected for dependent samples; see **Methods**). **f**, An individual brain heatmap example showing coupling ratio between HFAb and low frequency (4-25 Hz) LFP after cue (top) and target onsets (bottom) for correct and incorrect trials. **g**, Similar to **f**, proportion of time points with significant decoupling from low frequency LFPs (4-25 Hz) after cue and target onsets for correct and incorrect trials. (**h, i**) Regression plots showing correlation of coupling ratios following cue onset with cue responses (green, **h**), and coupling ratios following target onset with target responses (purple, **i**). Scatter points denote electrodes, lines indicate individual subjects with orange line showing the regression across all subjects.

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Fig. 3. Long-range coordination of HFAbs identifies functionally specialized subnetworks. a,
High frequency coordination was measured by calculating HFAb-triggered HFA between
electrode pairs for HFAbs outside of cue/delay and target/response periods (top shows an electrode
pair example, and bottom shows HFAb-triggered HFA averaged over all electrode pairs for
individual subjects). **b**, Normalized PSD over HFAb-triggered HFA for all electrodes (each
electrode relative to the rest of the network; white dashed lines are the border between subjects)**.**
c, HFAb-triggered HFA for electrodes distanced in four quantiles (25, 50, 75, and 100 mm), from
green (short) to red (long). **d**, The first two principal components of HFAb-triggered HFA for
individual subjects. **e**, A pair-wise grouping probability matrix for an individual example with an
optimal number of eight clusters (top, white lines indicate cluster borders, clusters are ordered
from top to bottom by their stability, see **Methods**). Cluster topography for the K = 8 number of
clusters for an individual subject shown in (bottom). **f**, Normalized burst densities around cue and
target onsets averaged across electrodes within each cluster for the same subject as in **e**. (shaded
error bars indicate the standard error of the mean; significant activations are indicated by thicker
lines, P < 0.05, Wilcoxon test). **g**, Topographical organization of electrodes in clusters that show
significant activation in response to cues and targets across all subjects (i.e., "cue-subnetworks"
and "target-subnetworks"). **h**, Classifier accuracy based on HFAb density around cue onset for

cue-subnetworks (purple) and target-subnetworks (green). Error bars indicate the standard error of
the mean across all realizations and cross-validations. Red lines indicate significantly higher
prediction accuracy than the baseline and chance level (binomial test, $P < 0.05$, FDR corrected for
dependent samples).

Fig. 4. Cue-subnetworks precede target-subnetworks during target processing. a, Example of
HFAb-triggered HFA for HFAbs during target processing, when HFA is measured in target-
subnetworks relative to HFAbs in cue-subnetworks (purple) vs HFA is measured in cue-
subnetworks relative to HFAbs in target-subnetworks (green). Red and blue shades denote
significant difference between directions denoting a cue lead and a target lag respectively
(Wilcoxon rank-sum test, $P < 0.05$) **b,** Group-level average of HFAb-triggered HFA, similar to **a**.
c, HFAb-triggered HFA median peak for electrode pairs corresponding to the same groups as in **b**
(the Wilcoxon test was used to determine whether there was a difference in the distribution of peak
positions between the two directions. Each row indicates the results for one individual. Error bars
represent the standard error of the mean). **d**, An individual visualization example of the lead-lag
patterns between electrodes in cue and target-subnetworks (across all cluster numbers) during the
target processing period. The lead and lag temporal patterns are shown in a color gradient from
red to blue. **e**, Heatmaps of normalized DMI values averaged across all members of the cue and
target-subnetworks. The left panel shows DMI when the target-subnetwork is fixed, and the cue-
subnetwork is shifted. The right panel shows DMI when the cue-subnetwork is fixed, and the
target-subnetwork is shifted. The white line indicates the time-lag distribution of DMI peaks across
electrode pairs. The cross signs indicate the median of DMI peak time-lags ± standard error. **f**,
Group average of DMI across all individuals, similar to **e**. **g**, Comparisons of DMI peak
distributions between the two opposite directions (green for shifting the cue-subnetwork and
purple for shifting the target-subnetwork) for trials with valid (right) and invalid cues (left). Each
individual is shown by a cross sign, which refers to the median ± standard error for DMI peaks
across all electrode pairs between the two subnetworks.

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Fig. 5. Computational modeling of iEEG signals. a, Two interconnected cubic networks of point
source spiking neurons were simulated (bottom panels show raster plots for neurons in each
network). A recording disk was implemented on top of each network to measure neural activity.
b, Example of simulated iEEG signals. **c**, The power spectral density (PSD) of iEEG signals. **d**, A
single trial example of spike density and raster (top) detected HFAbs (middle, HFAbs are shown
in red), and HFAb density (bottom). **e**, HFAb density and spike density show linearly increasing
correlations as input coherence increases. **f**, HFAb-triggered LFP. **g**, Cycle-balanced power
spectrum triggered around HFAbs when the input to the network has high (red) or low coherence
(cyan). **h**, HFAb phase distribution at different frequencies. **i**, The PLV of HFAbs to low
frequencies after a transient input (thick black line) is fed to the network. (**j, k**) HFAb-triggered
HFA between (**j**) reciprocally connected and (**k**) directional feedforward networks (connections
from N1 to N2, see **Extended Data Fig. 12e** for further details) with varying connectivity strengths
(purple and green traces show HFAb-triggered HFA when bursts are extracted from N1 and N2,
respectively). **l**, HFAb-triggered HFA between disconnected networks with shared rhythmic
inputs. **m**, PSD over the HFAb-triggered HFA for rhythmic inputs of varying frequencies.

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Supplementary Materials

Methods

Extended Data Figs. 1 to 12

Supplementary Tables 1 to 4

Methods

Experimental model and subject details

Participants. Intracranial recordings were obtained from 12 epilepsy patients who underwent pre-

surgical monitoring with implanted grid electrodes. Study 1 included seven patients (35.99 ± 12.42

years; mean $\pm$ SD; 5 females; see Helfrich et al., 2018 for further details). Patients were recruited

from the University of California, Irvine Medical Center, USA (n = 6) and California Pacific

Medical Center (CPMC), San Francisco, USA (n = 1). Study 2 included 5 patients (30.20 ± 1186

years; mean $\pm$ SD; 1 female, 3 patients were excluded from the original study due to their limited

electrode coverages; see Szczepanski et al., 2014 for further details) from Johns Hopkins Hospital

in Baltimore, MD, USA (N = 1) and Stanford Hospital, CA, USA (N = 4). The electrode placement

was entirely guided by clinical considerations, and all patients provided written informed consent

to participate in the study. All procedures were approved by the Institutional Review Board at each

site, as well as the Committee for Protection of Human Subjects at the University of California,

Berkeley (Protocol number: 2010-02-783) and were in accordance with the Declaration of

Helsinki.

METHOD DETAILS

Experimental design and procedure

Behavioral tasks. Participants performed a spatial attention task in each experiment. In

experiment 1, participants performed a variant of the Egly-Driver task (Egly et al., 1994;

Fiebelkorn et al., 2013; see Helfrich et al., 2018 for further details) Behavioral data were collected

with Presentation Software (Neurobehavioral Systems). Subjects were seated approximately 60

cm from the laptop screen. Subjects started each trial by pressing a left mouse button. On each

trial, after appearance of a fixation cross, two bars appeared vertically or horizontally on the screen,

followed by a brief spatial cue (100 ms), presented after 400-800 ms at one of the four corners of

the bar stimuli. The spatial cue indicated the location where the target was most likely to appear

(72% cue validity) and occurred pseudo-randomly in any of the four quadrants. A variable cue-to-

target interval (500 – 1700 ms) was introduced after the cue during which participants sustained

spatial attention at the cued location. Targets could randomly appear at any point during the cue-

target interval,and participants released the mouse button to report a detected target. Infrequent

catch trials (10%) during which no actual target appeared were used to track the false alarm rate.

Auditory feedback indicated whether the trial was performed correctly. The target luminance was

adjusted every 15 trials, if necessary, by increasing/decreasing the RGB value, in order to achieve

an overall approximate accuracy of 80%. The experimenter monitored continuous fixation. All

participants responded by using the hand contralateral to the implanted grid, except for participant

S5 who had bilateral grids and responded by using the left hand. Participants performed up to 5

blocks of 60 trials each (190 trials ± 67; mean ± SD).

Experiment 2 (Extended Data Fig. 1) used EPrime software (Psychology Software Tools) to

control stimulus presentation (see Szczepanski et al., 2014 for more details). Subjects were seated

approximately 60 cm away from the laptop screen. Each trial began with red circles (distractors)

dynamically switching on and off on a dark background. A spatial cue guided participants to the

right or left hemifield, and the cue remained on the screen throughout the trial. Subjects were

instructed to maintain fixation and only covertly shift their attention to the cued hemifield. Through

the trial, the experimenter monitored eye movements and ensured central fixation. After a variable

cue-target interval (1000 – 2000 ms), a blue square target appeared on the screen (~62/38% on the

cued/uncued hemifields). The target remained on the screen until the subject responded or the trial

ended (2000 ms timed out). Subjects were asked to report a target seen in a cued hemifield by

pressing a a button while withholding a response if the target was seen in a non-cued hemifield.

Targets appeared randomly during the cue-target interval. Three out of five subjects responded

with the hand ipsilateral to the grid. Each participant completed six blocks (each 42 trials). The

experimenter monitored eye movements and ensured central fixation throughout both experiments.

ECoG data acquisition. Electrophysiological and peripheral (photodiode) data were collected

using a Nihon Kohden recording system at UC Irvine, CPMC and Children's Hospital (128/256

channel, 1000/5000 Hz sampling rate), a Tucker Davis Technologies recording system at Stanford

(128 channel, 3052 Hz sampling rate), or a Natus Medical Stellate Harmonie recording system at

Johns Hopkins (128 channel, 1000 Hz sampling rate).

Electrode localization. In experiment 1, the electrodes were localized by transforming both the

pre-implant MRI and the post-implant computed tomography CT into Talairach space. For all

subjects, MNI coordinates were also calculated for each electrode location, which was used for

group-level visualizations (see Helfrich et al., 2018).In experiment 2, post-implant CT was aligned

to the pre-implant MRI and all were transformed into MNI space across subjects (see Szczepanski

et al., 2014). Strip or grid electrodes were implanted with 1 cm spacing. One participant (S5) had

an additional 8 contact depth probe inserted into the occipital cortex. Electrode positions were

primarily determined using the VTPM atlas (Wang et al., 2015). For electrodes without an assigned

label, the process was repeated using the AFNI atlas (Lancaster et al., 1997). The assigned

positions were manually verified and adjusted based on electrode reconstructions visualized in

native Talairach space. Electrodes near the Temporoparietal Junction (TPJ) were manually

localized, as TPJ definitions were not available in either the VTPM or AFNI atlases (see Helfrich

et al., 2018 for more details).

iEEG Data. Preprocessing: All intracranial EEG channels were manually examined by a

neurologist for epileptiform activity and artifacts. Affected channels and epochs were excluded.

The raw data was preprocessed using the EEGLAB and Fieldtrip toolbox in MATLAB.

Preprocessing included notch filtering at 60 Hz and all harmonics, as well as referencing the data

to the common mean of electrodes as previously described [4,29]. Then, the data was time locked to

individual trials. Trials were 8 seconds long, -3 to +5 seconds around cue onsets in the experiment

1 and -2 to +6 seconds around cue onsets in the experiment 2. As a control, we re-referenced the

datasets from common average referencing to local composite referencing (LCR), a spatial

Laplacian estimate relative to nearest neighbors. This re-referencing did not alter the main results.

Analysis of high frequency activity bursts (HFAbs)

HFAb detection and density analysis. We adopted an adaptive burst detection approach, similar

to previous work [7], to identify high-frequency oscillatory bursts (65-115 Hz) at each electrode.

The frequency band was selected based on spectral peaks observed across all individuals (87 Hz

trials ± 14; mean ± SD) and in the modeling. Similar analyses were conducted for a broader band

(65-175 Hz) and the low gamma band (35-65 Hz). While the broader band produced similar results,

the low gamma band yielded inconsistent responses and noisy clustering. We selected the

frequency band based on spectral peaks across individuals and in the modeling. First, we applied

a zero-phase Butterworth bandpass filter to the padded signal and then calculated the analytic

signal x(t) using the Hilbert transform. We extracted the instantaneous amplitude as the real part

of the analytic signal $z(t)$ following eq. 1:

$z(t) = x(t) + iy(t) = a(t)e^{i\theta(t)}$ eq. 1

where $y(t)$ is the Hilbert transform of $x(t)$:

$y(t) = \frac{1}{\pi} \int_{-\infty}^{+\infty} \frac{x(\tau)}{t-\tau} d\tau.$ eq. 2

The instantaneous energy [89] $IE(t)$ of the signal is calculated from its Hilbert transform:

$IE(t) = \int_0^{\omega_N} H^2(t, \omega)\, d\omega$ eq. 3

$\omega(t) = \frac{d\theta(t)}{dt}$ eq. 4

where $\omega(t)$ corresponds to instantaneous angular velocity. If the frequency band is narrow and if

the instantaneous frequency (eq. 4) is small enough, it can be approximated by squared $a(t)$, which

is the instantaneous amplitude. The marginal mean energy of the signal then can be estimated as

eq. 5:

$\overline{IE} = \frac{1}{T} \int_0^T a(t)^2\, dt$ eq. 5

where T represents the duration of the signal. For skewed energy distributions in empirical data,

we determined a threshold by setting it to 3.3 times the standard deviation of a half-normal

distribution based on the median energy, plus the mean energy.

To qualify as a burst, the energy level had to exceed this threshold for at least 1.5 cycles of the

upper bond frequency, and the instantaneous amplitude needed to surpass $\sqrt{2}$ times the RMS of

the peaks. Burst boundaries were marked by the closest points to a burst peak where either the

instantaneous energy fell below the signal's mean energy or the deviation in instantaneous

frequency exceeded the mean change plus two standard deviations. This was to exclude multi-

component or noisy events. Bursts were considered significant if their duration was at least 2.5

times the upper bond frequency cycle and exceeded the average span of adjacent local minima of

the energy function. Finally, when bursts were too close (less than five frequency cycles apart),

only the burst with the higher energy peak was kept.

To estimate how HFAb events are distributed over time, we calculate the HFAb density by

convolving a vector of burst events with a gaussian window of 500 ms and a standard deviation of

100ms. After estimating the HFAb density for each channel and trial, we investigated whether the

cue and target stimuli affected burst density. For each electrode, the average burst density aligned

to the cue and target onsets were calculated separately. Following that, we normalized timeseries

to the baseline (1000 ms before each event onset) by subtracting the mean and dividing it by the

standard deviation (see **Fig. 1c**). This is a similar approach to the peri-stimulus time histogram

(PSTH) for spike trains [90].

Visualization of individual and group average responses on 3D brains. To visualize how HFAb

responses were topographically organized in the 3D brains, we plotted both individual (**Extended**

Data Fig. 1e, 2c) and group responses to cue (**Fig. 1f**) and target onset (**Fig. 1g**). Each electrode

value was calculated as the mean of Z-scores within 500 ms of cue and target onset. For individual

subjects, the plotted value for each electrode was linearly attenuated with distance from the

electrode and for a sphere of 1 cm radius (illustrating correct versus incorrect trials separately, **Fig.**

1h, **Extended Data Fig. 1e,2c**). The group average plot (**Fig. 1f,g, Extended Data Fig. 2b**) was

calculated using electrode locations from both experiments to better cover the entire brain. The

MNI coordinates of electrodes were used for rendering on a template brain (subject S4 from

experiment 1 and subject S12 from experiment 2 were excluded due to suboptimal wrapping of

Tal to MNI spaces). We set the value of all mesh surfaces to zero for each subject. Then, similar

to the plotting for individual data, we calculated the value for mesh surfaces by using linear

attenuation (the sphere radius was set to 2.5 cm in order to achieve a smoother visualization of the

whole brain). As a last step, we averaged the surface values across all subjects to find consistent

patterns of activations for the cue and target. We plotted the data onto 3D brain for correct and

incorrect trials separately.

Statistical analysis of HFAb responses to cues and targets events. After calculating the burst

density and finding PSTH for each channel, we examined whether the HFAb responses evoked by

cues (within a window of 500 ms after cue onset) and targets (750 ms after target) were

significantly different from baseline. This analysis was done at the network level. The average

responses of electrodes within the defined time window were determined using the normalized

HFAb density for each channel. Wilcoxon signed-rank tests were then used to examine if there

was a non-zero response at the network level to cue and target onsets. Also, we performed a linear

regression analysis of the cue and target responses in electrodes under the null hypothesis that the

cue and target responses are independent (**Fig. 1e**).

To test whether cue and target responses were different when grouped by trial outcomes, we used

the Kruskial Wallis test under the null hypothesis that cue, and target responses do not differ by

outcome condition. For pairwise comparisons between different groups, we used Dunn's test [91]

with Tukey-Kramer multiple comparison correction (**Fig. 1d**).

We also tested whether and when burst density profiles in correct trials were different compared

with other outcome conditions. We used the mean of HFAb-density in correct trials as a test

statistic. We then randomly selected 1000 samples by permuting trial outcome labels and for each

randomly selected sample computed the 95% confidence intervals (CIs) around the mean. For

multiple comparison correction, we repeated the random permutation 1000 times and constructed

95% CIs on all 1000 CIs of randomly selected samples under the null hypothesis that the HFAb-

density for correct trials was not different from randomly labeled trials at any timepoint relative to

cue and target onsets separately (**Extended Data Fig. 2a**).

1020

Identifying cue-responsive electrodes. We identified Cue+/- electrodes by determining increased

HFAb rate or density profile within window of 500 ms after cue onsets. For each electrode, we

compared the average HFAb density following cue onset with that at baseline using Wilcoxon

rank-sum test. Electrodes with significant increases in HFAb rate after cue onset were labeled as

Cue+ electrodes, while the remaining electrodes were labeled as Cue- electrodes, which was

subsequently used in the classification (**Fig. 1k**).

1027

Generalized Linear Mixed Effect Models. We used generalized linear mixed effects (GLMEs)

models to examine the effects of each task variable on HFAb response to cue and target events.

Three main predictors were used for the independent variables: *Laterality* (if the cue was either

ipsilateral or contralateral to the electrode) with two levels (*Ipsi* and *Contra*), *Validity* (if the target

appeared at the cued location) with two levels (*valid* and *invalid*), and trial outcome with four

levels (*Correct hit, False alarm, Correct Rejection, Miss*). Since not all subjects had trials for all

four outcome conditions, an alternative analysis also considered outcome as a binary variable

(*Correct* and *Incorrect*) with a logit link function. The random effect was determined by

considering groups as subject and channel labels. The response variable was either the mean burst

density in response to the target or the cue. The GLME is then formalized as shown in eq. 6:

$$Response_{cue/target} = Laterality + Validity + Outcome + (1|Subject) + (1|Channel) +$$

$b + \varepsilon$ eq. 6

1040

Training classifiers for predicting trial outcome based on HFAb density around cue onset. A

time-resolved classification approach was used to determine how accurately HFAb responses

evoked by sensory cues could predict trial outcomes. First, we selected electrodes that showed a

significant HFAb responses to the cue presentation (*Cue+* electrodes, see above), for which we

then calculated the average HFAb density for *Cue+* electrodes for each trial and subject. Next, we

tested whether the average burst density in sliding windows around the cue onset could predict the

outcome at the trial level with a sliding window of 350 ms and a step of 25 ms. We used binary

Support Vector Machine (SVM) with one-to-one comparisons of HFAb density in sliding windows

with five folds of cross-validation. For training each SVM, a vector of the HFAb density in each

sliding window was used along with a vector of outcome labels (*"Correct"* = 1, *"Incorrect"* = 0).

The classifier used a Gaussian radial basis function kernel with a scaling factor of one. We assured

that the number of correct and incorrect trials used in the training was identical, to prevent sample

size biases. As the number of incorrect trials were lower than the number of correct trials, we

randomly sampled correct trials with a sampling size equal to the number of incorrect trials in each

fold. For each sliding window, we trained the classifier 1000 times and calculated the average

accuracy and confusion matrix across all iterations and folds. (**Fig. 1k).**

To determine whether HFAb density after cue onset could more accurately predict trial outcome

than chance and baseline, we used a binomial test on the accuracy of each window against the

maximum value of baseline and chance-level prediction accuracy. After obtaining a p-value for

each binomial test, we corrected the p-values using false discovery rate (FDR) for dependent

samples with a 0.05 alpha level [92] to correct for multiple comparisons error rate across all windows.

We performed this procedure separately for each experiment (**Fig. 1k, Extended Data Fig. 3h**).

In our main analysis, we pooled data across all subjects in each experiment due to the low number

of trials per subject. However, to ensure that the results were not solely dependent on one subject,

we ran a control analysis in which one subject was left out each time and the classifier was trained

and tested. Controlled analyses in both experiments demonstrated that our observation was not

based solely on one subject (**Extended Data Fig. 3i**). We used a similar approach for training the

classifier on cue and target-subnetworks to train the classifier on cue and target-subnetworks, as

further detailed in the 'Identifying synchronous subnetworks' section.

1070

<u>HFAb-triggered LFP analysis</u>

We asked whether HFAbs on average were systematically related to any evoked potentials at lower

frequencies. To address this question, we extracted a segment of 2 seconds around each burst (1

second before and after) and calculated the average HFAb-triggered potential for each electrode.

The HFAb-triggered LFP was then averaged across all electrodes in each subject (**Fig. 2a**). A

similar analysis was performed on the simulation results, but with a duration window of one second

around HFAbs due to shorter trial lengths in simulations (**Fig. 5f**).

1078

HFAb-triggered spectrum and Phase Locking Value (PLV) analysis. To understand the

spectral dynamics of HFAbs and local population activities, we performed HFAb-triggered

spectrum analyses using HFAb centers as discrete points. We estimated the PLV of points (burst

centers) to their local field activity dynamics (both in the modeling and electrophysiological data)

in order to investigate the phase synchronization of HFAbs within their local networks. We

calculated the HFAb-triggered spectrum using an adaptive window around HFAbs. We extracted

a window centered around each selected point (HFAb center), which covered 2.5 cycles of the

frequency of interest before and after the selected point. This window was then multiplied by a

Hanning window. We estimated the power spectrum for each window using the Fast Fourier

Transform (FFT) for frequencies ranging from 1 Hz to 100 Hz. To account for trial-wise power

variations, triggered spectrum estimates were normalized by dividing by total power. We averaged

spectrum estimates across all points and trials to calculate the final HFAb-triggered spectrum.

Following the analysis of the HFAb-triggered spectrum, a PLV calculation was performed to

quantify the level of phase consistency of the HFAbs across trials for the frequencies of interest.

The phase angle for each frequency was calculated based on the FFT results from the HFAb-

triggered spectrum analysis. The PLV of HFAbs at each frequency was then calculated as the mean

resultant in eq. 7:

$\text{PLV(f)} = \left| \frac{1}{N} \sum_{n=1}^{N} e^{i\phi_{f,n}} \right|$ eq. 7

where N is the total number of HFAbs and $\phi_{f,n}$ denotes the phase angle for the nth HFAb at

frequency f. The statistical significance of the observed PLV values was determined using a non-

parametric permutation test with 1000 permutations and the Rayleigh test corrected for multiple

comparisons, at 0.05. Peaks that passed both tests and had a prominence of 25% higher than the

PLV range were considered significant (shown in black dots in **Fig. 2c**).

1102

Time-resolved PLV analysis. To quantify the temporal dynamics of the phase synchronization of

HFAbs with the low frequency LFP during cue and target processing, we extracted the phase of

HFAbs at each frequency as explained above. Then, we used a sliding window of 500 ms with a

step of 25 ms between -1500 and 1500 ms around the cue and target onsets separately. PLV was

calculated for each sliding window and across all trials (different types of trials were analyzed

separately, e.g., correct trials and incorrect trials). We set a minimum number of data points of 50

bursts for the analysis (to achieve reliable statistics on circular data, Fisher, 1995). We measured

the PLV for 1000 samples of 25 HFAbs drawn randomly from a population of HFAbs in each time

bin to control for the number of bursts. The PLV for each time bin was calculated as the average

PLV across all randomly drawn samples. The average PLV value for each subject and for all

subjects in each experiment was calculated separately.

To test whether HFAb phase synchronization differed during cue and target processing, we used a

channel-specific randomization test. For each recording channel and time bin, 1000 subsamples of

HFAbs were randomly selected from the baseline period (within 1 second before each event). For

each channel, each time bin, and each frequency, we calculated the upper and lower bond CIs

(2.5% most extreme PLVs). For multiple comparison correction, we repeated this procedure 1000

time and found the most extreme 2.5% value across all CIs for time bins under the null hypothesis

that the PLV for each time bin and frequency is not significantly different from the baseline value.

Each time-frequency bin was considered significant if it differed from the critical values

(**Extended Data Fig. 4d**). Each electrode and frequency band (theta/alpha (4-14 Hz) and beta (15-

25 Hz)) for a time bin was considered significant if it showed a significantly different PLV from

the baseline in more than 25% of the frequency points in that frequency band. Next, we computed

the mean number of electrodes with significantly different PLVs than the randomized PLV

distribution for each subject. Using the binomial test, we determined whether the proportion of

electrodes with significantly lower PLV after the cue and target onset was different from the

baseline level as well as the chance level (5%, **Fig. 2e**). To adjust for multiple comparisons, we

used FDR for dependent samples and an alpha level of 0.05.

We also performed a control analysis to ensure that event-evoked iEEG signals are not

confounding the variation in synchronization. First, we extracted -1.5 to 1.5 seconds around cue-

and target-aligned iEEG signals for each electrode and trial. We averaged the data across all trials

and removed the average event-triggered iEEG signal from individual trials. The same

synchronization and statistical analyses were then performed on the trial with event-evoked iEEG

subtracted. Subtraction of event-evoked iEEG did not change the main results pattern (**Extended**

Data Fig. 4e).

1137

Analysis of Coupling ratio. A Coupling Ratio (CR) index was defined to compare PLV after cue

and target events as compared to baseline. We used this CR index also to visualize coupling

variation in both 3D brain renderings (**Fig. 2f**), and the average network level coupling analysis

(**Fig. 2h,i**). We calculated the coupling ratio by:

$CR = \frac{PLV_{event} - PLV_{baseline}}{PLV_{baseline}}$ eq. 8

Where the $PLV_{baseline}$ is the average PLV for each electrode within 1 second before the event, and

PLV_{event} is the average PLV for each electrode within 0.5 seconds after the event. In this context,

network decoupling is defined as a negative CR value indicating a reduction in PLV relative to the

baseline. We show the CR value at both cue and target events for each subject.

We also used GLME models to investigate the effect of cue and target response on the coupling

ratio following cue and target onsets (**Fig. 2h,i**). The GLME is formalized as shown in eq. 9:

$Coupling\ Ratio_{cue/target} = Response_{cue} + Response_{target} + (1|Subject) + b + \varepsilon$ eq. 9

1150

<u>**Quantification and Spectral analysis of HFAb-triggered HFA**</u>

We calculated the interaction between HFAbs and HFA between each pair of electrodes. To

estimate HFA, first we used a zero-phase Butterworth filter with cut-off frequencies of 65 Hz and

175 Hz to bandpass filter the signal. We chose the HFA frequency band broader to capture larger

spectral content (similar results were obtained by choosing 65-115 Hz band). Next, we performed

a Hilbert transform and used the real part of the analytical signal as HFA amplitude (eq. 1). We

extracted a duration of one second around each HFAb from the HFA signal. We then calculated

the HFAb-triggered HFA for each individual burst event as well as the average value for all bursts

between each pair of electrodes. Our main analyses were restricted to HFAb-triggered HFA that

occurred outside of the main behavioral epochs; either before cues or after target detection (for

those without a response 1 second following target presentation). To control for any burst-

independent correlations of iEEG signals across electrodes, we first calculated the HFAb-triggered

HFA using randomly assigned burst times. Each burst was jittered with a random time lag of ± 1000

ms. We then subtracted this jittered HFAb-triggered HFA from the original for further analysis.

We calculated the spectral power of HFAb-triggered HFA across all electrode pairs to assess how

HFA is organized relative to HFAbs recorded on other channels. The power spectral density was

computed over the ± 500 ms time window using a hanning taper. Additionally, we analyzed peak

prominence for all pairs and plotted the distribution of spectral peaks. For each pair of electrodes,

we extracted the prominent spectral peaks and plotted their distribution.

1170

Dimensionality reduction of high-frequency coordination patterns. To identify prominent

patterns of high-frequency activity coordination within the brain network, we analyzed a high-

dimensional space of HFAb-triggered HFA across all electrode pairs for each subject, with each

electrode pair representing a single dimension. Using the HFAb-triggered HFA population, we

calculated the covariance matrix C by:

$C = \frac{1}{n-1}\sum_{i=1}^{n}(X_i - \bar{X})(X_i - \bar{X})^T$ eq. 10

where X_i shows each HFAb-triggered HFA time series, n is the total number of electrode pairs, $\bar{X}$

is the marginal mean, and X^T is the transpose matrix of X. We found the eigenvectors of C as in

eq. 11:

$C = VDV^T$ eq. 11

where V columns are the eigenvectors and principal components (PCs), and D contains

eigenvalues indicating how much variance each component explains. In all participants, PC1

showed a near-symmetric activity state and explained more than 10% of variance in HFAb-

triggered HFA dynamics over the population of electrode pairs (we used multistep Wilcoxon rank-

sum test to examine if there was asymmetry of HFA within mirrored time windows around the

HFAbs). By projecting the original data to the PC vector space, we calculated the HFAb-triggered

HFA scores as:

$Score = XC$ eq. 12

We then used the scores of electrode pairs on the first component as their loading values on the

synchronous component of the population.

1191

Identifying synchronous subnetworks. Based on the scores of each electrode pair on the

synchronous principal component, we generated a network synchrony matrix that describes

synchronous inter-electrode interactions. For each electrode, we then defined a vector of variables

with a dimension equal to the total number of electrodes. Each element of this vector describes the

score of an electrode pair on the synchronous component. This vector was defined for all

electrodes, which generated a matrix in which each row represented one observation (electrode)

and each column represented the score of the observed electrode on another electrode.

$S_i = Score(X_{i, 1:n})$ eq. 13

Using this matrix, we clustered the electrodes using resampling-based consensus K-Means

algorithm with a correlational defined distance as in eq. 14:

$d_{i,j} = 1 - r(S_i, S_j)$ eq. 14

where $d_{i,j}$ is the correlation distance between two electrodes i and j. The correlational distance

between two electrodes is low when the coordination between them is synchronous, and when they

show similar coordination patterns to the rest of the network. First, we used several clustering

indices, including Hubert, Silhouette, Davies-Bouldin, Calinski-Harabasz, Hartigan,

Homogeneity, and Gap, to find an optimal range of cluster numbers (between 2 and 8 for all

subjects) [94–97].

For each cluster number, we ran the K-means algorithm 1000 times. The sample size was

subsampled and only 25 percent of electrodes were randomly selected for each clustering (we

ensured that each cluster had at least an average of 5 data points). After running the clustering

1000 times, a probability matrix for electrode pairs was defined as the ratio of numbers that

electrode pairs clustered together, divided by the number of electrode pairs in the same random

sampling for K-Means clustering. This ratio was calculated for all electrode pairs and used to

create a matrix of pair-wise grouping probabilities. We then ran a second K-means clustering

algorithm on this matrix to identify clusters that were similar in their network-level pair-wise

grouping likelihood. Using a similar approach and random sampling of electrodes, we generated

another pair-wise grouping probability matrix indicating how often electrodes were clustered

together based on their pair-wise grouping likelihood (**Extended Data Fig. 5e**). Using this

hierarchically defined pair-wise clustering likelihood, we ran a final K-means clustering on all

electrodes, labeling them according to the probability of being stably grouped together for each

cluster number. For each K (cluster number), we calculated clustering accuracy, confusion

(probability of non-diagonal clusters), a confusion rank, and a ratio from dividing median accuracy

(diagonals) by median confusion. We normalized each of the measures between 0 and 1 (1 showing

the best, and 0 showing the worst performance between all clusters). We used these four measures

and in a non-parametric vote, we chose the cluster number that outperformed others in this voting

pool. This non-parametric measure shows how well each K performs to detect more stable clusters

with high accuracy and low confusion level and estimate the optimal number of clusters. While

there is no definitive answer on what number of clusters is the best, we selected the optimal number

of clusters using this method to conduct further analysis. In summary, this clustering technique

reduces clustering biases caused by outlier electrode pairs in all clustering realizations as well as

stabilizes clusters.

To determine whether identified clusters were functionally specialized, we compared their

responses evoked by cues and targets to their baseline activity levels. We calculated the averaged

baseline normalized burst density within windows of 500 ms after cue onset and 750 ms after target

onset. The Wilcoxon test was used to determine if this response was non-zero across the electrodes

in each subnetwork. We corrected for multiple comparisons by using FDR for dependent samples

with an alpha level of 0.05. Clusters that were significantly activated by cue events are referred to

as "cue-subnetworks" and clusters that were significantly activated by target events are referred to

as "target-subnetworks". The cue and target-subnetworks were found in each data set for the

optimal number of clusters. For datasets, for which the optimal number of clusters did not contain

distinct cue and target-subnetworks, if existed, we chose the next K (cluster number) with highest

ranking in the clustering measures that contained both subnetworks.

1244

<u>Time-lag analysis between cue and target-subnetworks</u>

We calculated the HFAb-triggered-HFA for pairs of electrodes during the period between the

target onset and the manual response to understand how the HFAbs were temporally ordered after

the target onset in both the cue and target-subnetworks. Next, we compared HFAb-triggered HFA

between electrodes in cue- and target-subnetworks to determine whether there was any asymmetry

in the distribution of HFAbs between the two subnetworks. A total of six subjects (3 in experiment

1 and 3 in experiment 2) showed both stable cue and target-subnetworks. We then calculated once

the HFAb-triggered HFA when HFA in the target-subnetwork was measured around the HFAbs

in cue-subnetworks, and when the HFA in the cue-subnetwork was measured around the HFAbs

in target-subnetworks. A lead state was indicated by HFAbs followed by stronger HFA power; a

lag state was when HFAbs followed stronger HFA power. First, we measured the maximum

asymmetry around the burst onset across all subjects (by calculating the absolute difference

between windows of varying lengths, 25 ms to 250 ms every 25 ms). We then calculated the

averaged HFAb-triggered-HFA within 150 ms of burst onsets where asymmetry was at its

maximum. Next, we asked if the value differed based on the directionality of the two subnetworks.

For both directions, we used the Wilcoxon test to determine whether the asymmetry around burst

onset is non-zero. Additionally, we tested whether HFAb-triggered HFA differs between the two

directions after and before bursts.

For each subject, we visualized the lead/lag interactions between stable cue and target-

subnetworks. To achieve a better visualization of lead/lag interactions, we measured the HFA peak

time for each electrode in cue/target-subnetworks relative to HFAb onset across all cluster

numbers. Each electrode that was a member of the target-subnetwork or the cue-subnetwork was

analyzed to determine its median peak-time-lag relative to the other cluster members. A median

peak-time-lag of all electrodes satisfying this condition was then plotted, with red representing a

lead, and blue representing a lag (**Fig. 4d, Extended Data Fig. 11c**).

1270

Delayed Mutual Information Analysis. We used mutual information (MI) which is a non-linear

metric used in information theory to estimate the shared information between different time

segments in two electrodes to find where their mutual predictability is maximized. For each

electrode, we extracted data (HFAb density) from -1500 ms to 1500 ms around the target onset

(and for the control analysis, around the cue onset). We normalized the data and calculated MI for

segments of 750 ms sliding every 50 ms. The MI between electrodes X and Y is given by eq. 15:

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1278 $\text{MI}(X,Y) = \sum_{x \in X_w} \sum_{y \in Y_w} p(x,y) \log\left(\frac{p(x,y)}{p(x)p(y)}\right)$ eq. 15

1279

where p(x,y) is the joint probability distribution function of each windowed segment of electrodes

X and Y, and p(x) and p(y) are their marginal probability distributions. We estimated the

probability distribution for each variable and for the joint distributions using a histogram-based

approach and binning the data (the number of bins was selected based on the Freedman-Diaconis

rule [98] to balance the trade-off between estimation resolution and statistical reliability.

To further quantify how information is directionally coupled between cue and target-subnetworks,

we calculated delayed mutual information (DMI). The DMI was calculated by comparing the

temporal dynamics and dependencies between these two subnetworks.

The DMI between X and Y was calculated similar to MI, except that one of the timeseries was

delayed incrementally to determine whether the past of one electrode is a better predictor of the

future of the other electrode. The delay time-lag ranged from -500ms to 500ms with a step of 25ms,

as in eq. 16.

$DMI(X,Y) = \sum_{x \in X_w} \sum_{y \in Y_w^\tau} p(x, y) \log \left(\frac{p(x,y)}{p(x)p(y)} \right)$ eq. 16

where X_w is segmented windows of electrode X, and Y_w^τ is segmented windows of electrode Y

shifted by a time lag of τ.

The DMI analysis of each electrode pair can inform us about (i) when the electrodes showed

maximum inter-predictability relative to an event onset (e.g., target), and (ii) at what time-lag the

inter-predictability was maximized. To address this question, we extracted the DMI peaks in a 2D

space, which gave us both the time-lag and the timepoint relative to the event onset where two

electrodes showed maximum DMI values. We then asked if the time-lag of this peak is different

between electrodes in the cue-subnetworks and electrodes in the target-subnetworks. For example,

when we shifted the timeseries of electrodes in target-subnetworks, for each electrode in the cue-

subnetwork, we measured its mean DMI relative to electrodes in target-subnetworks. We

determined at what time lag and at what time relative to target onset DMI was maximized. We

used the Wilcoxon test to see if the maximum DMI time-lag (τ_{max}) occurred between electrodes

in cue and target-subnetworks was non-zero. The lead and lag patterns in inter-predictability

between cue and target-subnetworks were then determined by the sign of the average over τ_{max} for

all electrodes in the shifting subnetworks.

1308

<u>Modeling iEEG by spiking neural networks</u>

We investigated high frequency activity in general and high frequency burst events in particular

using a limited network of two recording sites placed on two interconnected networks of spiking

neurons. For modeling the spiking networks, we used a framework described in [7]. Neuronal point-

source models can accurately simulate electrical fields in cortical neural networks [99]. Two cubic

neuronal structures were simulated in three dimensions. Synaptic dynamics and connectivity

patterns were implemented as explained in [7]. Each cubic network consisted of 1000 neurons (10 x

10 x 10, xyz). We modeled neurons as spherically symmetric points in a 3D grid (with r units on

each axis). A recording disk was implemented on top of each network at a distance three times

greater than the network depth (**Fig. 5a**). Pairwise connectivity was calculated based on anatomical

studies (discussed below) and a distant-dependent Gaussian rule [100,101]. The distant dependent

connectivity factor is:

$$P(d) = P_0 \, e^{\frac{-(\frac{d}{r})^2}{\sigma^2}} \qquad\qquad eq.\,17$$

where r is the grid unit, d is the distance between two neurons, σ is the standard deviation of

distances between neurons (Barral and Reyes, 2016), and P_0 is a structural scaling factor reflecting

the maximum connection probability across the network (see **Supplementary Table 3**).

Four interneuron types were used: Parvalbumin (PV), Calbindin (CB), Calretinin (CR), and

Cholecystokinin (CCK) expressing interneurons. Excitatory neurons were divided into regular

spiking neurons (70%), intrinsic low-threshold spiking bursting neurons (10%), and fast adapting

regular spiking neurons (20%).

Neuron models. We used Izhikevich neuron model [46] for simulating regular spiking, burst spiking,

fast spiking and low-threshold spiking neurons. Each neuron is modeled by a series of differential

equations as in eq 18.

$$\frac{dv}{dt} = 0.04v^2 + 5v + 140 - u + I \qquad\qquad eq.\,18$$

$$\frac{du}{dt} = a(bv - u)$$

where variables v and u denote neural membrane potential and membrane recovery, respectively.

Parameters a and b define the recovery rate and sub-threshold fluctuations sensitivity,

respectively. For after-spike resenting the model uses two auxiliary equations as in eq. 19,

if $v > 30\ mV$, then $\begin{cases} v = c \\ u = u + d \end{cases} \qquad\qquad eq.\,19$

the parameter c resets the value of membrane potential v after a spike, and the parameter d adjusts

the after-spike recovery variable u. Parameters for different neuron types were chosen as suggested

in [102] to approximately generate firing patterns of each neuron type (See **Supplementary Table 4**

for each neuron type parameter).

1342

Neural connectivity. Besides distance-based connectivity factors, neuron types had different

connection probabilities. We adapted the scaling factor for connectivity between excitatory

neurons and inhibitory interneurons from [101]. Additionally, rodent anatomical studies were

considered in determining the connectivity among different types of neurons. Generally, PV

interneurons inhibit themselves and VIP interneurons (likely similar to CR), whereas SOM

interneurons (likely similar to CB) do not inhibit each other, and VIP interneurons disinhibit SOM

interneurons preferentially [103,104]. The connectivity between networks was defined by a probability

and a rate of connection. This connectivity was attributed primarily to excitatory neurons (90%).

1351

1352 **Simulation of post-synaptic potentials**. For each neuron the postsynaptic potentials were

1353 modeled by a biexponential function as in eq. 20,

1354
$$g(t) = e^{-\frac{t}{\tau_r}} - e^{-\frac{t}{\tau_d}} \qquad\qquad eq.\,20$$

1355 where τ_r and τ_d denote the rise and decay time constant of postsynaptic current, respectively. The

1356 biexponential function was implemented through a second-order ordinary differential equation as

1357 in eq. 21.

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$$\frac{d^2 g(t)}{dt^2} = -\frac{(\tau_d + \tau_r)}{\tau_d \tau_r}\frac{dg(t)}{dt} - \frac{g(t)}{\tau_d \tau_r} \qquad\qquad eq.\,21$$

1360

1361 Where t is time relative to spike, and g(t) is the synaptic conductivity. The rise time was set

1362 similarly to ~1ms for all neurons while the decay time for pyramidal neurons were and

1363 interneurons varied from ~6ms to 24ms [105–108] as shown in **Supplementary Table 4**.

1364

Network external inputs. Each network was fed external currents to generate firing rates similar

to cortical neurons. Each neuron received a cosine input. The objective was to first control

externally induced rhythmicity in network activation by frequency, as well as phase coherence

between the input function and neurons. On average, each network received external input

sufficient to generate a 5 Hz firing rate [109]. The external input to pyramidal neurons was three times

greater than the external input to inhibitory neurons. In addition, a Brownian noise $(\frac{1}{f^2})$ was added

to the input as per previous experimental observations [110].

For nonrhythmic input, we considered slow and ultraslow oscillatory (<1 Hz) input to each neuron

with an initial phase lag. Then a coherence index was used to determine the distribution of phase

lags among neurons. Thus, the phase range was defined:

φ = 2π (1 - coherence)   *eq. 22*

For the rhythmic input, we incrementally increased the cosine input frequency up to 12 Hz for

each simulation run. For networks with shared input, we ran 100 simulations in which networks

were not connected but received correlated inputs (5-25 percent of neurons received the same

input). For networks with feedforward connection, we simulated feedforward networks in which

the connections between the two networks are unidirectional. The connectivity strength was

changed from 0.001 to 0.1 by one order of magnitude. For each value, we ran 100 simulations. For

Networks with reciprocal connections, we fed the networks with uncorrelated inputs, but both

networks were reciprocally connected. The connectivity strength was changed by one order of

magnitude from 0.001 to 0.1 and the simulation was run 100 times for each value.

To investigate the effect of an external stimuli on directional networks, we simulate a feedforward

network as explained before with an internetwork connectivity ratio of 9 to 1 (network 1 and 2

respectively, **Extended Data Fig. 12e**). We then fed network 1 with an external input pulse of 500

ms duration and 250 ms duty cycles (**Extended Data Fig. 12f**). The input was fed to 50 percent

of neurons in the network 1. We then calculated the time resolved PLV in both networks as

explained before (**Fig. 5i**, **Extended Data Fig. 12g**).

1391

Integration of postsynaptic currents and neural activities at the recording sites. For each

simulation, we estimated the field potential at two recording sites (black disks **Fig. 5a**). By

assuming neurons as point-source field, we measured field dynamics at each recording site by

summing the attenuated membrane potentials and the postsynaptic currents from all neurons. We

estimated the voltages at the recording disk by considering membrane and post-synaptic potentials

as electrical dipoles (with negligible distance between poles relative to the recording disk). The

electric filed is then represented by $E(r, t)$, where r and t denote the distance from the source and

the time, respectively. The extracellular potential is then calculated by:

$$E = -\nabla V \qquad eq.\,23$$

Using Ohm's law, the electric field at distance r from each dipole with a current density of I_n (t)

is equal to:

$$E(r, t) = \frac{I_n(t)}{4\pi r^3 \sigma} \qquad eq.\,24$$

with $I_n(t)$ represented as:

$$I_n(t) = I_m(t) + I_{syn}(t) \qquad eq.\,25$$

where σ denotes the medium conductivity (which we assumed is independent of distance from

sources). $I_m(t)$ and $I_{syn}(t)$ are the transmembrane current and the synaptic current of each neuron

respectively. By integrating the electric field, we calculated the potential at the disk by:

$$V(r, t) = -\int_\infty^r E(r', t)dr' = -\int_\infty^r \frac{I_n(t)}{4\pi r'^2 \sigma}\,dr'$$

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$$V(r, t) = \frac{I_n(t)}{4\pi r^2 \sigma} \qquad eq.\,26$$

The voltage recorded at each site is calculated as in eq 27:

$$V(t) = \frac{1}{4\pi r^2}\sum_{i=1}^{N}\frac{I_n(t)}{r_i} \qquad eq.\,27$$

where r_i is the distance between the recording disk and the ith point-source, and N is equal to the

total number of neurons in each network.

We used a non-ohmic filter to attenuate higher frequencies by getting insights from [111]. We

implemented an exponential attenuation in the frequency domain. First for each signal we

computed the FFT. We then applied an exponential attenuation factor to the magnitude of the

frequency components (**Extended Data Fig. 12b**). This factor exponentially decreases the

amplitude for higher frequencies as in eq. 28:

$$A(f) = e^{-\alpha f} \qquad eq.\,28$$

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Where $A(f)$ is the attenuation factor for frequency f, *and* α is a parameter that controls the rate of

exponential decay which we set to 0.01. After multiplying the attenuation factor, we performed

the inverse FFT (iFFT) to transform the signal back to the time domain.

For each condition, we ran simulations 100 times, each simulating iEEG signals and neural activity

for three seconds. We detected HFAbs at each recording site and calculated the amplitude of the

analytical signal as explained in (eq. 1). Next, we examined whether there was a correlation

between the density of bursts and the aggregated spike density in each network. The spike density

was calculated and smoothed using a Gaussian window of 25 ms. We measured the correlation

coefficient between aggregated spike density and burst density for each simulation. On average,

burst events were significantly correlated with spike densities in each network.

In a control condition, we randomly assigned burst times and examined the correlation between

burst density and spike density. This randomization was performed 1000 times and we found the

95% confidence interval under the null hypothesis that burst density is not related to spike density.

All other analyses of the modeling results were conducted in a similar manner to those of the

experimental data.

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Extended Data Fig. 1. HFAb activation patterns in experiment 2. (**a**) Task structure of
experiment 2. Subjects hold their gaze fixation to the center of a screen (a white plus sign) with
red circles turning on and off. A spatial cue endogenously cues subject's attention to a hemifield.
A target appears at one hemifield and subjects should report whether the target was seen in the
cued hemifield. The brain shows the localization of electrodes across all subjects. (**b**) Similar to
Fig. 1b for experiment 2. (**c**) Similar to **Fig. 1d**, for experiment 2. (**d**) Activation profiles of HFAbs
grouped by trial outcome, for experiment 2. (**e**) Similar to **Fig. 1h**, for individual subjects in
experiment 2. Participants not having enough incorrect trials for this analysis are not visualized.

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1452 **Extended Data Fig. 2. HFAb responses to cue and target events in experiment 1.** (**a**)
1453 Activation profiles of HFAbs grouped by trial outcome. (**b**) similar to **Fig. 1e, f** for incorrect trials.
1454 (**c**) similar to **Fig. 1h**, for individual subjects.
1455

Extended Data Fig. 3. HFAb responses to different experimental conditions in experiment 1
and 2. (**a**) Similar to **Fig. 1I**, showing responses to valid and invalid cues. (**b**) Similar to **Fig. 1j**,
showing target responses in trials with cues contra- and ipsi-lateral to the electrode. (**c,d**) Similar
plots as in **Fig. 1i,j** for experiment 2 (each line is an individual, error bars are standard errors of
the mean, thick lines show average over all subjects). (**e**) Temporal profile of average HFAb
density across all subjects and electrodes relative to cue and target onset, for trials with cues contra-
and ipsi-lateral to the electrode (left), and for trials with valid or invalid sensory cues (right). (**f**)
Similar to E for experiment 2. (**g**) Confusion matrix showing the classifier accuracy (**Fig. 1k**)
within 500 ms of cue onset (white asterisks denote significantly higher prediction accuracy than
baseline and chance level, binomial test, $P < 0.05$). (**h**) Similar results as in **Fig. 1k** for experiment
2. (**i**) Similar classifier analysis results to **Fig. 1k** when one subject is omitted (each line indicates
the result of omitting one subject). Red lines indicate prediction accuracy higher than baseline
(dashed lines) and chance levels (binomial test, $P < 0.05$, FDR corrected for dependent samples).
Shaded error bars indicate the standard error of the mean across all realizations and cross
validations.

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Extended Data Fig. 4. HFAb coordination with low frequency activity in experiment 1 and
2. (a) Group level average spatial pattern of observed frequency peak of HFAb phase locking to
LFP. (**b**) Individual examples showing the spatial pattern of the observed frequency peaks of the
HFAb phase locking to LFP. (**c**) An individual electrode example of the phase-frequency
distribution of HFAbs locked to both theta/alpha and beta frequency bands. (**d**) Corresponding to
Fig. 2e, showing the proportion of time-frequency points where phase locking was significantly
lower than baseline (P < 0.05, random permutation test). (**e**) Similar to **Fig. 2e**, but after removing
event-related potential from the LFP (see **Methods**). (**f**) Examples of the coupling ratio between
HFAb and low frequency (4-25 Hz) LFP following cue and target onsets in correct and incorrect
trials. (**g**) Similar to **Fig. 2e** for experiment 2. (**h,i**) Regression plots showing correlation of
coupling ratios following cue onset with target responses (green, **h**), and coupling ratios following
target onset with cue responses (purple, **i**). Scatter points denote electrodes, lines indicate
individual subjects with orange line showing the regression across all subjects.

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Extended Data Fig. 5. A network clustering approach based on the coordination of HFAbs
between electrodes. (a) The average HFAb-triggered HFA for individuals in experiment 2. **(b)**
The normalized PSD for HFAb-triggered HFA in experiment 2**. (c)** HFAb-triggered HFA for
electrodes distanced in 4 different quantiles (25,50, 75, 100 mm), ranging from green (short) to
red (long) in experiment 2, similar to **Fig. 3c**. **(d)** The first and second principal components of
HFAb-triggered HFA for individual subjects in experiment 2. **(e)** A schematic demonstration of
network clustering algorithm. We used HFAbs outside of cue/delay and target/response periods.
The network synchrony matrix shows the loading values for each electrode pair on the
synchronized component. A K-means clustering was performed on randomly selected electrode
samples for different cluster numbers (K = 2 to 8). We calculated a pair-wise grouping probability
matrix in which each element indicates how likely it is that two electrodes will be grouped together.
The next step was clustering with network subsampling, similar to the previous step but based on
the pairwise grouping likelihood matrix. The final clustering of the pair-wise grouping likelihood
results indicated stable clusters for each K (see **Methods**).

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Extended Data Fig. 6. Clustering results for individual subjects in experiment 1. (a) For each
subject, the square matrix shows color-coded loading values on the synchronized PC (left) and the
pairwise grouping probability (right). **(b)** The confusion matrix for the optimal number of clusters.
The diagonals show the average percentage of cluster members grouped together across all
clustering over subsamples. The non-diagonals indicate the percentage of members in one cluster
who were confused with members in another cluster across all clustering over subsamples. **(c)**
Optimal number of clusters is selected using four metrics and a nonparametric voting rank metric
(black). The accuracy is determined by the median diagonals, the confusion by the median
nondiagonal, selectivity by the relative rank of the diagonal over the highest nondiagonal rank,
and stability by the relative rank of the diagonal over the nondiagonal rank. **(d)**. Similar to **Fig. 3g**
for different subjects. Shaded error bars indicate the standard error of the means, thicker lines
indicate significant functional subnetworks.

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Extended Data Fig. 7. Clustering results for individual subjects in experiment 2. (a-d) Similar to **Extended Data Fig. 6. a-d** for experiment 2.

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Extended Data Fig. 8. Organization of clusters based on cluster numbers. Columns from left to right show the results for cluster numbers K = 2 - 8. The cluster IDs are sorted by cluster stability.

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1526 **Extended Data Fig. 9. Results for different cluster numbers for an individual subject. (a)**
1527 Similar to **Extended Data Fig. 6a** for different Ks. (**b**) Confusion matrices for different Ks. (**c**)
1528 Cluster topography for different Ks. (**d**) Similar to **Extended Data Fig. 6d** for different Ks.

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Extended Data Fig. 10. Classifier trained on cue-subnetworks predicts outcome. (a) As in
Fig. 3h, each line represents classifier results when one subject is omitted. (**b, c**) Classifier
accuracy in predicting correct trials (green), errors (brown), and the average accuracy (gray) for
(**b**) experiment 1 and (**c**) experiment 2. The shaded error bars show the standard error of the mean.
Thick lines indicate timepoints where the accuracy of the prediction is significantly higher than
the baseline (dashed lines) and chance level (P < 0.05, binomial test, FDR corrected for dependent
samples).
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Extended Data Fig. 11. Temporal precession between cue and target-subnetworks. (a) HFAb-
triggered HFA examples for individual subjects similar to **Fig. 4a**. (**b**) Group-level average of
HFAb-triggered HFA, similar to **Fig. 4b**, but for HFAbs during the cue/delay period. (**c**)
Visualization of lead-lag patterns across members of the cue and target-subnetworks during target
processing for all clusters (similar to **Fig. 4d**). (**d**) DMI results for individual subjects similar to
Fig. 4e. (**e**) similar to **Fig. 4g**, around the cue onset.
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Supplementary Tables

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Subject ID	Cue +	Target +
S1	IFG, TPJ, V3b, hV4	ISP0, MFG, MTG, TPJ
S2	Cingulate Gyrus, ISP2, IFG, IPL, LO2, MFG, Postcentral Gyrus, SFG,	Cingulate Gyrus, ISP1, ISP3, IPL, MFG, Paracentral Lobule, Postcentral Gyrus, Precentral Gyrus, SFG, STG
S3	IPL	IFG, IPL, ITG, MTG, Orbital Gyrus, Precentral Gyrus, SFG, STG, TPJ
S4	IPL, MFG, hMT, Postcentral Gyrus, LO2	Angular Gyrus, FEF, FFG, IFG, IPL, MFG, Postcentral Gyrus, Precentral Gyrus, SFG, STG, TPJ,
S5	FFG, ISP2, ISP3, LO2, MOG, MTG, Postcentral Gyrus, hMT	FEF, FFG, IPL, MTG, Postcentral Gyrus, Precentral Gyrus, SFG, TPJ
S6	FEF, IPL, Postcentral Gyrus, SFG, TPJ	FEF, IPL, MFG, Paracentral Lobule, Postcentral Gyrus, Precentral Gyrus, Precuneus, SFG, STG, TPJ
S7	ISP2, ISP3, IPL, Postcentral Gyrus, SFG, SPL, TPJ	FEF, ISP2, ISP3, ISP5, IPL, Paracentral Lobule, Postcentral Gyrus, Precentral Gyrus, Precuneus, SFG, SPL, TPJ
S8	LO1	FEF, ISP1, ISP2, MFG
S9	ISP2, ISP3, MFG, STG	ISP1, ISP2, ISP3, MFG, MTG, Precentral Gyrus, SFG, STG
S10	ISP2, ISP3, MFG, Postcentral Gyrus, FEF	FEF, ISP2, ISP3, IFG, IPL, MFG, MTG, Postcentral Gyrus, Precentral Gyrus, SFG, STG
S11	ISP2, MFG, hV4	ISP1, ISP2, ISP3, IFG, MFG, MTG, Postcentral Gyrus, STG
S12	ISP2, ISP3, Postcentral Gyrus	FEF, ISP1, ISP2, ISP3, IPL, MFG, MTG, Postcentral Gyrus, Precentral Gyrus, SFG

Supplementary Table 1. List of brain areas containing electrodes that showed significant HFAb response to cue (cue
+) and target (target +, see **Methods**). The abbreviations are: Inferior Frontal Gyrus (IFG), Temporoparietal Junction
(TPJ), Visual area 3b (V3b), human Visual area 4 (hV4), Intraparietal Sulcus (IPS1, IPS2, IPS3, IPS5), Middle Frontal
Gyrus (MFG), Middle Temporal Gyrus (MTG), Inferior Parietal Lobule (IPL), Lateral Occipital area 2 (LO2),
Superior Frontal Gyrus (SFG), Superior Temporal Gyrus (STG), Inferior Temporal Gyrus (ITG), Frontal Eye Field
(FEF), Fusiform Gyrus (FFG), Inferior Occipital Gyrus (IOG), Parahippocampal Gyrus (PHG), Middle Occipital
Gyrus (MOG), human Middle Temporal/V5 (hMT), Superior Parietal Lobule (SPL), and Lateral Occipital area 1
(LO1).
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Subject ID	Cue Subnetworks	Target Subnetworks
S2	Cingulate Gyrus, ISP2, ISP3, IFG, IPL, MTG, Paracentral Lobule, Postcentral Gyrus, Precentral Gyrus, STG	Cingulate Gyrus, ISP1, ISP2, ISP3, IFG, IPL, MFG, MTG, Paracentral Lobule, Postcentral Gyrus, Precentral Gyrus, SFG, STG
S3		IFG, IPL, ITG, MFG, MTG, Postcentral Gyrus, Precentral Gyrus, STG, TPJ
S4		Angular Gyrus, Anterior Cingulate, Cingulate Gyrus, FEF, FFG, IFG, IOG, IPL, ITG, MFG, MTG, PHG, Postcentral Gyrus, Precentral Gyrus, SFG, STG, TPJ
S5	FFG, LO2, MOG, Postcentral Gyrus, hMT	FEF, IPL, Postcentral Gyrus, Precentral Gyrus, SFG
S6		FEF, ISP2, ISP3, IPL, MFG, Paracentral Lobule, Precentral Gyrus, Precuneus, SFG, STG, TPJ
S7	ISP2, ISP3, ISP5, IPL, SPL, TPJ	FEF, ISP2, ISP3, ISP5, IPL, Paracentral Lobule, Postcentral Gyrus, Precentral Gyrus, Precuneus, SPL, SFG, TPJ
S8		FEF, ISP1, ISP2, MFG
S9	ISP1, ISP2, ISP3, MFG, STG	ISP1, ISP2, ISP3, MFG, MTG, Precentral Gyrus, SFG, STG
S10	FEF, ISP2, IPL, MFG, Postcentral Gyrus, Precentral Gyrus, SFG, STG	FEF, ISP2, IFG, IPL, MFG, MTG, Postcentral Gyrus, Precentral Gyrus, SFG, STG, TPJ, V3b
S11	ISP1, ISP2, ISP3, MFG, Postcentral Gyrus, Precentral Gyrus	FEF, ISP1, ISP2, ISP3, IFG, IPL, MFG, MTG, Postcentral Gyrus, Precentral Gyrus, SFG, STG

Supplementary Table 2. List of brain areas containing cue- and target-activated subnetworks (see **Methods**). The
abbreviations are: Intraparietal Sulcus (IPS1, IPS2, IPS3, IPS5), Inferior Frontal Gyrus (IFG), Inferior Parietal Lobule
(IPL), Middle Temporal Gyrus (MTG), Superior Temporal Gyrus (STG), Middle Frontal Gyrus (MFG), Superior
Frontal Gyrus (SFG), Inferior Temporal Gyrus (ITG), Temporoparietal Junction (TPJ), Frontal Eye Field (FEF),
Fusiform Gyrus (FFG), Inferior Occipital Gyrus (IOG), Parahippocampal Gyrus (PHG), Middle Occipital Gyrus
(MOG), Visual area 3b (V3b), Superior Parietal Lobule (SPL), and human Middle Temporal/V5 (hMT).
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Cell-type	Pyr	PV	CCK	CB	CR
Pyr	0.3	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5
PV	0.6	0.4	0.25	0.15	0.05
CCK	0.6	0.25	0.4	0.15	0.05
CB	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.05	0.25
CR	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.6	0.05

1587 **Supplementary Table 3.** Connectivity strength between neuron types in each network (see **Methods**).
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Cell-type \\ Parameters	Pyr	PV	CCK	CB	CR
population	0.76	0.07	0.02	0.9	0.06
a	0.02	0.1	0.05	0.02	0.02
b	0.2	0.23	0.23	0.23	0.23
c	-65	-65	-65	-65	-65
d	8	2	2	2	2
τ_r	1	1	1	1	1
τ_d	6.4	8	12.4	16	16

Supplementary Table 4. Parameters used for modeling different neuron types. The parameter a indicates a recovery rate variable, b the sensitivity to sub-threshold fluctuations, c the membrane potential, d adjusts the after-spike recovery variable, τ_r synaptic potential rise time, and τ_d synaptic potential decay time (see **Methods**).