

Call for Abstracts

‘Beyond Switching Plastic Straws’

Tenth PhD Conference in the History of Science, Medicine and the Humanities

A biennial conference *by and for* PhD researchers from
universities in Belgium and the Netherlands



Submissions close
1 December 2024

de Greune Weide (NL)
9-10 April 2025



Gewina



Scope

We invite contributions from PhD researchers in Belgium and the Netherlands who work in the field of the history of science in the broadest sense: including histories of knowledge, technology, medicine, the natural sciences, the humanities, and the social sciences, spanning any time period and any geographical region. This conference is open to researchers in any stage of their PhDs, takes place every 2 years, and serves as one of the few platforms in our field dedicated exclusively to PhD students. It is an event meant for convivial and collegial interactions, for all of us to share progress, struggles, and to offer support among peers. We want to sustain and transform our discipline by maintaining a strong collective of early career researchers. To get an idea of what the conference is like, please read [the report in *Shells and Pebbles*](#) written by the organisers of the 2023 edition.

This year's location

We've decided to move the venue to The Landhotel de Greune Weide (degreuneweide.nl), a large rural property located near the small town of Eibergen, in the region of Achterhoek in the Netherlands.

We have sought a location facilitating the academic culture we envision. We have chosen a venue that would permit formal presentations as well as encourage informal interactions and improvised intellectual discussions. As well, we want this conference to reflect our career stage and take advantage of our capacity to innovate and experiment with presentation formats and venue settings. We want to go beyond switching plastic straws for paper straws – rather, we imagine a resilient research community built on local, sustainable, inclusive conference practices. The 2025 edition aims, above all, to be down-to-earth and in the spirit of do-it-yourself rather than plug-and-play mentality. We will cook, discuss, and share our research. *More details soon.*

Presentation formats

Each participant contributes in two ways; thus **each submission should include both**:

- a) **A traditional paper presentation.** Participants should indicate their preference for short (circa 15 minutes) or long format (circa 25 minutes).
- b) **A 5-minute 'pitch'.** You have 5 minutes to talk about or show us something very concrete, more or less related to doing research or being a historian of science. This is format-free, you choose: it can be a short talk, a performance, a song, a guided walk, an embodied activity, a whisper... It may or may not be related to your traditional paper presentation. You can use it to discuss (but not restricted to):
 - **Historiography.** You've read something interesting, difficult, or infuriating and want to share it.
 - **Source materials and methods.** Here you can talk about concrete methodological approaches in an educational format, e.g., How do you design an oral history transfer-of-rights document for correct archiving of interview transcripts? How do you decipher sixteenth-century handwriting? How do you combine Zotero and Obsidian in your research workflow?

- **Meta.** You can talk about your PhD process and our professional outlooks as early-career researchers.
- **Good and bad mistakes.** Intellectually sponsored by the Center of Trial and Error, we want to offer a space for you to share your errors, mistakes, and mishaps. We are ready to listen to your failures –productive or not–.
- **Teaching.** You are struggling to get others to understand why a reflexive attitude towards knowledge production is so important to save our democracies, and want to talk about it.
- **Outreach.** You're engaged in blogging, podcasting, or any other form of reaching out to a wider audience. Let us hear about it!

Participation

Please fill in this Google Form ([link](#)) by **1 December 2024 23h59** with the following information: a) Title and abstract (circa 250 words) of your traditional paper presentation, with your preference for short or long format; b) Three descriptive, jargon-free sentences about your 5-minute 'pitch'; c) A 2-3 sentence biography; d) Affiliation. We will notify you of our decision by Christmas Day 2024.

Participation fee

Thanks to the support of several institutions and partners, we have managed to reduce the participation fee substantially. We are awaiting confirmation from some donors, but we estimate it will be below 90€. This includes accommodation and food for 2 nights. If you want to participate in the conference but are experiencing financial difficulties, please contact the organisers. We aim for this conference to be as inclusive as possible and might be able to sort something out.

Organisers

Marieke Gelderblom (Utrecht University), m.h.gelderblom@uu.nl; Max Bautista-Perpinyà (UCLouvain), max.bautista@uclouvain.be; Martijn van der Meer (Erasmus University Rotterdam), vandermeer@eshcc.eur.nl.

Partners

Our sincere thanks go out to all our donors and partners: Gewina, Descartes Centre for the History and Philosophy of the Sciences and the Humanities, Huizinga Institute, National Committee for Logics, History and Philosophy of Science, Vossius Center for the History of Humanities and Sciences, Center for the Philosophy of Science and Society, and the École doctorale de philosophie.

PhD mailing list

Don't forget to [sign up](#) to the mailing list *phdcommunityhosh*, the list for the community of PhD students in the history of science and the humanities in Belgium and the Netherlands. You can use this list to connect, ask questions, express your doubts, share support, publicise post-doc positions, promote your public PhD defence, and organise events (dedicated workshops, writing retreats...).