



ESOF 2022
EuroScience Open Forum
LEIDEN

CALL FOR SESSION PROPOSALS

EUROSCIENCE OPEN FORUM 2022 IN LEIDEN (THE NETHERLANDS)

13 – 16 JULY 2022



**The present call seeks session proposals for the
main programme only.**

**Proposals must be submitted electronically. Instructions for
electronic submission of your proposal can be found on the
ESOF2022 website (www.esof.eu)¹.**

**For all correspondence concerning the submission of
your application, please send an email to:
programme@esof.eu**

¹ The ESOF2022 website also contains information about the other programme tracks.

ABOUT ESOF

The EuroScience Open Forum (ESOF) is the largest general science conference in Europe, and its main goal, as an open multi-disciplinary forum, is to provide a venue for cross-cutting debate among all stakeholders about science itself, the way science is performed and the impact of science in, with and for society. Founded in 2004 by EuroScience, the European Association for the Advancement of Science and Technology, and organised once every two years, ESOF aims to:

- ◆ **foster dialogue** on science, technology, innovation, policy and society through a platform for cross-disciplinary interaction and exchange;
- ◆ **present cutting-edge scientific and technological developments** in all scientific areas, including natural and medical sciences, life sciences, physical sciences, social sciences and humanities;
- ◆ **offer a valuable opportunity for early-career researchers**, including networking and career advice.

Crossing Borders, Engaged Science, Resilient Societies

Considering the current global context, there is no city more suitable than Leiden to host ESOF2022, a city which throughout the centuries has proven itself to be a centre of freethinkers, and a city that preserves the rights of liberty on the very site where academic freedom was born. The importance of freedom is paramount in a period in which the very essence of science is being debated. The dynamics of science concern the pursuit of truth, which can only flourish in an environment of open debate and freedom among scientists. With an internationally renowned university whose motto: 'Praesidium Liberatis' (Bastion of Freedom), and in a city that reflects those same long-lasting values with its motto: 'Haec Liberatis Ergo' (This for the sake of Liberty), Leiden is the perfect place for the 10th edition of ESOF. With its rich past, Leiden welcomes you to exchange knowledge and to celebrate the future!

The ESOF2022 conference programme entitled 'Crossing Borders, Engaged Science, Resilient Societies' - a perfect condensate of Leiden's own motto - is embedded in the 365-day programme of Leiden City of Science 2022, celebrating the arts, science and technology, and targeted to reach out to the general public with the objective of truly connecting science with society. ESOF2022 will be about creating a sense of urgency among scientists, policy makers, the media and the general public to exchange and debate more actively on science. ESOF2022 in Leiden will reinforce the societal dimension of European research - recognizing that citizen engagement is key to support for science and to the appreciation of the benefits of science to society. The ESOF2022 Conference Themes reflect the complexity of the issues challenging today's society and provide a glimpse into the areas where scientific research plans will have to focus in the near future.

The themes are designed to cross all borders: not only between countries and cultures but also between the humanities, the social sciences and the natural, medical and physical sciences. The conference provides an opportunity for all stakeholders of science to engage in open discussions and debate on science itself and how it can contribute to tackling the grand challenges of tomorrow.

ESOF2022 will comprise a number of distinct programme tracks:

- ◆ **A main program**, with lectures, seminars, workshops, debates and poster presentations on the latest advances in scientific research, scientific practice and related policy issues, structured around a series of keynote speakers and interactive sessions.
- ◆ **An exhibition** that showcases the best in European scientific activity and research, whether academic or industrial, from both the public and private sectors.
- ◆ **A public engagement programme:** the European Science in the City Festival.
- ◆ **A wide variety of other meetings**, satellite events and networking opportunities (involving, among others, science policy advisers and science media).

A. ESO2022 Scientific Conference Themes and Cross-Cutting Questions

1. Scientific Conference Themes



Theme 1: A sustainable environment

A sustainable environment is an environment in which human society and the biosphere of the planet are able to co-exist over the long term. This long-term co-existence has been endangered in various ways since the early stages of the development of modern human culture, but only now has the situation come to affect human society as a whole on a global scale. To ensure viable long-term co-existence, the United Nations adopted in 2015 its Sustainable Development Goals as universal public values. The goals concern the quality of the biosphere of the planet (including a stable climate, clean water and air, healthy food, sufficient energy and rich biodiversity) along with targets for human society (including peace, freedom, inclusion, equality and diversity) as the basis for a value-driven systems approach for the transition to a sustainable environment.

Suggested issues to be explored: climate change as a driving force for migration; the human rights situation at Europe's borders; sustainable ways of living; a fair transition to green energy; the role of citizen science; the future of mobility; the future of cities; an economy that keeps the earth liveable; a long-term global perspective on the relationships between humanity and nature; traditional ways of dealing with environmental and climatic variability; valuing and value assessment in socio-political decision-making processes around sustainability.



Theme 2: Cultural Identities and Societal Transformations

Various events in recent years have led to a context in which a certain number of the 19th- and 20th-century principles of cultural identity, belonging, ownership, achievement and pride are increasingly being challenged. Not only global migration but also the creation of supranational entities such as the European Union have given rise to questions regarding what cultural identity and societal values are and how societies should deal with the increasing presence of diversity. Grassroots movements of minorities such as "Black Lives Matter" force societies to discuss and debate their interpretations of history and cultural roots. Science and art can play a vital role in leading and moderating the inevitable debates and assist societies as they undergo necessary transformations and adaptations.

Suggested issues to be explored: differences between past and contemporary migration; fortress Europe; the new role and mission of museums and collections in the debates regarding identity and history; new national and international regulations on contested heritage; the role of art in developing cultural identities; decolonisation of knowledge production; art that questions science and technology; development of communities out of protest movements.



Theme 3: Space for science

The universe is the greatest of all imaginable physics laboratories. Cosmologists study how the universe expands and evolves under the laws of physics, using ever more powerful satellites and telescopes. Rapid advances in planetary sciences promise to shed light on the prevalence of biological activity in the universe within our lifetime. Humanity is now opening a new chapter in space missions, with a much larger and more diverse set of countries having space ambitions. The most ambitious plans include establishing bases and villages on the moon as well as the first manned landing on the planet Mars. There are technical challenges to design and construct the necessary ground-based and space-based instrumentation to characterise potential habitats and discern signs of life, but unequivocal proof of biological activity will require a synthesis among many disciplines.

Suggested issues to be explored: the search for earth-like planets; the challenge of construction in space and on the moon; societal implications on earth of discovering extra-terrestrial life; dark-matter research; quantum computing.



Theme 4: Healthy Societies

Health care is facing major challenges. Life expectancy is rising, and the demand and cost of health care are both increasing. Improving the overall health of the population and providing for healthy ageing can only be achieved with a transdisciplinary approach. Prevention and a healthy life style are as important as reducing health inequalities in diverse communities. There is a growing need both for new biomedical breakthroughs and digital solutions to promote health literacy and provide optimal care.

Suggested issues to be explored: management of chronic diseases; digital tools in improvement of health literacy and prevention; curbing the increasing costs of healthcare and drug development; interplay between industrial research and academic research in pharmaceutical development; reducing global inequalities in health care; data protection in health care; regulatory aspects of artificial intelligence in health care.



Theme 5: Freedom and Societal Responsibility of Science

The freedom of research and the independence of researchers and research institutions have shaped modern science for decades and are regarded as the basis for scientific advancement. Nevertheless, in view of the challenges arising from global pandemics and climate change, the scientific community is confronted with increased societal expectations such as ensuring a steady flow of new knowledge and breakthrough innovation, providing high-quality up-to-date education to all students and contributing to socio-cultural well-being. Moreover, academic independence is under pressure in many countries and societies. This theme is aimed at exploring the value and role of scientific freedom from a variety of perspectives, especially with regard to how societal, cultural and political factors shape scientific research.

Suggested issues to be explored: integrity in science advice; dialogue between science and policy; the role of funding in scientific freedom; responsible research and innovation; science diplomacy; conflicts of interest in science and at the intersection between science and policy.



Theme 6: Back to Business: Action-Based Entrepreneurship and Education

Science creates knowledge that has no boundaries, and the stock of knowledge produced is both a shared heritage and a basis for progress. Innovation is the capability of transforming knowledge into new solutions that stimulate progress and growth, while entrepreneurship is the capability of connecting science with the business environment and the ability to identify new opportunities in terms of new products, processes or services. This theme will explore the many ways in which societal value can be created from research, with a special emphasis on education and on the role and opportunities of the humanities in the process.

Suggested issues to be explored: entrepreneurial education; similarities and differences of research performed in academia and industry; value-driven innovation; innovation out of the humanities.



Theme 7: Off the beaten track: new paths for Academic Careers

Academia is a hub of knowledge and innovation that hosts exceptional human resources, but it suffers in many cases from conservative and outdated models for academic careers. The current system in which academics - particularly early-career academics - often feel overburdened, unfulfilled and unappreciated is unsustainable and non-inclusive. There is a growing movement among the various stakeholders of science to rethink the academic system and to discover new, sustainable academic career paths that are inclusive and promote diversity.

Suggested issues to be explored: new career paths inside and outside academia; research quality versus quantity in an international competitive setting; the role of team science.

2. Cross-Cutting Questions

A core question present throughout the ESOF2022 event will be:

How will science be conducted in the future and how can science improve its role of being a transformative agent for societal change?

This core question can be articulated and declined through a series of more specific cross-cutting questions such as those below (although other interpretations are welcome as well):

- ◆ How can science be as open as possible across all borders, whether disciplinary, geographical or societal?
- ◆ What will be the behaviours, values, expectations, attitudes and norms of the research community in the future?
- ◆ How can institutional structures be changed to foster diversity, equity and inclusion?
- ◆ What will be the impact of digital technologies, artificial intelligence, machine learning and virtual reality on the scientific community, scientific practice and society as a whole?

Sessions that offer an opportunity for a critical look at scientific practice, scientific communities and scientific ecosystems, including working conditions, assessment practices, international collaboration, research management, research governance and research funding, are particularly encouraged.

B. Guidelines for Submission of Session Proposals

The present call seeks session proposals for the main programme only. **Submission is open from 27 September 2021, 10:00 CET to 15 November 2021, 16:00 CET/CEST (15:00 GMT)**. Proposals must be submitted electronically, and instructions for electronic submission of your proposal can be found on the ESOF2022 website (www.esof.eu).

Please read carefully the following guidelines and information about the main-programme themes.

1. Objectives and expected outcomes

ESOF2022 main-programme sessions should contribute to the general objective of the conference, which is to highlight and interrogate the interplay between science and society, the conditions under which science is conducted, the processes of expected and unexpected discovery and application and the wider socio-cultural environment - including the contribution of education, innovation policy, investment and funding mechanisms. Session proposals should also promote public debate on science-related societal change, as well as dialogue with the general public on scientific advances.

ESOF2022 will be an opportunity to discuss the socio-cultural and economic implications and impacts of scientific breakthroughs from regional, national, European and global perspectives. This international perspective is particularly significant since, in the face of global challenges and the internationalisation of trade and political governance, science is increasingly considered as an international collaborative endeavour, a feature that the sessions should seek to address whenever possible.

2. Session duration and format

Prior to submitting a proposal, applicants are advised to consider the duration and format. Each standard session will last for 1 hour and 15 minutes.

It is possible to propose two consecutive sessions for a total of 2 hours and 30 minutes if the topic and format are appropriate. The two sessions must nevertheless be submitted as two separate proposals and the applicant must clearly demonstrate the added value of a double session in the proposals.

Applicants are encouraged to make their sessions as interactive as possible. Various formats are possible and applicants are encouraged to develop their own innovative and creative formats and make use when appropriate of the possibilities of hybrid sessions.

Examples of possible formats are:

- ◆ Traditional panel discussion: maximum of 3 to 4 speakers (maximum 5 minutes each), followed by extended discussion with the audience, including the use of digital tools for real time feedback such as polls, word clouds, etc.
- ◆ Interactive round table(s): a flexible format with brief presentation and space for questions, answers and reactions, including the use of digital tools for real time feedback such as polls, word clouds, etc.
- ◆ (Hybrid) Workshop: a flexible format, led by a speaker experienced in stimulating exchanges of views and using practical exercises
- ◆ House of Commons style pro and con debate on a controversial topic

The list above is not exhaustive, and proposals for sessions with other innovative formats (hackathons, Ted-type talks, 3-minute-thesis style sessions) will also be welcome.

Please remember that ESOF is not a conventional scientific conference. The audience is expected to be diverse (scientists, policy makers, students, general public, etc.), with strong interest in the topics presented but not necessarily knowledgeable in the specific scientific fields involved. It is recommended therefore to pay special attention to the communication style and to the ability of suggested session speakers to address an ESOF audience.

The session proposals should be targeted to a scientifically literate but non-specialist audience. Be prepared to be flexible and patient, and be sure to leave sufficient time for wide-ranging questions and debate. Please note that the session should be chaired by an experienced moderator nominated by the session organiser, and it is also recommended to have a chat moderator for hybrid sessions.

As EuroScience and Leiden2022 strongly support the Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations, ESOF aims to be as sustainable as possible. It is encouraged to minimise the impact on the environment and climate when composing the session panels.

C. Selection process

The submission of session proposals is open from **27 September 2021 at 10:00 CET, with a submission deadline on 30 November 2021 at 16:00 CET/CEST (15:00 GMT)**.

- ◆ Proposals will be evaluated and ranked by independent international peer review, with each proposal being evaluated by at least two reviewers.
- ◆ Based on the ranking of the reviewers, a Selection Committee (SC) will determine which proposals will be accepted for inclusion in the ESOF2022 programme.
- ◆ Applicants whose proposals have been accepted or rejected will be informed during the month of February 2022.
- ◆ SC may request revisions to some proposals. If this is the case, applicants will be advised by mid-February 2022 and revised proposals must then be resubmitted by 15 March 2022 for a second-stage evaluation.

Submitted session proposals for the main programme will be evaluated according to the criteria described below. Criteria marked with an asterisk (*) are mandatory.

1. Content

- ◆ Quality, originality and topicality capable of attracting delegates and ensuring that they benefit from new insights and discussion.*
- ◆ Relevance to the ESOF2022 scientific conference themes and/or cross-cutting questions.*
- ◆ Interdisciplinary approaches and, where relevant, policy perspectives.

2. Composition and format

- ◆ Diversity (with appropriate balance of geographical origin, gender and inclusivity in the session panels).*
- ◆ Interactivity for discussion and dialogue. Proposals presenting innovative formats and making use of the new possibilities of hybrid formats are welcome.

Organisers of accepted sessions will be responsible for the organisation of their sessions and speakers. A full range of conference facilities will be available.

No registration fee will be charged to the organiser and speakers of an accepted ESOF2022 session. But neither EuroScience nor ESOF2022 Leiden have supporting funds available to facilitate conference attendance. Participants' involvement in the event must therefore be completely self-financed, including travel, accommodations and any other organisational expenses.

Please note that the Selection Committee reserves the right to modify session titles, abstracts and session formats following acceptance of your session.

D. Poster Presentation

In addition to the interactive main-programme sessions, it is possible to submit proposals for presenting a poster at ESOF2022. The proposals for posters will undergo the same review process as the sessions and will be evaluated following the criteria described in the guidelines for session proposals, with the exception of the "format" criteria.

No registration fee will be charged to the presenters of an accepted ESOF2022 poster. But neither EuroScience nor ESOF2022 Leiden have supporting funds available to facilitate conference attendance. Participants' involvement in the event must therefore be completely self-financed, including travel, accommodations and any other organisational expenses.

Please note that the Selection Committee reserves the right to modify poster titles and abstracts following acceptance of your poster.



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