

NOS-HS Exploratory Workshops in

Olfactory Cultural Studies

Workshop I, 4–6 September 2023, Ålesund, Norway

Call for papers and participation

With support from NordForsk, we are happy to announce a call for papers and participation in an exploratory three-day workshop in “olfactory cultural studies”. This is the first workshop in a series of three independent yet related workshops across different Nordic countries, with a general objective to develop and investigate methodologies to explore how olfactory phenomena are conceptualised and contribute to meaning-making. The remaining two workshops will be organised in Denmark and in Finland in 2024, with calls to be released in due course. The workshops centre on the significance of odours and the meanings ascribed to them, both in different physical environments and in media representations, thus complementing multisensory, multimodal cultural studies. Emphasis is laid on the role of olfactory phenomena in the construction of social and cultural identities. To address the olfactory cultural dynamics at stake, the workshops are guided by three main research questions:

- a) How are different environmental odours made meaningful?
- b) How are olfactory phenomena conceptualised and represented in art and the media?
- c) How do olfactory phenomena participate in the construction of social and cultural identities?

Workshop

The workshops are designed to combine ethnographic, experimental and textual research. The first workshop is structured as follows:

Day 1: ethnographic exercise: “marine summer-time olfactowalk”, to be conducted in a select environment and followed by methodological and theoretical reflection.

Day 2: experimental exercise at the Atlanterhavsparken Aquarium and Marine Science Museum in Ålesund, on the theme “wake up and smell the fish”. The exercise seeks to share and develop knowledge by exploring aesthetic and analytic sense experiences in an encounter between researchers and museum communicators. The exercise draws perspectives from a range of disciplines to highlight the potential for the sensory perception of smell in the domain of the marine.

Day 3: a seminar session with participants’ presentations on the theme of roles of smell (olfaction) in context-based communication and learning, followed by methodological and theoretical reflection. As opposed to rigid disciplinary thinking, the point of departure here is “what sensory perceptions and domains of knowledge can, or must, I rely on in this situation?”

Submissions

We hereby cordially ask all interested individuals to submit a proposal of up to 3,000 words no later than 1 May 2023, via email to olfactory.cultures@gmail.com. The proposals form the basis for the seminar session (Day 3) and therefore should address its theme (context-based olfactory

communication and learning). The proposals should be in PDF format, appended with a one-page CV.

Notifications of acceptance will be sent by the end of May 2023. There is a limited amount of seats in the workshop, and all participants are required to take part in all exercises and sessions. If selection is required due to the amount of proposals, priority will be given to those who i) reside in the Nordic region as defined by NordForsk, and ii) address the theme of Day 3.

Travel and accommodation

The physical location of the workshop is on the island of Runde along the western coast of Norway (www.runde.no), with a day-trip to the Atlanterhavsparken Aquarium and Marine Science Museum in Ålesund (Day 2; <https://en.atlanterhavsparken.no>).

The organisers will cover accommodation, local transport and comestibles. Accommodation in Runde is in two-bedroom flats with shared bathrooms. Travel bursaries of up to €500 are available in exchange of receipts for a limited number of participants, with priority given to early career researchers who do not have access to institutional support.

For further information regarding the other two workshops or any other related matter, please do not hesitate to contact the organisers at olfactory.cultures@gmail.com.

Organisers

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