



Call for Abstracts

Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Age(ing) and Care: What does it mean to grow old?

4th International PhD Conference | Rijeka-Ljubljana-Graz
University of Graz, Austria | June 4 – 6, 2020

In light of current debates about population aging, demographic change, and the so-called “crisis in care,” old people tend to be seen as a growing “burden” to our societies, while caregivers often work in precarious conditions and receive little appreciation. At the same time, scientists work on life extension and “anti-aging” technologies to make us “forever young.” Is aging a disease that can be cured, as some scientists argue? Is it a natural part of life? What does “active,” “successful,” and “productive” aging really mean? What about ageism and age discrimination? And how are these aspects represented in individual academic disciplines?

In literature and cultural studies and social sciences, aging is not only to be seen as a biogerontological process but also, according to Margaret Gullette (2004), a cultural construct, and the aspect of “care” can be related to Joan Tronto’s notion of the “caring democracy” (2013). For art and aesthetic theory, the aspect of caring is often linked to either phenomenological and/or epistemological concerns. Hannah Arendt’s terms of “Sorge” and “Friendship” as well as Michel Foucault’s “care of the self” are central positions for these discussions. Most recently Nicholas Bourriaud’s term “relational aesthetics” describes participatory art projects in which social and cultural interactions form the work of art. Whereas these vantage points are predominantly embedded into the research areas of the interdisciplinary *Age and Care Research Group Graz*, this conference also opens up the field in order to discuss aspects of aging and care from a broader perspective.

This PhD conference aims at discussing age and aging from interdisciplinary perspectives. Contributions are welcome that discuss topics including, but not limited to, images and concepts of age and care, stereotypes of old age, medical/nursing/speculative ethics, dementia, disability, death and dying, intersectionality, marginalization, gender, LGBTQ2S+, “anti-aging,” trans- and posthumanism, life-extension, euthanasia/geronticide, socio-political dimensions of age(ing) and care, narrative medicine, age(ing) and care activism, artistic, cultural and literary representations of age(ing) and care, and questions of the end of life.

By bringing together emerging scholars who address the question of what it means to grow old, the conference aims at shedding light on current research in the field, highlighting the significance of interdisciplinarity in age(ing) and care research. Accordingly, we invite contributions that challenge traditional methods and/or propose new ones that aim at incorporating interdisciplinary aspects at an early research stage. Participants are invited to critically reflect on the meanings of age(ing) and care, and discuss perspectives from a cross-cultural and interdisciplinary point of view, including challenges and developments in academia, social practice, art, and activism.



Conference language: **English**

We welcome submissions for both papers and posters from PhD students from all fields of research. Please specify whether your contribution is a paper or a poster in your application. It should be stressed that **preference will be given to applications from PhD candidates from the Universities of Rijeka, Ljubljana, and Graz.**

Papers will feature a presentation by its author(s). The paper abstract must include a title, author(s) name(s) and short narrative CV, and a summary of the research design and findings. The abstract and CV must be no longer than 250 words each.

Posters will be featured throughout the conference. The poster abstract must include a title, author(s) name(s) and a short narrative CV, and a summary of the research design and findings. The abstract and CV must be no longer than 250 words each.

Submissions are due by March 1st 2020 (notification by April 1st).

Please send your abstracts as word documents by March 1st 2020 to Ms. Eva-Maria Trinkaus, ageandcare@uni-graz.at.

Costs: There will be no registration fee for this conference. Accommodation and travel for participating doctoral students from abovementioned universities will be subsidized.

A **conference website** will soon be available on <http://ageandcare.uni-graz.at>

Conference chairs: Prof. Dr. Sabine Flach, Prof. Dr. Ulla Kriebner, University of Graz, Austria

Program committee: Rector Prof. Dr. Snježana Prijić Samaržija, University of Rijeka, Croatia, Prof. Dr. Aleksandra Kanjuo Mrčela, University of Ljubljana, Slovenia, Prof. Dr. Peter Scherrer, University of Graz, Austria

Executive committee at the University of Graz: Mag. Anna-Christina Kainradl, MA, Urša Marinšek, MA, Gréta Mikos, MA, Eva-Maria Trinkaus, MA, Katharina Zwanzger, MA