

**SWDTP ANNUAL STUDENT
CONFERENCE 2025
- PROGRAMME -**



EVERYDAY & BEYOND

**ENCOUNTERING
SHARING
CARING.**

**- 30 OCT 2025 -
10:00-17:00**

**COMMONS BUILDING
NEWTON ST LOE CAMPUS
BATH SPA UNIVERSITY**



CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

	CM.G23/24	CM.107	CM.108
10 - 10.30	Registration		
10.30 - 11.45	Welcome & Alumni Panel		
11.45 - 12.00	- Break -		
12.00 - 12.40	Engagement in Decolonising Research P1: When Rivers Meet the Ocean: Rethinking Positionality and 'Who Researches Who' in Indigenous Research P2: Reimagining Education through Language: Decolonial Reflections on Power, Ethics and Participation in Fieldwork	Insider Challenges in Health Research P5: An Exploration of the Meaning of Participation for Older Adults from Diverse Cultural Backgrounds: A Community Participatory Action Research Study P6: Pushing my self away? Navigating insider status in the study of a novel breastfeeding condition, Dysphoric Milk Ejection Reflex.	Confronting the Uncomfortable P3: Encountering the 'Spooky': The Researcher's Role in Navigating Engineered Fear P4: I'm sorry... you research what?! Reflections on doing "dirty research" as a PhD student
12.40 - 1.30	- Lunch -		
13.30 - 14.15	Keynote: Camilla Morelli "Animating the Future: visual ethnographies of the beyond"		
14.15 - 14.30	- Break -		
14.30 - 15.10	Co-creation: from Portraits to Play P11: Developing 'A Box of Ethics' to prompt children's perspectives around ethical issues in research. P12: Whose story is it anyway? Constructing and Co-curating participant pen portraits	Impact and Environmental Justice P9: Protecting the Amazon by Sustaining its Peoples: A Qualitative Study into the Role of Traditional Communities in Ecological Preservation P10: Between Theory and Practice: Care in Multi-Species Justice Research	Ethics in Workplace Research P7: Ethical Tension in Desk-Based Legal Research: 'The Hope of Transcendence' P8: Listening to Silence: A reflexive exploration of Care and Emotional Demands in Qualitative Research
15.20 - 16.20	Workshop 1: Slow Thinking, Deep Feeling: Reflective journals as tools in close-to-identity research	Workshop 2: Researching Technology: What Can Social Scientists Bring to the Table?	Workshop 3: Creating a culture of agreements in participatory practice? Exploring a new framework to support interpersonal reflexivity
16.20 - 16.30	- Break -		
16.30 - 16.45	Closing remarks from SWDTP director		
From 16:45	Informal networking session		

VENUE INFORMATION

This year's conference is being held in the Commons Building at Bath Spa University (Newton Park Campus).

Planning your Journey

- Please arrive between 10am and 10.20am for registration. The first session will begin at 10.30am.
- The nearest train station is Bath Spa. From the station you can take the U5 bus to the campus.
- From the city centre, you can take the U3 bus to the campus.
- For a campus map and more information on planning your journey to the campus, please visit:
<https://www.bathspa.ac.uk/student-life/campuses/newton-park/>

Quiet Room: CM.110

- We have a dedicated quiet room available to anyone who may need it on the day. We kindly request that you refrain from using this room for work/emails/meetings, as the space is reserved for those who need to use it for quiet time & reflection.

Lunch and Refreshments

- Tea and coffee will be available throughout the day.
- Lunch is provided (including vegetarian and vegan options). Dietary requirements as stated at registration will be accommodated.

Informal Networking Session

- After the conference, you are welcome to stay for an informal networking session.

KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Dr Camilla Morelli
The University of Bristol

“Animating the Future: visual ethnographies of the beyond”



This talk examines how anthropology can transcend the everyday and reach into what lies beyond—the imagined, the aspirational, the surreal, and the yet-to-come. Drawing on long-term research in Amazonia, I introduce a methodology based on ethnographic animation: animated films that bring together people’s lived experiences with imaginary futures and ancestral pasts.

I examine ethnographic animation both as a research method and as a transformative practice through which participants begin to inhabit alternative futures. I thereby propose an applied, future-oriented anthropology – one where the coproduction of visual knowledge can actively shape new ways of seeing and living in the world.

Author bio

Camilla is a social anthropologist with an expertise in childhood and youth, visual anthropology, studies of the future and the imagination, and the ethnography of Amazonia.

ALUMNI PANEL



Dr Victoria Christodoulides (she/her)

Dr Victoria Christodoulides is a researcher and practitioner whose work bridges health, arts, and community practice. Her PhD, funded by the ESRC SWDTP at the University of Bath, explored childhood trauma recovery through feminist participatory action research and arts-based methods, developing a visual assemblage model of recovery. She currently co-leads the Active Recovery Project, a community-based programme supporting survivors through creative and embodied approaches, and contributes to national initiatives on creative health, trauma-informed practice, and mutual recovery. Victoria's research and public engagement work have been featured in the National Creative Health Review.

Dr Chloe Asker (they/them)

Chloe is an interdisciplinary academic researcher, queer creative health practitioner, and curator. They have published across the medical humanities and social sciences on a range of topics from mindfulness to active travel. Currently, they work for Culture& (an arts and heritage charity) on the Reimagining Museums Antitheses project with University of Oxford, funded by the Wellcome Trust. The project is investigating polarisation and disagreement around the retention and display of human and non-human remains, repatriation of objects, and the funding of museums.



Dr Helen Frisby

Dr Helen Frisby is Research Culture & Development Co-ordinator at UWE Bristol. Her PhD (Leeds, 2009) explored Victorian working-class funeral customs. Helen has previously taught History at UWE, and on the FDSc Funeral Services at the University of Bath where she's also a Visiting Research Fellow. Helen is Hon. Secretary of The Folklore Society, and continues to research, speak and publish on death, funerals and bereavement, past and present.

STUDENT PRESENTATIONS: ENGAGEMENT IN DECOLONISING RESEARCH

When Rivers Meet the Ocean: Rethinking Positionality and 'Who Researches Who' in Indigenous Research

Kate Matzopoulos, University of Bath

My presentation puts forward a decolonial and Indigenous reframing of researcher positionality, grounded in my ongoing doctoral work with the Ju/'hoansi San community in Nkhoma, Namibia. In this collaborative project, members of the community are not research participants but co-researchers—a complex dynamic that challenges conventional ideas of authority, expertise, and knowledge production. It invites the question: who researches whom?

Rather than resolving this through fixed identity categories—such as insider, outsider, or in-between—this reflection explores how positionality might be reimagined through a relational and participatory lens. Drawing on Indigenous knowledge systems, decolonial theory, and Bhabha's concept of the Third Space, I argue that the standardised use of positionality statements often reinforces boundaries rather than enabling meaningful collaboration. In contrast, I propose an approach that allows knowledge systems to meet like rivers flowing into an ocean: distinct yet inseparable, relational yet plural. This becomes the foundation for creating a space where researchers work in tandem—equally researching and being researched.

Using Khalil Gibran's metaphor of rivers becoming the ocean, I offer a framework of dynamic reflexivity that evolves with context, relationships, and ongoing engagement. This approach helps address inequalities in educational research by affirming difference and resisting the hierarchisation of epistemologies.

My reflections invite critical consideration of how research methodologies generated from shared spaces shape what becomes possible, and how decolonising reflexivity can support more ethical, situated, and transformative research.

Reimagining Education through Language: Decolonial Reflections on Power, Ethics and Participation in Fieldwork

Mercy O. Martins, University of Bath

This reflective presentation draws on my PhD research titled *Resistance and Agency as Anti-colonial Praxis: Reimagining Language Practices in Nigerian Secondary School*. Returning home to conduct fieldwork raised complex questions about power, ethics, and the limits of research. I encountered the everyday tensions of doing research in a school system that actively marginalises local languages—the very practices my research seeks to challenge. Gaining access involved navigating institutional gatekeeping while remaining honest about my research objectives. Once inside, the ethical dilemmas multiplied. Students were eager to participate, yet vulnerability and surveillance shaped how, when, and what they could share. I wrestled with my own positionality as an insider-outsider: fluent in context yet holding academic power. I also had to balance how I interacted with the adult participants paying attention to cultural influences.

This piece reflects on how I worked to centre participants as co-constructors of knowledge rather than data sources. Drawing on a range of participatory and decolonial methods: talk circles, story wheels, map-making, walking interviews, and theatre. I created space for students to lead, reflect, and imagine differently. I share how I balanced care and rigour, and how I moved beyond extractive research models to foster trust, voice, and agency. The presentation explores what it means to share power, to listen deeply, and to imagine more ethical forms of research grounded in justice, reciprocity and care.

STUDENT PRESENTATIONS: CONFRONTING THE UNCOMFORTABLE

Encountering the 'Spooky': The Researcher's Role in Navigating Engineered Fear

Razan Alem, University of Exeter

This presentation explores the ethical and methodological challenges of researching attractions that operate on the fine line between "spooky" and "horror." My PhD project investigates how UK attractions, such as the London Dungeon and Bodmin Jail, strategically engineer experiences that are thrilling but not truly terrifying. This raises a guiding question for this conference: What does it mean to research 'spooky' when the fear itself is a carefully designed product?

Encountering these attractions involves deconstructing a fundamental distinction. While "horror" aims to provoke genuine dread, the "spooky" framework which my research analyses use atmosphere, narrative, and often humour to create a controlled, family-friendly thrill. As a researcher, my positionality is complex: I must critically analyse this "spooky" construction while simultaneously allowing myself to be a participant in its intended effect. This creates a tension between analytical distance and immersive experience.

Sharing this research means moving beyond a simple description of "what is spooky." It involves revealing how the 'Spooky' is strategically produced through specific technological or performative choices (holograms vs. live acting). By triangulating marketing materials with on-site observation, I explore the gap between the promise of fear and the delivery of fun. This addresses the question: What is research useful for? I argue it is useful for making visible the invisible labour of emotional engineering.

Finally, caring in this context means engaging ethically with how historical trauma is reframed into a 'spooky' narrative. It requires a reflexive practice that acknowledges the researcher's own fluctuating responses from analytical critique to genuine enjoyment. This presentation offers insights into the unique challenges of researching an emotion that has been deliberately tamed for entertainment.

I'm sorry... you research what?! Reflections on doing "dirty research" as a PhD student

Filipa Torres, University of Exeter

The term "dirty work" was first coined by American sociologist Everett Hughes to refer to occupations and jobs which are simultaneously societally necessary and seen as disgusting, demeaning or immoral and, therefore, repudiated (1958). The individuals who perform this type of work – such as garbage collection, for example – are seen as 'dirty workers' and face stigma and social taint. Janice Irvine has argued that sexuality research is too a form of 'dirty work' within the academy (2014), leading to sexuality researchers being "tolerated but reviled and acknowledged, but deemed unimportant" (Msibi, 2014:669).

Irvine and others like Samantha Keene (2021) have demonstrated that doing dirty work poses specific challenges to researchers including stigma, challenges by institutions and ethical boards and barriers to career progression, like access to funding, publication opportunities and tenure.

This talk will explore the complex negotiations that researching a "dirty" topic involve, based on my personal experiences as a PhD student researching mediated accounts of rough sex from a sex positive feminist lens over the past four years. This will include ethical considerations, such as gaining ethical approval from a university board, as well as difficulties when disseminating research both within and outside academia. The aim of the talk is to not only highlight the everyday realities of being a "dirty researcher" but to also consider how occupying this position requires continuous reflexive practice on the part of the researcher and the positive possibilities that this can have for research practice more broadly.

STUDENT PRESENTATIONS: INSIDER CHALLENGES IN HEALTH RESEARCH

An Exploration of the Meaning of Participation for Older Adults from Diverse Cultural Backgrounds: A Community Participatory Action Research Study

Büşra Yildiz, University of Bournemouth

Participation—engagement in meaningful daily activities within one’s sociocultural context—is central to occupational therapy and vital for well-being, particularly in later life. However, older people from diverse ethnicities in the UK may face increased risk of participation restrictions due to cultural misalignment in healthcare approaches and systemic health inequalities. This research uses Community Participatory Action Research (CPAR) to explore how older people from diverse ethnicities define and experience participation, aiming to understand barriers, facilitators, and culturally specific ways of engaging in everyday life.

Older people were engaged as co-researchers and participated in six interactive workshops co-designed around their preferences, including storytelling methods. These workshops explored participants’ lived experiences, cultural values, and perspectives on meaningful activity. An iterative cycle of planning, action, observation, and reflection was followed to ensure their voices shaped every stage of the project, from data generation to dissemination strategies.

The second phase involves reflecting on workshop findings, planning public dissemination events such as a “global café,” and engaging occupational therapists, students, and community stakeholders to discuss findings and their implications. The aim is to increase cultural awareness, support recognition of patients’ cultural needs, and create societal impact through collaborative knowledge sharing.

This project shows how involving older people from diverse ethnicities as co-researchers can generate meaningful insights into participation. Sharing these findings with occupational therapists, students, and community stakeholders can help improve cultural awareness, align services with individuals’ values, and support more inclusive care approaches.

Pushing my self away? Navigating insider status in the study of a novel breastfeeding condition, Dysphoric Milk Ejection Reflex.

Jennah Evans, University of Bournemouth

A reflexive orientation has become an indispensable tool within health and social sciences scholarship, helping to remedy the perceived inequities of the researcher-participant dynamic. In contrast to the historical leaning towards positivist, sterile interpretations of illness and disease, a reflexive approach offers the prospect of a nuanced understanding of phenomena, by embedding and critically deconstructing the influence of researcher positionality, lived experience and socioeconomic context.

It is not uncommon for personal experience to serve as an individual springboard towards academic enquiry. It has been suggested that insider status can stimulate unique methodological and theoretical insights, ordinarily closed off to those who do not share this position. At the same time, the study of a health condition which also affects the researcher, can introduce an additional layer of complexity, demanding a renegotiation of insider status. The sustained and extensive introspection required of the reflexive project can result in unintended, negative consequences for the researcher’s wellbeing, as potentially traumatic aspects of the illness are reanimated for fresh interrogation. In studies of this nature, an overarching question emerges, which is part self-care and part-methodological rigour, highlighting tension between what is unearthed and what remains surface level: ‘how much of my self do I want to give away?’

This presentation considers the researcher’s experience with breastfeeding condition, ‘Dysphoric Milk Ejection Reflex’ which causes intense negative emotion during each feeding session. From hypothesis generation to methodology, there will be an exploration of the approach taken to manage the balance between reflexivity, insider status and self-care.

STUDENT PRESENTATIONS: ETHICS IN WORKPLACE RESEARCH

Ethical Tension in Desk-Based Legal Research: ‘The Hope of Transcendence’

Tom Carr, University of Bristol

This presentation reflects on some of the ethical tensions I have encountered while conducting desk-based legal research on stakeholder engagement in human rights due diligence (HRDD) in the Bangladesh garment sector. My research draws on the concept of reflexive law to explore how regulation is being used to compel large garment retailers to engage stakeholders in ongoing dialogue and mutual learning. Yet, as a researcher based on the UK studying these processes without myself engaging with stakeholders directly, I face a methodological contradiction: how can I critically examine the role of stakeholder voice in HRDD while remaining at a distance from those whose voices are at stake?

This contradiction prompts a broader reflection on researcher reflexivity, particularly when working across national, cultural, and epistemic boundaries. I examine how the choice to undertake a desk-based study – motivated by practical, ethical, and positional considerations – both limits and shapes the kinds of claims I can responsibly make. I also reflect on the risks of reinforcing extractive research dynamics when studying contexts that are not one’s own, and on the need to continually question who is being centred, spoken for, or left out in academic research on global justice.

By bringing together the normative dimensions of reflexive law and the methodological challenges of researcher reflexivity, I explore what it means to practise ethics in the ‘everyday’ of research design and knowledge production. This presentation aims to open a conversation about ethical responsibility, distance, and the boundaries of representation in social science research.

Listening to Silence: A reflexive exploration of Care and Emotional Demands in Qualitative Research

Margaret Edmondson, University of the West of England

This study explores the ethical and emotional challenges of researching ‘employee silence’ during organisational restructuring in a UK university. It investigates how silence is constructed through leadership discourse, institutional norms, and spatial dynamics, particularly within formal meeting spaces. Silence is conceptualised not as absence, but as presence: inhabited, structured, and ethically charged (Mazzei, 2007; Shohet and Samuels, 2024). Alongside this, the study reflects on the demands of researching silence from within the institution as an embedded and reflexive researcher.

The empirical data collection includes institutional documents, observations of formal meetings and interviews. Analysis focuses on moments of discursive contradiction, legitimisation, and framing (Engeström and Sannino, 2011; Fairclough, 1992; Fairclough, 2013; van Leeuwen, 2007; Fairhurst, 2010) to explore how silence manifests, whether through exclusion or as a deliberate, situated response. Rather than asking why employees remain silent, the research examines how silence is shaped and sustained through leadership discourse and institutional power.

Researching silence, requires attention to its attunement to its affective and ethical weight (Mazzei, 2007; Gunzenhauser, 2006). Participants may be navigating job insecurity, ambiguity, or distress.

Caring in this context goes beyond procedural ethics; it involves attentiveness, relational responsibility, and situated sensitivity (Dickson-Swift, Kippen and Liamputtong, 2008; Pillow, 2003). Care must also extend to the researcher, whose role involves listening to emotionally charged narratives during interviews—a process that can be draining, particularly when they are institutionally entangled (Hubbard, Backett-Milburn and Kemmer, 2001).

This presentation contributes to the “Caring” strand by offering a reflexive account of care and the emotional demands of qualitative research, particularly when investigating silence within the context of organisational change.

STUDENT PRESENTATIONS: IMPACT AND ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

Protecting the Amazon by Sustaining its Peoples: A Qualitative Study into the Role of Traditional Communities in Ecological Preservation

Felipe Schaeffer Neves, University of Bath

This presentation reflects on the ethical, methodological and epistemological challenges of conducting research with traditional Amazonian communities resisting predatory extractivism in Brazil. Underpinned by a theoretical framework composed of various radical paradigms, such as post-extractivism, degrowth and rights of nature, and a Marxist critique of capitalist development, the research examines how riverside communities (ribeirinhos) along the Xingu River preserve the forest through their traditional practices, livelihood strategies, and collective organisation. Based on three months of fieldwork, this study shines a light on the struggles of communities historically marginalised by development policies. The encounter with these communities reveals the contradictions of “sustainable development” and conservation models rooted in Western epistemologies, often ill-suited to Amazonian realities.

In line with this, the research argues that safeguarding the Amazon requires keeping its traditional inhabitants in place, supported through sustainable bioeconomy value chains – such as latex, Brazil nuts and cassava flour –, ensuring that these products are purchased at remunerative rates that reflect the socio-environmental services these communities provide. Such mechanisms would require a combination of state subsidies and ethical partnerships with the private sector.

Engaging with the conference themes of encountering, sharing, and caring, the presentation critically reflects on positionality, power dynamics, and the tension between academic and ancestral knowledge. It underscores the ethical imperative of research that goes beyond data extraction to foster reciprocal relations that contribute to an emancipatory praxis towards forest conservation and recognises the communities not as subjects, but as co-producers of knowledge.

Between Theory and Practice: Care in Multi-Species Justice Research

Heidi Barron, University of Plymouth

In Western thought and culture, human exceptionalism - the belief that humans hold a privileged position, set apart from the rest of the world - has dominated for centuries. This way of thinking has shaped how we understand and interact with the natural world. Nature, for example, is often viewed as something ‘out there’, separate from humans, and either as a resource to be exploited or a wilderness to be preserved. More recently, scholars working with more-than-human perspectives have challenged these traditional assumptions in both academic and everyday contexts.

It is within this evolving field that my PhD research is situated. I explore the concept of multi-species justice (MSJ), which emerged to challenge traditional theories of justice that focus solely on humans and instead asks how we can treat all humans and non-humans more fairly. While a growing body of scholarship has articulated the theoretical foundations of MSJ, this project builds on that work by exploring how more inclusive forms of justice might be enacted in practice, particularly through notions of care. To ground these ideas, the research is centred on fieldwork conducted on the River Dart in Devon, England.

In this talk, I critically reflect on the conference themes of encountering, sharing, and caring in the context of conducting research across human-non-human divides, engaging with both the theoretical and practical realities shaping this research experience.

STUDENT PRESENTATIONS: CO-CREATION: FROM PORTRAITS TO PLAY

Developing 'A Box of Ethics' to prompt children's perspectives around ethical issues in research

Luci Gorell Barnes, University of the West of England

In this presentation I present a way of discussing ethical issues with children that I developed as part of my PhD study. The study explores how arts-based methods can support minoritised children to express, reflect on, and amplify their lived experiences and perceptions. Inspired by 'A Case of Ethics' (Edwards, 2019), I designed 'A Box of Ethics' to engage the participating children in active discussion.

Populated with playful objects and information cards, my aim was to prompt the children's to share their perspectives around issues of consent, confidentiality, anonymity, authorship and the purpose of the research. I outline the importance of negotiating informed consent, particularly considering unequal power dynamics between adult researchers and child participants (Alderson and Morrow, 2020). I describe the activity, reflect on its advantages and drawbacks, and touch on the nature of the children's discussions and concerns, which continued throughout the six-month study.

Whose story is it anyway? Constructing and Co-curating participant pen portraits

Claire Hadfield, Plymouth Marjon University

How do we ethically and meaningfully represent participants' experiences in qualitative research—particularly when identity is fluid, partial, and shaped by complex fields of power? This presentation shares a methodological approach developed as part of a PhD study exploring early career secondary teachers' identities in England. Drawing on Bourdieu's (1990) concepts of habitus, field and capital, and working within a reflexive thematic analysis framework (Braun & Clarke, 2021), I am creating 'pen portraits'—composite profiles capturing the contextualised identity trajectories of individual participants.

These portraits are not endpoints of analysis, but dialogic tools, shared with participants, inviting feedback, revision, and negotiation. This collaborative process aims to resist extractive modes of representation and instead foreground teacher voice, agency, and the socio-cultural structures that shape their nascent professional identities.

The presentation reflects on both the practical and epistemological challenges of this method: whose interpretations are privileged, how feedback reshapes meaning, and what it means to produce knowledge with rather than about participants. It argues that co-curated portraits can operate as a form of relational validity (Cousin, 2009), situating participants not as data points but as interlocutors in the production of understanding.

DIGITAL POSTER PRESENTATIONS

We are excited to share with you a fantastic range of posters, covering the breadth of research being undertaken by social science PGRs across the South West of England.

We encourage you to take some time to engage with the posters here, and to make note of any questions or comments you have for the poster presenters to ask them during the conference.

GENDER AND FOOD IN COLONIA: POWER, RESISTANCE, AND IDENTITY

*Agriculture and Household Food Systems under the Portuguese
Estado Novo (1933-1974)*

Zong Yi, University of Bristol

NEWS FRAMING OF QUANTUM COMPUTING

Who benefits from the narratives we tell about quantum computers?

Henry Bennie, University of West of England

PROSPECTIVE ACCEPTABILITY OF DRAMA IN NURSING EDUCATION

A Qualitative Study

Cuihong Xie, University of Exeter

To view the posters, either scan the QR code below or click the following link:



POSTERS

WORKSHOPS

Workshop 1: Slow Thinking, Deep Feeling: Reflective journals as tools in close-to-identity research

Rachel Griffiths, University of Exeter

This hands-on, creative workshop explores the emotional challenges of carrying out close-to-identity research.

Drawing on the facilitator's experience as an educator and mental health worker, it introduces reflective journalling as a transformative tool for processing difficult encounters, supporting self-care, and enhancing ethical awareness.

Participants will engage with poetry and guided prompts to support their own reflective thinking. The session offers practical strategies for slowing down, navigating emotional intensity, and how these can be used positively in thesis writing. Ideal for PGRs working with participants with similar life stories to their own, or interested in trauma-informed, reflective research practices.

Workshop 2: Researching Technology: What Can Social Scientists Bring to the Table?

Ksenia Lavrenteva and Maria Volkova, University of Exeter and Henry Bennie, University of the West of England

This workshop invites participants to critically reflect on how we, as social scientists in a broad sense, engage with technology, not merely as users, but as researchers. In a world increasingly shaped by data, automation, digital platforms, and artificial intelligence, the social sciences are uniquely positioned to question the assumptions, consequences, and power structures embedded in technological systems.

We ask:

- What questions do social scientists bring to the study of technology that technical or managerial approaches often overlook?
- How can social science methodologies help us understand power, positionality, and lived experience in digital systems?
- What does it mean to encounter and care for participants and the wider public when researching digital technologies and their imaginaries?

Grounded in the conference themes of Encountering, Sharing, and Caring, the workshop will open with short provocations drawn from real-world research. These will serve as the basis for discussions exploring both the potential and limitations of different social science approaches. We will discuss: What methodologies enable us to investigate issues of power, responsibility, and subjectivity? And what tensions arise between the design of technical systems and the complexity of social realities?

The session will conclude with a collaborative mapping of critical concerns and open challenges in researching technology from a social science perspective. We welcome participants from all disciplinary backgrounds and career stages.

With this event, we aim to launch a series of workshops on the intersection of social sciences and digital technologies. We are planning to hold the next sessions in January (Exeter) and April (Bristol).

WORKSHOPS

Workshop 3: Creating a culture of agreements in participatory practice? Exploring a new framework to support interpersonal reflexivity.

Hannah Gardener, University of Plymouth

It is suggested public engagement in research or governance is a spectrum (IAP2, 2018) or ladder (Arnstein, 1969); from informing or consulting to collaboration or empowerment. Whilst such measures usefully clarify the type of engagement intended, they do not ensure a good experience for those engaged. We suggest one reason is such frameworks support 'macro-level' project design and evaluation, but not action and reflection at the 'micro-level' of everyday delivery.

We offer a framework to reflect on both 'macro-level' project design, and 'micro-level' interactions between collaborators. Our adaptation of the wheel of consent (Martin, 2016) is the ILBR framework (Gardiner et al., 2025). It prompts us to ask who Initiates (makes requests/offers), does the Labour (the action), gets Benefits, and takes on Risks. Using it allows us to aim for an equitable balance of requests, benefits, labour and risks across collaborators.

This is not advocating maximum engagement at all times, as this may not be desirable for participants (Flicker et al., 2008; Lenette, 2022: 45), and could present ethical risks (Brown, 2022). It's about reframing how we think about participation beyond just the 'level' of engagement. We aim to support growth in interpersonal reflexivity (Chiu, 2006; Nicholls, 2009) and disrupt assumptions and habitual ways of working, supporting a participatory praxis where consent becomes an ongoing dialogue; making transparent the desires and constraints of collaborators.

Participants undertake a role-play exercise to think through the ILBR dimensions. We then reflect on implications for participatory practice, and potential for a culture of agreements.



ORGANISING COMMITTEE



Madison Lindeman (she/her)
University of Bristol

Madison is a third year PhD student at University of Bristol in the School of Geographical Sciences. For her doctoral project, Madison utilises a comprehensive blend of embodiment, feminist, and urban theories to delve into the intricate ways in which women in Western Uganda experience menstruation in their daily lives. Through an intersectional and interdisciplinary approach, Madison's research seeks to comprehend the nuanced interplay between societal, cultural, and structural factors, and how these shape an individual's perception and experience of menstruation.

Margaret I. Abazie-Humphrey
University of Bristol

Margaret is a PhD (Politics) candidate at the School of Sociology, Politics and International Studies (SPAIS), University of Bristol, funded by the Nigerian government. Margaret has worked with Nigerian post-conflict intervention programmes, particularly in disarmament, demobilisation, and reintegration (DDR) of Niger Delta ex-combatants, where she held various technical roles. Her prior DDR experience in Nigeria inspired her doctoral research on the lived experiences of marginalised child soldiers. Using qualitative interviews and Roger Mac Ginty's "Everyday Peace Theory," Margaret investigates how ethnic politics influence marginalised former child soldiers in Nigeria's Niger Delta region in accessing benefits and opportunities within the informal sphere, since their marginalisation renders them invisible to state protection services.



Mónica Sánchez Hernández (she/her)
University of Bristol

Mónica is an Indigenous-rooted, working-class woman from the Global South/Global Majority. She is currently completing her PhD in Social Policy at the University of Bristol (fourth year), having previously studied at universities in Brazil, Belgium, Mexico, and France. Her work experience has centred on education programmes for incarcerated men in Mexico. Her current research examines understandings of manhood within and without prison using art-based methods and decolonising methodologies to study intimate partner violence.

ORGANISING COMMITTEE

Hayley Redman (she/her)
University of Exeter

Hayley is a second year PhD student at University of Exeter in the Faculty of Health and Life Sciences. Hayley is an applied social scientist with an interdisciplinary background. For her PhD, she is researching fathers' experiences of neonatal palliative care, using narrative methods.



Lara Hollander (she/her)
University of Bristol

Lara is a third year PhD student at University of Bristol in the School for Policy Studies. Her mixed-methods research combines health and education paradigms to explore how physically active learning (a pedagogical approach combining movement with learning in curricular lessons) might be implemented successfully in British secondary schools. This includes the amplification of young voices via creative methods.

Rose Bevan-Smith
University of Bath

Rose is a PhD researcher at the University of Bath within POLIS. Her research examines the application of ecocide legislation nationally to inform proposed international laws.



Nina Kleen
University of Bristol

Nina's research focuses on the production of sociodigital futures of buildings and urban spaces by exploring the imaginaries, visualities and materialities of digital construction tools such as Building Information Modelling (BIM). She uses ethnographic methods to research BIM as a future-making practice

The committee would like to say thank you to Jordane Libeaux, Ksenia Lavrenta, Pujan Ghosh and Tomiris Gilazah for chairing sessions, and to Jackson Patterson and Brendan Walsh for all their support and guidance in planning the conference.



WHAT TO EXPECT AT A CONFERENCE

In preparation for the SWDTP Student Conference on 30th October, the conference committee have created this guide! Whether it's your first ever conference, or you just want a refresher on how to make the most of the day, we hope this is helpful.

The guide was made with our upcoming conference in mind - but most points are relevant for any conference!

Attending a conference, especially for the first time, can be a little daunting. They involve a huge amount of attention, from finding the venue, to introducing yourself, and then engaging with the presentations and the socialising... one of our committee members describes this as feeling, **'exciting and drowning at the same time.'**

Conferences are a fantastic opportunity to connect with like-minded people, and can bring loads of exciting opportunities of exchange and support. You may meet incredible people that later became close friends, collaborators, and even employers.

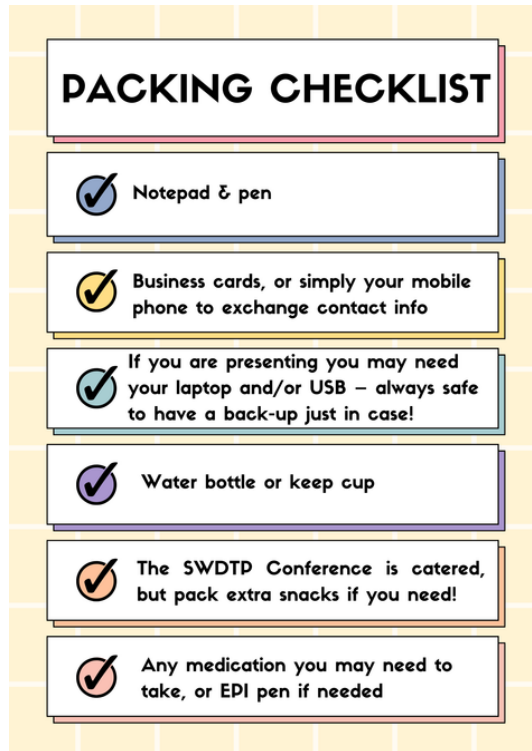
Every single conference is different. Each one has its vibe, its values and its people. However, a lot of the experience of attending or presenting at a conference has to do with you, and how you are.

It is important to recognise that the SWDTP 2025 Conference values the vibrant PGR community and aims to promote the scholarly exchange of ideas within the diverse research of our PGR community.

To promote inclusive and equal access for all participants, we encourage everyone to respect each other's perspectives and offer constructive feedback when needed. We advise our participants to treat others with dignity and respect, free from harassment or bullying, by recognising behaviours that may cause discomfort to others, ensuring that our experience at this conference remains rewarding.

Before the conference:

- Look at the programme and posters in advance to plan which sessions you plan to attend and a couple of people you might like to speak to.
- Prepare a short intro about yourself: e.g., “Hi, I’m [name], a PhD student at [university] researching [X]”
- If you have accessibility needs, don’t hesitate to contact us
- If presenting, email your presentation to the organisers as a back-up
- Make a packing list, which may include:



Extra packing list tips:

- The app ‘Bling!’ can work well as a digital business card, with a free plan available
- Unless presenting, you probably don’t need your laptop and charger – one committee member says, ‘*I always end up carrying my laptop and charger for no reason!*’

- Check on Google Maps where the venue is and plan how you’ll get there in time
- Try and get a good sleep the night before, and a full, nourishing breakfast on the morning of the conference!
- Plan your outfit – something that you’ll be comfortable in, that can also be smart or smart-casual. Layers are a must for the colder seasons! If you’re unsure, here’s a bit of outfit inspo modelled by our previous SWDTP conference attendees (and staff!):



At the conference:

- When you arrive, there will be a desk where you can register. Arrive in time to do this before the first session
- It can be a long day taking in a lot of information, and one of this year's conference themes is caring – this includes caring for your own wellbeing! So stay hydrated, eat, and take time outside if needed (or if things feel overwhelming). These will help you to properly function and engage. Make sure that you listen to your body and your mood!



- Get familiar with the venue layout so you can easily find the rooms of presentations you wish to attend
- Keep your phone on 'Do Not Disturb' – you don't want to be the person awkwardly silencing an incoming call during a presentation!
- Try and speak to different people, be curious and ask about their journey to academia and their research. We can learn so much from each other!
- If approaching people feels daunting, it's okay to start with small talk about the venue or a session you just attended.
- Connect on LinkedIn/Bluesky/Whatsapp with people you meet
- It's normal to feel a bit of imposter syndrome when others seem so confident about their work. But remember that you bring something unique to the table including your passion, your ideas, and the reason you were chosen for your course in the first place!
 - Also remember that everyone's research journey and PhD timeline looks different...

During sessions - attendees:

- If you are late to a session, enter quietly and with as little disruption as possible.
- Respect the speaker and actively listen – do not sit on your phone/laptop etc. and try to avoid side conversations when someone is presenting
- Ask questions – sometimes this can feel intimidating, but kind and constructive questions will be welcomed by speakers
- Tell people if you enjoyed their talk/poster etc – it can be very nerve-wracking presenting and for some of our presenters it will be their first time presenting to a group this size!
- Engage in workshops as much as you can, to get the most out of them
- Not every presentation will be directly relevant to your research, but there is always something useful or interesting you can take away. Embrace hearing about ideas and methods beyond your research ‘box’! Who knows, it may give you a new perspective you hadn’t previously considered!

Speakers:

- Practise a mock presentation to familiarise yourself with the content.
- Try to arrive at your session room early. Deep breaths to focus!
- Avoid jargon. You can simplify your presentation to encourage interaction - focus on sharing your research ideas with the audience rather than striving for perfection.
- Speak clearly and maintain eye contact. Do not rush your presentation, but keep within the time slot.
- Take notes during question time and respond thoughtfully. If you blank on an answer or are unsure, you can always say you’ll get back to the person later!

Afterwards:

- Take some time to reflect
 - What inspired you? What could inform your own work? Who might you like to keep in touch with? What would you do differently at the next conference?
- If you can, send a follow up message to those you would like to stay in touch with. (Otherwise new connections can sometimes be forgotten about!)
- Speakers - learn from your SWDTP Conference experience as a guide for future improvement

**Enjoy yourself, look after yourself,
and stay curious!**

We hope that you have found this guidance useful, and please don’t hesitate to get in touch if you have any questions about the SWDTP Conference day. If you’re unsure who to talk to on the day, come and say hi to the committee or SWDTP staff - we’re here to help you feel welcome!

We can’t wait to see you all on the 30th!