

University of Cologne – Oct 14-19, 2024

EUniWell – MESH – BRIDGES  
Autumn Academy for Planetary Wellbeing

**A Graduate School on Multispecies Conviviality (MESH Well)**

- open call for applications -

At a time of global biodiversity loss, climate disruption, and environmental degradation, wellbeing cannot be restricted to humans but needs to be seen as well through a planetary perspective and as a matter of multispecies conviviality. Grave concerns about multiple ecological ruptures are the source of widespread anxiety as well as anger, especially among young people. The aim of the [MESH Well](#) project and our Autumn Academy is to address these entanglements through an exploration of multispecies conviviality in urban more-than-human environments, with a view to enhancing planetary wellbeing.

The Autumn Academy for Planetary Wellbeing builds on the success of the two prior graduate summer schools organised by the Environmental Humanities initiative within [EUniWell](#) (EHWell) at Linnaeus University (2022) and the University of Florence (2023). We will continue this successful series with a Graduate School linked to our annual *MESH Symposium on Multispecies Conviviality* in October 2024 and the launch of the [UoC BRIDGES Thematic Hub for Planetary Wellbeing](#). Our goal is to create a European community of researchers dedicated to enhancing Planetary (More-than-human) Wellbeing.

## **What?**

The multifaceted character of current socio-ecological crises requires a multidisciplinary approach, which lies at the core of research done at the hosting institution of [MESH](#). Through the Autumn Academy for Planetary Wellbeing, which encompasses the *MESH Symposium on Multispecies Conviviality*, we bring together researchers from the disciplines of anthropology, ecology, education, geography, literary and cultural studies, and philosophy, as well as forging links between universities, and several national and international research organizations, including the [Leibniz Institute for the Analysis of Biodiversity Change](#) (Bonn) and the [BRIDGES UNESCO-MOST](#) coalition for humanities-led sustainability sciences, as well as with local communities, artists and activists from Cologne.

In addition, Cologne-based researchers and visiting international scholars (ecologist [Sandra Diaz](#) and sociologist [Laurel Kearns](#)) will give introductory lectures on the project's relevant themes.

The academic programme of the Autumn Academy also encompasses excursions exploring local forms of multispecies conviviality and biodiversity conservation projects, for example the [Forschungsmuseum Koenig](#) (part of the Leibniz Institute for the Analysis of Biodiversity Change), the [Science Barn of the MPI for Plant Breeding](#) in Cologne Vogelsang or the [Cologne Zoo biodiversity engagement](#) in cooperation with the University of Cologne.

## Who?

The Autumn Academy is open to **master's and doctoral students** from the 4 participating universities (University of Cologne, University of Florence, Nantes University, and Linnaeus University), who are interested in learning more about environmental humanities, multispecies conviviality, and ideas to foster planetary wellbeing.

All accepted students will be reimbursed for their travel expenses and accommodation to and from Cologne (through their home university). In addition, a **certificate** will be issued to each student to testify to their participation in the autumn academy.

As the autumn academy will be conducted in English, **proficiency in English** is a prerequisite. If there is a high number of applications, a selection amongst the candidates will be made.

Participating graduate students will have to

- 1) **produce collaborative posters** that will be presented publicly on Saturday, 19 October 2024
- 2) **write a short research report** (2 pages) on their experience at Autumn Academy for Planetary Wellbeing including ideas on multispecies conviviality.

Exemplary reports will be published as a [MESH Leaf](#) dedicated to our Autumn Academy and Annual Symposium.

## When?

Starting in the morning of **October 14, 2024**, to the early afternoon of **October 19, 2024**.

The autumn academy requires full-time attendance, including evening (social) activities.

There is no tuition fee to participate in the autumn academy, which also includes excursions and field trip experiences.

## Where?

University of Cologne

## How to apply?

Graduate students (MA, PHD level) of any courses and faculties from the 4 participating universities (Cologne, Florence, Linnaeus, Nantes) can apply to participate.

To apply to take part in the autumn academy, please send a **short CV** (maximum two pages; with your personal details) and a **motivational letter** to Saskia Maassen, [smaasse3@uni-koeln.de](mailto:smaasse3@uni-koeln.de) by **July 31, 2024**.

**Notifications of acceptance will be emailed to the applicants by end of August 2024.**

## Questions?

Academic inquiries: Christoph Lange, [c.lange@uni-koeln.de](mailto:c.lange@uni-koeln.de)

General inquiries: Saskia Maassen, [smaasse3@uni-koeln.de](mailto:smaasse3@uni-koeln.de)