

Call for papers

Does Science need Heroes? (Nobel) Prize cultures in the Netherlands

The history of the Nobel Prize, the most prestigious and visible science award in the world, is since the very beginning in 1901 intertwined with Dutch science history. Counting more than twenty Dutch laureates to date, among others Einthoven, van 't Hoff and Tinbergen, the Netherlands rank among the top ten nations in the statistics of Nobelists per country. Having said that, our understanding of how awards have been and are used as a symbol for excellence has remained poor. Using the Netherlands as a case-study, this symposium aims at investigating how scientific prizes in general and the Nobel Prize in particular are enacted in different settings (museums, universities, cities) and for various purposes. Drawing on current discussions about 'heroes' in science (vs. teamwork), we wish to explore the meanings and motives of scientific accolades in the Netherlands and beyond.

The symposium is primarily interested in contributions that shed light on the history, uses and future of prizes in the sciences. Proposals may focus on functions and objectives of major awards (historical or contemporary case studies), individual (Nobel) laureates or nominees, and how prizes shape science communication and/or the public understanding of science. We are also open for papers that approach 'excellence' in the sciences more broadly, also considering minorities in prize populations. One such example is the Gender Award Gap: Why do women receive fewer and less prestigious scientific awards than men?

The symposium, organized by the Rijksmuseum Boerhaave and Nils Hansson, Heinrich-Heine-University, Düsseldorf, will take place in Leiden **September 29-30, 2023**. We welcome proposals that include title, abstract (300 words max.), presenter's name, affiliation and e-mail address. We intend to launch a volume in English with selected articles during the symposium. Please send your abstract no later than **July 15, 2022** to nils.hansson@hhu.de and admaas@rijksmuseumboerhaave.nl

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