

CONFERENCE

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ACTIVE

NIS 2026 : Novelty and Inequalities in Science: International Research Symposium on Recognizing and Rewarding Novelty in Science

LOCATION

Czech Republic

SUBJECT / TOPIC

General

EVENT DATES

October 8-9, 2026

LAST UPDATED

28th June, 2026

DESCRIPTION

Centre for Science, Technology, and Society Studies at the Czech Academy of Sciences invites prospective participants to submit abstracts for presentation at the international research symposium Novelty and Inequalities in Science, to be held in Prague, Czechia, on October 8-9, 2026.

Every entry in the scientific record is expected to deliver a novel contribution to the stock of knowledge. Yet, despite its implied omnipresence, novelty has lately emerged as itself a novel research object in the science of science. This shift compels us to examine the social processes driving novelty to the forefront of scientific inquiry, and whether the concept complements or supplants established notions such as priority or originality.

What motivates the current emphasis on novelty? There is an increasing concern that the proportion of truly novel work shrinks despite - or perhaps due to - the exponential growth in scholarly communication.

Other explanations point to policy frameworks that prioritize innovation and commercialization, gradually seeping into the research agenda from the outside. But on the inside, the availability of new computational tools and large-scale datasets has also enabled scholars to tackle previously elusive concepts such as novelty. Either way, the question of what counts as novel, and who gets to decide, has acquired fresh urgency.

Upon closer look, novelty remains an ambiguous concept. It oscillates between a property of scientific work determinable ex ante, at the time of publication, and a process of recognition that can only be retraced ex post, susceptible to social prejudice. While novelty is frequently treated as an asset that earns rewards, there are also indications that it acts as a liability subjecting academic careers to penalties from risk aversion.

Understanding how funding agencies, peers, and research institutions identify, evaluate, and reward novelty - and whose novel contributions are overlooked - requires a critical interrogation of structural inequalities in the academic field. In this context, the development of algorithmic measures holds the potential to either disentangle novelty from prestige

KEY DEADLINES

Submission **30th Jun, 2026**

Conference **8th Oct, 2026**

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CALL FOR PAPER URL

<https://callforpaper.org/cfp/call-for-papers-ni>

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or exacerbate academic audit culture.

The symposium aims to provide a collaborative platform to reflect on the recent attention devoted to novelty research and discuss the relationship between novelty and inequalities in science. We welcome empirically grounded contributions driven by computational, network, quantitative, or qualitative methods in disciplines such as the science of science, research on research, scientometrics, and sociology of science.

Participants are encouraged to share both accomplished and research-in-progress work for non-archival presentation and debate. To submit an abstract of 150-300 words by June 30, 2026, find out more details, or get the latest updates, visit <https://stss.flu.cas.cz/novelty2026> or send an inquiry to novelty2026@flu.cas.cz.

Suggested topics include:

Measuring and recognizing novelty
Inequalities in novelty assessment
Novelty and funding allocation
Risk aversion, gatekeeping, and barriers to novel research
Neglected novelty and delayed recognition
Novelty and interdisciplinarity
Types of novelty in science
Novelty in career trajectories
Novelty and team or epistemic diversity
Policy demands or support for novelty
Impact of AI technologies on scientific novelty