



VRIJE
UNIVERSITEIT
AMSTERDAM

FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

Talma Event 2023

Friday 20 January 2023 (14:30 – 17:00)

Nominees FSS Research Awards

Every year, the Faculty of Social Sciences grants three research awards: a masterthesis award, a dissertation award and a research award. The winners will be announced on Friday 20 January, at the Talma Event.



Nominees FSS (junior) Research Award

The FSS Research Award aims to bring the most appealing, promising and original research achievements into the spotlight. Each academic department of the FSS may nominate one candidate. This year the FSS Research Award will be granted to a junior research talent.

Tijs van den Broek (Organization Sciences)

Tijs van den Broek is an interdisciplinary and engaged organization scientist who strives to impact science and practice by bridging disciplines, methods, and stakeholders inside and outside academia.

His research interests include: 1) online forms of organizing, such as symbolic protest mobilization, peer-to-peer fundraising, and mediation in (polarized) online discussions, 2) the social evaluation of organizations on social media, such as judgments related to organizational legitimacy, reputation, and authenticity, and 3) the governance of data collaborations and ecosystems.

Methodologically, he advocates an open, team-based, and interdisciplinary perspective on research and employs multiple methods, such as network analysis, experiments, database analyses and case studies, to grasp the dynamics of online social networks. For example, he has collaborated with computer scientists to develop machine learning algorithms to measure social concepts, such as perspective-taking, based on text.



Andreu Casas (Communication Science)

Andreu Casas is a computational social scientist working on political communication, public policy, and legislative politics. The substantive goal of his research is to build a better understanding of the policymaking process, broadly speaking, in the current digital society.

His research in political communication and public policy looks at how social media has shaped collective action dynamics; how social movements, interest groups, political parties, and the public, use public communications to influence the political agenda; the role of (social) media in increasing/ameliorating polarization; and the regulation of political speech on social media. His research on legislative politics looks at the conditions under which legislators and parties influence policy through less prominent (e.g. amendments) and more informal (e.g. bundling legislation) mechanisms.

In all his research he develops/applies novel computational methods (text-as-data and images-as-data) that allow him to unlock important (classic and new) research questions that could not be answered otherwise.



Yarin Eski (Political Science and Public Administration)

Yarin Eski is an exceptionally active researcher with remarkable societal impact. His research output is highly above average and of consistently high quality. Besides 14 articles in good journals, he has published 2 monographs: a book on genocide and a biography of an arms dealer. He has developed his own research line on the governance of crime and is or has been involved in various commissioned research projects in this field.

Yarin's research is valued and used by fellow academics as well as by practitioners from relevant public organizations. He is also an often-invited expert in the media. One example: his report "Van Verhalen naar Verbalen" on the failing policy against drugs-related crime in the port areas of the greater Amsterdam region was the topic of a Nieuwsuur item, has been referred to by Minister of Justice Grapperhaus, and has been presented to the mayors of Amsterdam, Velsen, and Zaanstad. With this profile, Yarin is crucial for B&P's strong applied-research record in the field of security & resilience.



Tara Fiorito (Sociology)

Tara Fiorito is an ambitious and thriving socially engaged sociologist concerned with describing, understanding, and tackling different forms of exclusion and enhancing societal inclusion and resilience by cocreating knowledge and societal impact with diverse societal stakeholders and communities.

She works on qualitative research on, for, and with undocumented immigrant youth (and their families) in the Netherlands. Based on qualitative, creative, and participatory research methods and the intensive involvement of societal partners, this research has the ambition to contribute to the societal inclusion and resilience of undocumented youth in the Netherlands and the inclusive capacity and resilience of Dutch institutions and organisations.

Central to her research are the different (explicit and implicit) forms of exclusion that undocumented youth experience in the Netherlands and how society (and organisations within society) can contribute to and profit from the societal inclusion of this group. In her research, she attempts to identify institutional barriers to the inclusion of undocumented youth to develop strategies that contribute to their inclusion. On top of this, she seeks to strengthen the resilience, talents, wishes, narratives, and future perspectives of the youths to further increase the adaptive, innovative, and inclusive capacity of Dutch social, educational, governmental, and commercial organisations and institutions.



Luisa Schneider (Social and Cultural Anthropology)

Luisa Schneider is interested in researching how marginalized groups reconfigure political and judicial systems. Because middle-income groups are at increased risk of becoming houseless, she began researching precariously housed people in the Netherlands, where social rental and free-market dynamics collide, and skyrocketing prices drive medium earners from cities.

Her research focuses on how the fundamental rights to privacy, protection for relationships and families, custody of children, health, safety or political participation depend on housing. She analyzes the individual and societal consequences of houselessness and the associated restrictions on basic rights.

She conducted 3 1/2 years of ethnographic fieldwork where she lived with houseless people on their terms in Germany. There, she also advised politicians, practitioners and policymakers about this subject. She uncovered that rising rents, speculation, and housing shortages spur disputes over basic rights, social needs and government promises, which feed mistrust and populism and test European democracies. Her work investigates how the everyday actions of affected people reshape society, social cohesion, law and democracy. It shows the need for imperatives to develop solutions, mitigate antagonism and secure the democratic contract.



Nominees FSS Dissertation Award

The FSS Dissertation Award seeks to increase the high quality of empirical research in the broad field of social sciences. The granting of the FSS Dissertation Award is open to all FSS former PhD students that defended their dissertations in the past two years at the faculty.

Sarah van Duijn (Organization Sciences)

Promoters: Sierk Ybema & Henk Nies

Collaboration is essential to working with colleagues, negotiating with partners, and addressing complex societal issues. However, collaboration is complex due to challenges in (re)arranging interaction across organizational, sectoral, and hierarchical boundaries. In this dissertation, Sarah van Duijn examines the dynamics of collaborative governance following a large healthcare reform that spans the health and social care sectors.

Her empirical analysis provides new insights into the interplay between different forms of boundary work. First, it underlines the value of adopting an interpretive and processual approach for studying collaborative governance. Second, it further develops the interconnectedness between different forms (i.e., decentral and central) of boundary work. Third, the dissertation explains how different forms of boundary work, and the enduring tensions in collaborative governance, can be mutually informative. This unearths a new form of boundary work: counter-configurational boundary work, a term for the responses of decentral actors to the configuring actions of central actors.

[Read the dissertation here.](#)



Adane Gebeyehu (Social and Cultural Anthropology)

Promoter: Jan Abbink

Climate change represents a profound challenge to the lives of (agro-)pastoralists, who are acutely dependent on natural resources. Adapting to climate change is important for maintaining livelihoods and ensuring sustainable development. In this dissertation, Adane studies how (agro-)pastoralists of the Nyangatom district in the Omo Valley (Ethiopia) have adapted to climate change and how large-scale development projects have influenced their adaptation efforts and overall food security. Adane Gebeyehu takes the perspective of the pastoralists, who face an extremely complicated situation. This area was subject to rapid agricultural development (mostly to produce biofuel), and dam construction, which, combined with climate change, left little room for sustainable use of pastoral resources. The Nyangatom pastoralists integrate traditional knowledge of weather, seasonal vegetation cover, peace and security, animal diseases, and livestock physical status in their grazing decisions. The Nyangatom area has development potential for the (agro-)pastoralists if they are empowered to solve vast seasonal fodder deficits.

[Read the dissertation here.](#)



Lisa Marie Kraus (Sociology)

Promoter: Maurice Crul

For decades, researchers have studied how people with a migration background integrate into ethnic majority societies. Now that the ethnic majority has become a local numerical minority, Lisa Marie Kraus's dissertation flips the question: how do people without a migration background integrate into majority-minority contexts?

She answers this research question in four empirical chapters which are based on data stemming from a rich mix of quantitative and qualitative methods: a large-scale international survey (n = 2,457), semi-structured face-to-face interviews (n = 20) and a vignette survey experiment (n = 364). The outcomes show that by going beyond merely polarised reactions, the integration of people without a migration background is more complex than previously assumed. Integration depends on socio-economic background plus previous experience with diversity, and does not happen without further effort. The employment of social strategies is necessary to become an integrated insider in spaces in which this group is a minority.

[Read the dissertation here.](#)



William (Liam) Stephens (Political Science & Public Administration)

Promoter: Hans Boutellier

Over the past decades, many targeted policy strategies for countering extremism (CVE) have shown all kinds of weaknesses and side effects, especially for already marginalized citizens. Awareness of these serious downsides led to a whole branch of more generic social strategies aimed at the prevention of violent extremism (PVE). Yet, tackling or preventing radicalisation in education (PVE-E) is one of the most notable and promising fruits of this branch.

In his dissertation, William Stephens analyses the central notion of 'building resilience' towards extremism in a systematic and thought-provocative way. Based on careful methodology and meticulous argumentation, Stephens traces the different ways of thinking about resilience to radicalisation that exists among policy-makers and practitioners. It is then concluded that tracing out these different perspectives can lay the foundation for a deeper discussion on these issues amongst people coming from different standpoints in order to inform better formal and non-formal PVE-E practices.

[Read the dissertation here.](#)



Nominees FSS Johannes van der Zouwen Master Thesis Award

The Johannes van der Zouwen Masterthesis Award is the prize for the best master's thesis in the field of social science research. The master thesis has to be graded with a minimum of 8 and has to be completed and graded a maximum of 1 year before the submission date.
Each master programme of FSS may nominate a thesis.

Eline van der Beek

Master: Communication Science

Title: Voter Preferences and Candidate's

Personality Traits: Researching the Role of Masculinity
and Femininity as a cue for Stereotyping of Political
Candidates.

Supervisor: Alberto López Ortega



Robbert Dillema

Master: Social and Cultural Anthropology

Title: “Taking it on the chest”: Tactical navigators among youth in the nets of neoliberal confinement

Supervisor: Luisa T. Schneider



Tom Kiel

Master: Political Science

Title: Community-supported agriculture as a means
to reconnect people to nature: A natural quasi-
experiment

Supervisor: Joshua Maiyo



Tessa Leegwater

Master: Culture, Organization & Management

Title: When friendship becomes a must:

Exploring workplace friendship in a culture of fun
through the lens of biopower

Supervisor: Patrizia Hoyer



Marjolein Nillessen

Master: Policy, Communication & Organisation

Title: "Oh No, What Will They Think of Me?" A Meta-Analytical Review of Reputational Concern & (Dis)Honesty

Supervisor: Annika Nieper



Danique de Rijk

Master: Societal Resilience

Title: Smuggling knowledge, policing 'habitus' and
pioneering innovation: A study on the Public

Prosecutor, social innovation & learning-led maritime
policing of drug smuggling

Supervisor: Yarin Eski

