



AURORA

Take the opportunity to meet your peers as well as renowned researchers from the Aurora partner universities. Expand your network and maybe even start new collaborations in your research area!

# Societal Challenges

Virtual Lecture Series &  
Early Career Networking Hour  
2021–2022 Academic Year



**Prof. Dr. Ir. Bart Bossink**  
**Univ. Prof. Mag. Dr. Dirk Rupnow**

In these times of climate change, pandemic, forced migration and increasing economic and political alienation, crisis talk is ubiquitous. While the world's problems are unquestionably urgent, the current discourse of emergency risks aggravating them by privileging quick but ineffective reaction over the calm, reflexive analysis that is a necessary first step in combatting the woes besetting us.

The objective of this lecture series is to provide an antidote to impulsive disaster talk through perceptive academic analysis. Outstanding researchers within the Aurora University Alliance will give engaging online lectures during the 2021–2022 academic year on cutting edge research within two broad domains, Sustainability & Climate Change and Culture: Diversity & Identity.

*Organizers: Dr. Toby Erik Wikström, University of Iceland &  
Dr. Estefania Velilla, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam  
Supported by: Graduate Center Plus, University of Duisburg-Essen*



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# Program for the Academic Year 2021–2022

The lectures will take place on Zoom and the networking sessions on the interactive Wonder platform. You can register for individual dates or the entire series. You will receive a certificate for your participation.

[Learn more and register here!](#)

## October



**13 October 2021, 17:00–18:30 CET**

Circular innovation and sustainable entrepreneurship  
Prof. Dr. Ir. Bart Bossink (Sustainability and Innovation, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam)



**27 October 2021, 17:00–18:30 CET**

Ignorance, ritual, abuse, and competition: The politics of Holocaust memory in the 21st century  
Univ.-Prof. Mag. Dr. Dirk Rupnow (History, University of Innsbruck)

## November



**11 November 2021, 17:00–18:30 CET**

Have you ever loved someone without housing? Houselessness and fundamental rights in a welfare state  
Dr. Luisa Schneider (Social and Cultural Anthropology, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam)



**18 November 2021, 17:00–18:30 CET**

Insect declines in the Anthropocene: Framing is everything  
Prof. Dr. Jeff Harvey (Animal Ecology, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam)

## February



**16 February 2022, 17:00–18:30 CET**

Historical and literary perspectives on pandemics: The need for a gendered response  
Prof. Dr. Patricia Plummer (Postcolonial Studies, University of Duisburg-Essen)



**17 February 2022, 17:00–18:30 CET**

Places to intervene in a system in crisis: Paradigm shift through Wellbeing Economy and Ecocide Law  
Prof. Kristín Vala Ragnarsdóttir (Sustainability, University of Iceland)

## March



**23 March 2022, 17:00–18:30 CET**

Measuring sustainability  
Doc. Mgr. Miroslav Syrovátka (Development & Environmental Studies, Palacký University Olomouc)



**24 March 2022, 17:00–18:30 CET**

Is there something new in 'neo-nationalism'? Right-wing populism in historical perspective  
Prof. Guðmundur Hálfðánarson (History, University of Iceland)

## April



**7 April 2022, 17:00–18:30 CET**

The importance of early climate mitigation for future glacier change  
Dr. Fabien Maussion (Atmospheric and Cryospheric Sciences, University of Innsbruck)



**19 April 2022, 17:00–18:30 CET**

Decolonial approaches to laïcité as a mode to re-think contemporary Islamophobia  
Prof. Nadia Kiwan (French and Francophone Studies, University of Aberdeen)