

Call for Abstracts (Düsseldorf, Deadline: June 30, 2025)

Workshop: Functional Explanation in the Philosophy of Language

We are pleased to invite early-career researchers to contribute talks at the workshop „Functional Explanation in the Philosophy of Language“. The workshop takes place as a „Satellite Workshop“ right after GAP.12, the international congress of the Society for Analytic Philosophy, on September 12 at Heinrich-Heine-University Düsseldorf, Germany.

The workshop aims to bring together researchers in the philosophy of language and linguistics to focus on the role that the attribution of functions to linguistic entities such as concepts (e.g. concepts of race and gender), linguistic systems (e.g. modal and moral language), or language as a whole can play in settling debates in the philosophy of language.

Rather than focusing on particular functional hypotheses, the goal of the workshop is to address general methodological questions on the use and usefulness of functional explanations in the philosophy of language (e.g. what grounds function attribution to a linguistic entity? What impact does the choice of concept of function have on our explanations? Which types of explananda are legitimate? How could functional explanations be more useful in theorizing about language than other types of explanation? How do paradigmatic functional explanations transfer to the study of language?).

Confirmed speakers:

- Amie L. Thomasson (Dartmouth College)
- Miriam Taverniers (Universiteit Gent)
- Eliot Michaelson (King's College London)

We will invite up to three early-career researchers (max. three years after acquisition of PhD) to contribute talks (30 minutes presentation, 10 minutes discussion). Should you be interested, please submit two abstracts (one short abstract of 150 words, one longer abstract of 1000 words incl. references and footnotes) to functions-gap12@uni-due.de by June 30, 2025. Notifications of acceptance will be sent out come early July.

We can cover up to two nights in a hotel as well as second class travel within Europe. Unfortunately, due to budgetary restrictions, researchers traveling from outside Europe might only be eligible for partial subsidization. If you intend to travel from outside Europe and require travel funding, please indicate so in your application.

Attendance of the workshop is free of charge, but registration prior to September 10, 2025 is required. For this as well as any further questions, please contact us via functions-gap12@uni-due.de.

Organizers: Raphael van Riel (Duisburg-Essen), Kai Ploemacher (Duisburg-Essen)