

Constellations – 2024 AHRC International Conference

16–18 September 2024, Robinson College, Cambridge

Call for Papers

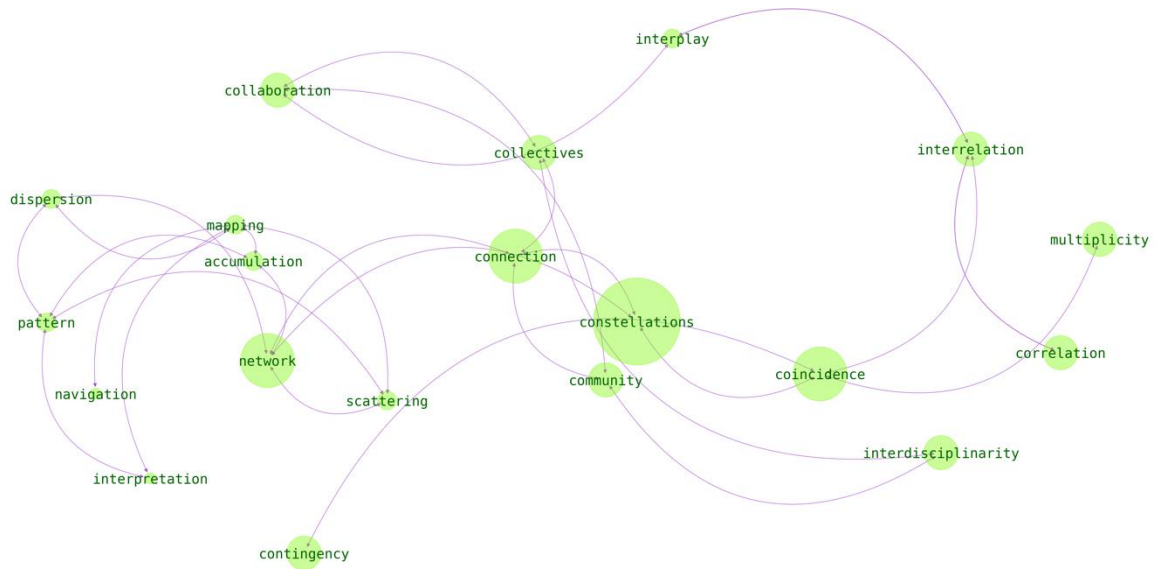
Constellations are groupings and networks which exist on the border between subjectivity and objectivity. They can be composed of objectively related ideas or objects or can be the result of human interpretation, subjectively connecting disparate concepts. Seeing constellations, and imaginatively creating them for ourselves, is a fundamental part of human nature. Our work as scholars involves perceiving and interpreting diverse and multiple patterns in the world around us. We connect ideas together, making them intelligible and helping us better understand our world. There is always room for multiplicity, different ways of looking at and connecting the same set of patterns and ideas.

This year's conference theme of constellations focuses on networks, connection, relation, collectivity, and interplay. It also recognises the vital importance of collaboration and community to our work. Constellations have another valence as shared points by which to navigate or map the night sky, and the world in which we move.

Submissions could explore how we can creatively connect points across disciplines, space, time, and language. Alternatively, papers may interrogate the boundary between conceptually useful but subjective constellations and the recognition of more objective relations, and consider the methodological implications of each approach. Applicants may also want to consider orientation, navigation, and ways of mapping out their field of study.

We accept proposals from all subjects in the arts and humanities for individual 20-minute papers and for themed panels (3 x 20-minute papers). We are also open to submissions for 5-minute lightning talks and/or creative responses. Potential topics and approaches include, but are not limited to:

- * Unexpected political, social, or historical communities and networks across space and time.
- * Artistic or literary movements and genres, connections between different artists, writers, or artworks.
- * Interdisciplinary connections and constellations.
- * Disparate connections, scattering, dispersion, and diaspora.
- * Path-finding, mapping, navigation, and orienteering (literally and/or figuratively).
- * Connections between humans and non-human factors (e.g. geography, ecology, technology, systems of law and politics).
- * Methodologies and ways of working which relate to connection, collectivity, and collaboration.
- * The role of interpretation in creating scholarly narratives.
- * Theories of connection, such as Walter Benjamin's concept of constellations, network studies, or Pierre Bourdieu's actor-network theory.



[In the graphic (from left to right): dispersion, pattern, navigation, interpretation, accumulation, mapping, collaboration, network, contingency, scattering, connection, collectives, community, constellations, interplay, coincidence, interdisciplinarity, interrelation, correlation, multiplicity]

Practical Info

All proposals should include a title, a brief abstract (no more than 250 words), 3 keywords relating to your proposed paper, and a brief speaker biography of no more than 100 words. Please submit your proposal to the a.r.t.e.s. Graduate School for the Humanities no later than 3 May 2024.

About the Conference

The Ninth Annual AHRC International Conference, supported by the Open-Oxford-Cambridge AHRC DTP, will bring together doctoral students from: the Open University, the universities of Oxford and Cambridge, a.r.t.e.s. Graduate School of Cologne University, Australian National University, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), and Stockholm University. Funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council UK (AHRC), the conference will facilitate interdisciplinary discussions and collaborations. It will be a space to present and debate the theme of Constellations in any and all forms, speaking across and between areas of study. It is an opportunity for attendees to introduce their work to the global research community, establish new connections, spotlight new areas for collaboration, and consider how the bringing together of disparate disciplines and subjects can produce fruitful new scholarship and debate.

We will be joined by high-profile keynote speakers from a number of institutions, who will be announced in due course. Each day of our conference will include social events and activities (e.g. poetry readings, movie nights, museum/city tours, yoga), coffee and lunch breaks, and conference dinners to allow attendees and panellists to network and explore Cambridge.