

NICOLIEN JANSSENS

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About Me

I am a PhD candidate working in the field of democratic innovations, aiming to enhance democratic participation. With a background in philosophy, logic, and social choice theory, I focus on designing online democratic platforms that align with democratic, specifically deliberative, values.

In addition to my research, I run a monthly radio show, "Talk That Science," broadcast live on echobox.radio.

Education

Master in Logic

University of Amsterdam

2020 – 2022

- Computation Track | GPA: 8.3/10
- Thesis: *Communicate and Vote: Collective Truth-Tracking in Networks*
- Supervisors: Davide Grosse & Giuseppe Dari-Mattiacci

Visiting Student

University of Edinburgh, Scotland

2018

Bachelor in Philosophy

University of Amsterdam

2016 – 2019

- Specialization: Analytic Philosophy and Logic | Cum Laude
-

Work Experience

Visiting PhD

Munich Center for Mathematical Philosophy, Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich

October 2024 - Present

- Visiting PhD in Philosophy and Decision Theory, chaired by Christian List

PhD Candidate

Erasmus University Rotterdam

April 2022 - Present

- Focus: Digital, deliberative, and participatory democracy | Social choice theory
- Supervisors: Frederik van de Putte, Jack Vromen

Research Associate & Assistant

Center for Law and Economics, Amsterdam

2020 - 2022

- Worked on the Humane Artificial Intelligence project, *Collective Decisions in Law and Economics: A Computational Perspective*, with Davide Grosse & Giuseppe Dari-Mattiacci
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Teaching Experience

Teaching Assistant

Erasmus University Rotterdam

- TA for the course *Deliberative Democracy*, May – June 2022
- TA for the course *Social Choice Theory and Political Representation*, December 2022 – January 2023
 - Guest lecture on Liquid Democracy
- Grading for the course *Deliberative Democracy*, January 2023
- TA for the course *Film en Filosofie*, October 2023 – January 2024
 - Guest lecture on *Digitale Democratie: een vloek of zegen?*

Teaching & Student Assistant

University of Amsterdam

2020

- Assisted in the BSc Artificial Intelligence course *Cognitive Modelling*

- Supporting PhD candidate Arnold Kochari with data collection
-

Science Communication

Organization

- Panel discussion on Digital Democracy, *1st Conference of the European Network for Digital Democracy*, 2024 | <https://www.eddy-network.eu/in-person-conference/panel-discussion>
- Festival *Talk That Science Live*, 2023 | <https://www.de-sering.org/event-details/talk-that-science>

Talks

- *Collectively uncovering the unknown*, Wijsgerig Festival Drift, 2023

Science Radio Host

Talk That Science

2020 – Present

- Manage the nonprofit radio show and platform *Talk That Science*, combining science with music to reach a broader public | talkthatsscience.com
-

Academic Service

Editor

Erasmus Journal for Philosophy and Economics (EJPE)

2024 – Present

- Role: Editor and webmaster | ejpe.org/journal

Reading Group

2023 – Present

- Founder of the monthly OZSW reading group on Digital Democracy
-

Talks

Communicate and Vote: Collective Truth-Tracking in Networks

- Ghent University, June 2022

Optimal k-Approval for Participatory Budgeting

- Esphil PhD Lunch Seminar, September 2022

Liquid Democracy

- Guest Lecture for the course *Social Choice Theory and Political Representation*, January 2023

Digitale Democratie: Vloek of Zegen?

- Guest Lecture for the course *Film en Filosofie*, November 2023

Ranking on Online Deliberation and Decision Making Platforms

- EIPE PhD Seminar, December 2023
- Decision and Action Theory Mini-Workshop, Munich Centre for Mathematical Philosophy, January 2024
- Poster Presentation at *Digital Democracy: Bridging Theory and Practice*, 1st Conference of the European Network for Digital Democracy, April 2024
- Social Epistemology of Argumentation Conference, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, April 2024

Diversity for Online Deliberation

- Digital Democracy Workshop, Digital Society Initiative, Zurich, October 2024

Publications

Enabling the Digital Democratic Revival: A Research Program for Digital Democracy

This white paper presents a long-term scientific vision for developing digital democracy technology, advocating for a comprehensive multi-methods research effort to support participatory renewal in society. It is co-authored by an interdisciplinary team and emerged from the Lorentz Center Workshop on "Algorithmic Technology for Democracy" (Leiden, October 2022).

Grossi, D., Hahn, U., Mäs, M., Nitsche, A., Behrens, J., Boehmer, N., ... & Van De Putte, F. (2024). *Enabling the Digital Democratic Revival: A Research Program for Digital Democracy*. arXiv preprint arXiv:2401.16863. [Link to the paper](#)

Student Publications

Being Optimistic About Skepticism

This article critiques various contextualist responses to skepticism, arguing that no form of contextualism adequately addresses the challenges posed by the brain in a vat thought experiment. It concludes that skepticism can be accepted without it being a problem, as skeptic pragmatic contextualism provides a plausible explanation for our intuitive knowledge claims.

Janssens, N. (2020). We Don't Know We Have Hands and It's Fine: Being Optimistic About Skepticism. Stance: An International Undergraduate Philosophy Journal, 13, 106-116. [Link to the paper](#)

De Jure Rigidity

This paper discusses Kripke's doctrine of rigid designation, arguing that while proper names and natural kind terms are de jure rigid, the rigidity problem extends to descriptions acting as singular terms. It defends Kripke's argument against descriptivism by distinguishing between de jure and de facto rigidity.

Janssens, N. (2018). De Jure Rigidity. Aporia 18 (1):9-18. [Link to the paper](#)

Ethiek van en voor het klinisch laboratorium

This article emphasizes the importance of ethical considerations in clinical laboratory work, discussing the ISO15189 guidelines and the relevance of ethical norms and values in daily practice. It highlights the necessity of established guidelines to enhance quality and reduce variability in laboratory settings.

Janssens, P., Scholten, A., Janssens, N. (2018). Ethiek van en voor het klinisch laboratorium. Laboratoriumgeneeskunde No. 1. [Link to the paper](#)