

The Philosophy of Neutrality

Call for Papers - The 2025 Symposium of the Swiss Philosophical Society

Overview

The concept of neutrality permeates philosophy, science, and everyday life. From state neutrality in international relations to value neutrality in social sciences, from emotional neutrality to neutral monism in metaphysics, this fundamental concept raises crucial questions across disciplines.

- Political Philosophy: State neutrality in international relations and domestic policy
- Philosophy of Science: Value neutrality, scientific objectivity
- Ethics: Neutrality of meta-ethics, agent-neutral reasons, population ethics
- Epistemology: Suspension of judgment between belief and disbelief
- (Meta)metaphysics: Neutrality of metaphysical frameworks, descriptive vs critical metaphysics
- Philosophy of Mind: Neutral monism, psychological descriptions
- Logic and Mathematics: Ontological neutrality, zero values
- Social Philosophy: Institutional neutrality in universities, media, and public spaces
- ...

Key Questions

Papers may explore any aspect of neutrality across philosophical domains. Potential questions include, but are not limited to:

- Is there a common core concept of neutrality that cuts across ethics, logic, philosophy of mind, politics, economics, science, etc., or are there only fragmented, loosely related uses of a single term?
- Should neutrality be understood as an absence or rather as a balance between opposing forces, ideas, or actions?
- If neutrality is an absence, what is it an absence of?
- If neutrality is a balance, what is it a balance between, and how is the opposition to be understood?
- What kinds of entities can be said to be neutral?
- Is neutrality a good thing (perhaps on a par with impartiality) or a bad thing (perhaps on a par with compromise, in the negative sense)?
- Is neutrality achievable?
- Is a form of neutrality (e.g., political neutrality) desirable in some contexts (e.g., schools) and not in others (e.g., the political arena)?
- What is the opposite of neutral: biased, subjective, unbalanced, one-sided, opinionated, prejudiced, committed, engaged, value-laden, passionate?
- What is the relationship between neutrality and cognate ideas such as impartiality, compromise, pluralism, agnosticism, balance or moderation?
- ...

Submissions

Up to 60 papers will be selected for presentation. We welcome submissions on the conference theme from all areas of philosophy and the history of philosophy. Beyond scholarly quality, the primary selection criterion is relevance to the overarching theme of the conference. The questions mentioned above serve only as suggestions; submissions need not focus on them, provided they engage with the conference topic in some way. Each talk will be allocated 40 minutes, with a maximum of 25 minutes for the presentation and at least 15 minutes for Q&A.

Submissions should be sent via email to neuchtrality@gmail.com by **March 15, 2025**. Please submit an anonymized PDF file containing an extended abstract of approximately 650–850 words (excluding references), a short abstract (100–150 words), and at least three keywords. Your full name, title, and affiliation must be included in the body of the email. Decisions will be communicated by May 31.

Submissions may be in English, German, French, or Italian, though English contributions are expected to attract the largest audience. We particularly encourage submissions from postdoctoral researchers and advanced Ph.D. students.

Fees

A participation fee of CHF 60 applies, with a 50% reduction for students, including Ph.D. candidates. Unfortunately, we are unable to provide travel grants or accommodation stipends.

Date

27 au 29 août 25

Horaire

TBA

Lieu

Institut de langue et civilisation françaises
Faubourg de l'Hôpital 61-63
2000 Neuchâtel

Organisation

Prof. Olivier Massin

[CFP](#)