

# COMPETITION PROGRAMME 2021 TEYLERS TWEEDE GENOOTSCHAP HAARLEM

In keeping with the *Teylers Stichting's* 200-year-old tradition of promoting academic research, the Directors of this foundation *Teylers Stichting*, together with the members of the *Teylers Tweede Genootschap* (Teyler's Second Society), have decided to hold a competition for the year 2021 on a subject that touches upon various academic fields as well as many social developments.

## SUBJECT

We invite an original study on the importance of images for the development of academic fields and/or society, with a focus on the influence that such visual material has on the credibility of associated knowledge claims ("*seeing is believing*").

## FURTHER INFORMATION

Examples of the illustrative or persuasive power of images are not only found in virtually all academic fields, but also in the arts, news coverage and social developments. The use of images, and in the past century in particular also of photography and film, has increased significantly, but in recent years we have entered a new phase in which images can be digitally altered and therefore manipulated.

Until the first half of the previous century, astronomical discoveries were made almost entirely with optical instruments: microbiology as a discipline resulted from the development of the microscope and X-rays allowed us to look straight through the human body. Besides visual observations, demonstrations have also been crucial in the development of the natural and medical sciences – the devices in the Teylers Museum are a testimony to the power of images for discoveries and demonstrations.

However, modern research now often takes place using techniques that do not yield "images", but which researchers can adapt or translate into an image that resembles a photograph. This not only applies to many astronomical observations (including the recent iconic "photograph" of a black hole, which is an adaptation of measurements made with electromagnetic waves of 1-2 mm), but also to countless scientific or bio-medical observations on the scale of atoms or biological cells. Animations of dynamic processes on a scale that cannot be directly observed, from the biological processes on the scale of a cell to the merging of black holes, are gaining ground. Aside from this significant development in undisputed research, image processing is increasingly being called into question in cases involving fraud in the natural and medical sciences: where do we draw the line between the processing of images in terms of scientific data and scientific fraud? And what are the consequences for the social acceptance of science?

The power of images is naturally evident throughout social sciences and humanities and is closely intertwined with art. Images not only support an argument or a scientific treatise but can also fuel the imagination or be used to enhance religious or nationalistic sentiments. In medieval depictions of visions, the internal images of the mystical process -which was invisible to all but those experiencing the vision - were rendered visible in the form of

miniatures and illustrations with accompanying texts. The aesthetic and emotional perception of a great deal of art is also closely connected to the image it evokes, with the Teylers Museum's art collection containing plenty of examples.

The use of images has, for all intents and purposes, become integral to contemporary journalism, media and politics, while in modern hybrid films, recordings of factual events are virtually indistinguishable from what has been added with animation.

In every aspect, both science and society appear to be entering a new phase due to the technical possibilities created by mass image processing and artificial intelligence to generate seemingly very real 'fake' photographs and recordings of people. This blurs the line between real and artificial visual observations and makes it easier for people to create their own virtual reality. What are the implications of everyone living in their own reality and only believing their own truths, partly as a result of manipulated images?

What is required here is an original critical study of this development of the power of images. There is no need for an overarching study; a choice of one or several of the aforementioned perspectives will suffice. The study should at least include a focus on the developments of the last few decades in one or more academic fields.

## **FORM OF CONTRIBUTION**

**Contributions should consist of either one extended study, in the form of a text prepared for publication, or of several publications, most of which have appeared in the three years prior to 1 January 2024. For the second option, the entrants shall be either the sole author or one of the principal authors; the entrants must also submit an unpublished text, written specifically for the competition, in which the earlier publications are placed in a broader academic context.**

## **PROCEDURE**

In order to qualify for the competition, candidates should submit four copies of their contribution to the Directors of the *Teylers Stichting* (Spaarne 16, 2011 CH Haarlem) by 1 January 2024 at the latest. Contributions received after that date will not be considered. The texts may be submitted in either Dutch, French, German or English.

In accordance with the provisions of Pieter Teyler van de Hulst's will, the author's name may not appear on the unpublished texts. Instead, they should be submitted anonymously, identifiable only by a motto. Submissions should be accompanied by a sealed envelope, marked with the motto that identifies the entry and containing the author's name and address.

## **JUDGING**

Judging will be carried out by the members of the *Teylers Tweede Genootschap*, who will submit their recommendation to the Directors of the Teyler Foundation within four months of the closing date for submissions. The Directors' decision, which will be made within one month, will be final. All candidates will be notified as soon as a decision is made.

## **PRIZE**

The prize consists of a gold medal struck from the *Teylers Tweede Genootschap's* dies. The medal will be awarded to the winner(s) at a special ceremony in the *Teylers Museum*. Professional journals and the press, and possibly other interested parties and institutions, will receive ample advance notice of the award ceremony.

## PUBLICATION

Responsibility for publication rests with the author of the winning contribution, although the *Teylers Stichting* and the *Teylers Tweede Genootschap* may consider lending assistance. On publication, reference should be made to the fact that the text has received an award from the *Teylers Stichting*.

## INFORMATION

Further information may be obtained from the secretary of the society (see below). Journal editors and others who wish to draw the attention of their readership to the competition, but who do not wish to print the competition details in full, are urged to advise intending candidates to consult the programme for full details of the competition. The application form can be found on [www.teylersstichting.nl](http://www.teylersstichting.nl).

For more information about Pieter Teyler van der Hulst, the *Teylers Stichting* and its related institutions, such as the two learned societies, the museum and the almshouse, please consult *Teyler 1778-1978* (Haarlem 1978), *De idealen van Pieter Teyler. Een erfenis uit de Verlichting* (Haarlem 2006) and [www.teylersstichting.nl](http://www.teylersstichting.nl).

## CURRENT COMPETITIONS

- Competition 2019 (numismatics): a study on the confluence of technical innovations and artistic developments in the work of early modern die-cutters and medallists, with a particular focus on the influence of traditional aspects on the physical and visual design of their coins and medals (closing date 31 December 2021).
- Competition 2020 (history of science): an original study in which the interaction between the sciences on the one hand and humanities on the other is illustrated and analysed based on one or several concrete examples (closing date 31 December 2022).

For full details of these competitions please contact the secretary or visit [www.teylersstichting.nl](http://www.teylersstichting.nl).

## SECRETARY

Prof. dr. Y.L. Bleyerveld: [bleyerveld@rkd.nl](mailto:bleyerveld@rkd.nl)

## SUBMISSIONS

Submissions should have reached the Directors of the *Teylers Stichting* (Spaarne 16, 2011 CH Haarlem) before 1 January 2024.  
(Spaarne 16, 2011 CH Haarlem).

MEMBERS OF *TEYLERS TWEEDE GENOOTSCHAP*

Prof. dr. W. van Anrooij, Professor of Dutch Literature before Romanticism, Leiden University

Prof. dr. Y.L. Bleyerveld, Senior Curator Drawings and Prints c. 1500-1800, RKD – Netherlandish Institute for Art History, The Hague / Professor by special appointment Leiden University

Prof. dr. B.A. de Graaf, Professor of History of International Relations & Global Governance

Prof. dr. F.H. van Lunteren, Professor of History of Natural Sciences at Leiden University

Drs. A. Pol, former Curator of Medieval and Modern Numismatics, Geldmuseum, Utrecht

Prof. dr. ir. W. van Saarloos, Professor of Theoretical Physics, Leiden University and former director KNAW

Prof. dr. L.E.M. Vet, former director of the Netherlands Institute of Ecology (NIOO) and emeritus professor of Evolutionary Ecology at Wageningen University



Medal of the *Teylers Tweede Genootschap* (gold, 72 mm, c. 120 g, 14 carat); dies by J.G. Holtzhey, 1778:

- beneath the radiant all-seeing eye of Providence are Physics with her globe and compass, Poetry with her lyre, History with her book, Drawing with her brush and palette, and Numismatics bearing a tray of medals; OMNES ARTES QVAE AD HVMANITATEM PERTINENT HABENT QVODDAM COMMVNE VINCVLVM (all arts and sciences relating to human civilisation share a common bond)

- in a laurel wreath DOCTRINAE PRAEMIVM EX TESTAMENTO PETRI TEYLER V D HVLST HARLEMENSIS NATI DIE XXV MARTII MDCCII DEFVNCTI DIE VII APRILIS MDCLXXVIII (prize for scholarly achievement in accordance with the last will and testament of Pieter Teyler van der Hulst of Haarlem, born 25 March 1702, died 8 April 1778).