

Vacancy Post doc (m/f), 1.0 fte

Ethnography and history of listening to the body in hospital settings, 1950-now (VICI programme "Sonic Skills: Sound and Listening in Science, Technology and Medicine, 1920s-now")

Reference number: AT2011.44

#### Maastricht University

Maastricht University (UM) is the youngest university in the Netherlands and renowned for its unique, innovative, problem-based learning system, which is characterized by a small-scale, student-oriented approach. Research at the UM is multidisciplinary and deals mainly with contemporary issues. Currently the UM has around 11,500 students and 3,000 employees. Reflecting the university's strong international profile, a considerable number of both students and staff are from abroad.

#### Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences

The Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (FASoS) has about 225 employees and 1600 students. All programmes are (also) offered in English. Its students come from all over the world. FASoS offers two 3-year bachelors programmes: Arts and Culture, and European Studies, six different 1-year masters courses and two 2-year research masters programmes. It has a Graduate School with an intake of about 10 PhD students each year. Research is organized across three programmes: Politics and Culture in Europe; Science, Technology and Society Studies; and Arts Media & Culture. The Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences is located in several recently renovated, 18<sup>th</sup> century buildings in the historic city-centre of Maastricht.

#### Research theme

The Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences at the University of Maastricht is looking for a post-doc to work on a project entitled "The Hospital: Audification of Physiological Phenomena, 1950-now". This project aims to understand shifts in modes of listening and sonic skills employed and taught in hospital contexts, between the 1950s and today. More specifically, the project examines the recent use and epistemic effects of the stethoscope in respiratory medicine and of sonic warning signals in intensive care, as well as the ways in which medical students have learned the sonic skills they need in their prospective professions. The project is both ethnographic and historical in character.

This PhD project is one of the subprojects in the VICI research programme "Sonic Skills: Sound and Listening in Science, Technology and Medicine, 1920s-now" (project leader: Prof. Dr. Karin Bijsterveld). This program aims to understand the contested position of sonic skills in knowledge production by studying the role of sound and listening in science, technology and medicine. It centres on the 1920s onwards, thus taking the rise of recording technologies into account. The program has three questions. The first is how scientists, engineers and physicians have employed their ears in making sense of the objects, machines and bodies they studied. The second question is how such listening practices have generated new scientific knowledge and technological design. The final and most crucial question is why in scientific legitimization, listening has remained contested nonetheless. By distinguishing between monitory, diagnostic, exploratory and synthetic listening, this program's scholarly aim is develop a theory that enhances our understanding of the role and status of sonic skills in knowledge production.

#### Tasks

##### Post doc project

In hospital settings, both monitory listening and diagnostic listening are important. *Monitory* listening is the kind of auditory surveillance physicians and other hospital staff members employ in order to check the proper functioning of patients' bodies. *Diagnostic* listening refers to the mode of listening physicians apply to identify pathologies when using a stethoscope. Whereas monitoring listening concerns checking *if* something is wrong, diagnostic listening is about examining *what* is wrong. This project examines *how* exactly monitory listening informs doctors and nursing staff of patients' conditions, and how novices *acquire* the sonic skills needed for diagnostic listening in hospital settings. The project focuses on two kinds of medical sites: the intensive care unit and the training environments of medical students. These will be studied at a Maastricht hospital. The results will be compared to earlier work on sound and listening in hospitals elsewhere in the West. For the contemporary part of the research, the project relies on ethnographic observation (partially participant observation), as well as in-depth interviews with doctors, nursing staff and students. As

to the recent history of teaching sonic skills to medical students, the post-doc will do interviews with (former) physicians and students, and historical document analysis of textbooks, courses and medical journals. This project focuses on the 1950s onward because from this decade on teaching methods started to include tape recordings of bodily sounds.

#### Qualifications:

We are looking for a prospective post doc with:

- A PhD in Anthropology *or* Science and Technology Studies (STS) *or* History of Science. A combination of these backgrounds is recommendable.
- Experience in conducting ethnographical research and/or historical research (inclusive of doing qualitative interviews) on issues concerning medicine and/or the sciences
- Affinity with hospital settings and medical issues
- Interest in sound and/or music
- Strong analytical capacity
- Fluency in spoken English and excellent writing skills in English; at least passive understanding of spoken and written Dutch, yet preferably active understanding of Dutch
- Willingness and proven ability to work in a team, and to execute a research project in concordance with the six other subprojects in the VICI programme Sonic Skills

#### Appointment

We offer a 3 year full-time Post-doc contract. (The first year will be a probation period, after a positive assessment the position will be extended with another two years.)

Salary: Depending on experience and qualification, the gross monthly salary is about € 2.977,00 gross per month, scale level 10 (based on a full-time appointment). The gross yearly salary is about € 41.500,00 (based on a full-time appointment).

If you do not already live in Maastricht (or its direct surroundings) you will be eligible for an allowance for alternative housing or, if eligible for the 30% tax rule, for a tax reduction.

Starting date: As soon as possible, yet not later than September 1, 2011

#### Information:

A more extensive description of the project and of the VICI program is available on request. We highly recommend applicants to read the full project and program proposal prior to sending in the actual application, and to contact Prof. Dr. Karin Bijsterveld at

[k.bijsterveld@maastrichtuniversity.nl](mailto:k.bijsterveld@maastrichtuniversity.nl)

Further information on the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences is available on our website:

[www.maastrichtuniversity.nl/fasos](http://www.maastrichtuniversity.nl/fasos)

#### Application:

Candidates are invited to submit their application, Applicants should send:

1. letter of motivation
2. CV
3. two recent publications
4. the names and addresses of two references

The deadline for submitting your application is April 26, 2011. Please send your application to the Secretariat of the Faculty Office, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, P.O. Box 616, 6200 MD

Maastricht, The Netherlands. Applications can also be submitted electronically at:

[Pzfdcwvacatures@maastrichtuniversity.nl](mailto:Pzfdcwvacatures@maastrichtuniversity.nl)