

# SISS MEETS EARLY CAREERS: A GLOBAL FORUM FOR EMERGING SCHOLARSHIP

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The Italian Society for the History of Science (SISS) launched the seminar series *SISS Meets Early Careers* in 2024 with the aim of creating a space where young researchers could present and discuss their work in an informal but intellectually rich setting. The initiative originated in discussions within the Internationalization Working Group of the Society. From its very beginning, the series has been conceived as a forum that foregrounds the diversity of approaches, geographies, and chronologies in the history of science, while fostering connections across disciplines and national traditions.

Two successful series of seminars have now been completed: the first in spring 2024, organised by Lavinia Maddaluno (Ca' Foscari University of Venice), and the second in spring 2025, co-organised by Maddaluno with Mauro Capocci (University of Pisa). The participation in both series, together with the breadth of topics covered, confirms the vitality of the community of early career scholars and the importance of sustaining opportunities for international dialogue. All sessions have been hosted online via Zoom and streamed on the Society's YouTube channel <<https://www.youtube.com/@siss-societaitalianadistor9115>>, ensuring accessibility to a wide international audience and strengthening SISS's commitment to openness and inclusivity.

The inaugural edition of *SISS Meets Early Careers* took place in April 2024 and brought together seven young researchers whose work explored the intersections of measurement, labour, and technological change in early modern and modern Europe. The opening session, chaired by SISS President Elena Canadelli, addressed the theme 'Assessment and Validation'. Armel Cornu (Uppsala University) traced the history of chemical analysis in

eighteenth-century France, showing how medical authorities sought to map mineral waters through empirical methods that blended health, economy, and regulation. Rebecca Jackson (MPIWG, Berlin) followed with an exploration of how the non-standardised ‘drop’ survived the nineteenth century as a medical unit, demonstrating how measurement practices were sustained not only through standardisation but also through rhetoric and pragmatism.

The second session, on ‘Labour, Technologies, and Gender’, was chaired by Lavinia Maddaluno and Violeta Ruiz (CSIC, Barcelona). Andreas Lingg (University of Witten/Herdecke) discussed ideas of productivity and craftsmanship in sixteenth-century Nuremberg, highlighting the role of artisanal skills in shaping economic discourses. Gabriele Marcon (Warburg Institute/Villa I Tatti) drew attention to women’s overlooked participation in early modern mining, demonstrating how their economic and technical contributions challenged prevailing gender hierarchies. Finally, Eóin Philipps (La Salle – Ramon Llull University, Barcelona) examined British canal-building projects in the late eighteenth century, situating them within imperial systems of labour discipline and technological control.

The third session, chaired by Dario Tessicini (University of Genoa), turned to ‘Global Knowledge(s)’. Gianamar Giovannetti-Singh (University of Cambridge) placed the Cape of Good Hope at the centre of early modern globalisations of science, examining how European travellers, missionaries, and local populations together produced hybrid forms of knowledge. Morgana Lisi (University of Turin) analysed disputes in Iberian Enlightenment botany, highlighting the tension between metropolitan taxonomic authority and local Creole expertise in the Americas. Together, these talks demonstrated how economic, technological, and social histories intersect with the history of science, and how a focus on material practices and labour relations can reshape established historiographical narratives.

The second series of seminars, held between March and June 2025, expanded the chronological and geographical horizons of the initiative, ranging from Renaissance Florence to twentieth-century Brazil. Co-organised by Lavinia Maddaluno and Mauro Capocci, the programme foregrounded themes of environment, cross-cultural exchange, and institutional networks.

Anca-Delia Moldovan (University of Warwick) opened the series with a paper on Stradano’s *Nova Reperta*, analysing how sixteenth-century engravings represented artisans as agents of nature’s completion and visualised European claims to mastery over natural and colonial worlds. In April, Matheus Alves Duarte da Silva (University of St Andrews) explored the transformation of plague and yellow fever into ‘wild diseases’ in rural Brazil between 1920

and 1975. His talk underscored how the movement of diseases from urban to wild spaces reshaped epidemiological knowledge and forced health authorities to confront new ecological realities. The May seminar featured Duygu Yildirim (University of Tennessee, Knoxville), who examined the limits of knowledge exchange between Italy and the Ottoman Empire in the seventeenth century. Her case studies of Giovanni Pagni and Luigi Ferdinando Marsigli illuminated the fragile, contingent, and often obstructed character of cross-cultural knowledge encounters. Finally, in June, Dannylo de Azevedo (Universities of Pisa and Lisbon) presented on the Lisbon Academy of Sciences (1779–1822), highlighting how its collaboration networks fostered scientific sociability across Europe and the Portuguese empire, despite the intermittency of communication.

This second series illustrated the vitality of current scholarship at the intersection of environmental history, colonial and imperial studies, and the social history of knowledge. It also reflected the geographical breadth of the field, with speakers working on Italy, Brazil, the Ottoman Empire, and Portugal.

With two editions now complete, *SISS Meets Early Careers* has established itself as an important forum for showcasing the research of early career scholars in the history of science. The success of the 2024 and 2025 series demonstrates both the intellectual richness of the field and the importance of creating spaces where emerging scholars can connect with international audiences in an open and supportive environment. A third series is planned for 2026, building on the experience of the past two years and continuing the mission of fostering dialogue across boundaries of discipline, chronology, and geography. As in previous years, the seminars will be held online and streamed to maximise participation. Further details will be circulated in due course. For more information: <https://societastoriadellascienza.it>.