Workshop: Why Trust a Collaboration?
Stockholm University, 27 – 29 April 2026

The expert–novice problem reveals a persistent epistemic asymmetry between scientists and the public. Non-scientists, unable to assess complex methods or evidence, must rely on expert testimony. Furthermore, trust in science extends beyond interpersonal trust in individual experts. Scientific knowledge is now produced and certified by collaborations that can function as epistemic agents in their own right. Their reliability, accountability, and trustworthiness derive not from any one member, but from shared norms, institutional structures, and distributed and often opaque practices.

Understanding what it means to trust a collaboration raises distinct questions. Under what conditions can collaborations be considered trustworthy? Can a group's internal mechanisms of knowledge production, accountability, and evaluation ground the public's trust in scientific institutions? These issues remain underexplored in the epistemology of trust and the philosophy of science.

This workshop will bring together leading and emerging scholars in social epistemology, the ethics of knowledge, collective moral responsibility, and scientists to develop a framework for trust in scientific collaborations. By treating collaborations as loci of epistemic agency, the workshop will clarify how well-placed and justified trust in scientific institutions and their outputs can sustain public confidence without collapsing into naïve deference or corrosive skepticism.

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Attendance for the workshop is free, but please register via email to Siska De Baerdemaeker (siska.debaerdemaeker@philosophy.su.se).

Organizers: Haixin Dang, Siska De Baerdemaeker, Paula Muhr, Sophie Ritson

Invited discussants: Richelle Boon, Niels Martens, Helene Sorgner

Monday, 27 April 2026 – Scientific Collectives and Epistemic Authority

Location: Gula Villan

09.00 – 09.30	Welcome, Introduction
09.30 – 10.30	Keynote: Stephen John – "Trusting a collaboration or trusting many collaborations?"
10.30 – 11.00	Coffee break
11.00 – 12.30	Facilitated discussion: Haixin Dang – Trust in collectives as epistemic agents
12.30 – 14.00	Catered lunch
14.00 – 15.30	Facilitated discussion: Olle Blomberg – Distributing and signaling responsibility in collectives
15.30 – 16.00	Coffee break
16.00 – 17.00	Keynote: Teemu Lari – "What do novices need to know about the practices of epistemic communities to place warranted epistemic trust in experts?"

If you would like, please join us for drinks at The Queen's Head (Drottninggatan 108)

Tuesday, 28 April 2026 – Epistemic Virtues and Conditions of (Dis)Trust

Location: Polstjärnan, Aula Magna

09.15 – 09.30	Welcome back, recap of day 1
09.30 – 10.30	Keynote: Louisa Estadieu – " "Well-placed" and "misplaces" (dis)trust"
10.30 – 11.00	Coffee break
11.00 – 12.30	Facilitated discussion: Paula Muhr – Epistemic virtues in collective knowledge production
12.30 – 14.00	Catered lunch
14.00 – 15.30	Facilitated discussion: Sophie Ritson – Transparency, Opacity, and Disclosure
15.30 – 16.00	Coffee break
16.00 – 17.00	Keynote: Matteo Michelini – "Asserting Through Disagreement: Modelling Science Communication Under Pressure" (Joint work with Dunja Šešelja)
19.00	Workshop dinner for invited participants at Tabbouli City (Regeringsgatan 70)

Wednesday, 29 April 2026 – Synthesis and Future Directions

Location: Gula Villan

09.15 – 09.30	Welcome back, recap of day 2
09.30 – 10.30	Keynote: Joe Roussos – "Trust and critical engagement: non-experts, science, and the products of large collaborations"
10.30 – 11.00	Coffee break
11.00 – 12.00	Closing synthesis discussion: Toward an Epistemology of Trust in Scientific Collaborations
12.00 – 12.30	Closing remarks and next steps