<h1 style="text-align:center">Abstracts workshops</h1>

## The role of theory in Qualitative Resarch (2x | max 15 deelnemers)

**Trainer:** Fijgje de Boer

How do qualitative researchers think and act in research, and how does this shape the results? In terms of structure, qualitative research may seem similar to quantitative research. It consists of an introduction, explanation of the methods, followed by the results and conclusion. However, each of these elements demands a completely different approach. Conducting qualitative research requires researchers to think and act in distinct ways at every stage of the process.This mindset is what we refer to as 'the role of theory in qualitative research'.

This workshop will explore these key differences, focusing on the role of theory in qualitative research. We'll examine all the unique qualitative characteristics of the research process: the background information leading to the research question (introduction), the choice for a qualitative research approach (the method), and the selection of data collection and data analysis techniques.

## To design or not to design, that is the question!

Trainers: Marjorie Bakker, Linda Meijer - Design Audit Studio, Netherlands Court of Audit

As design researchers, we explore how design approaches enrich the work of the Netherlands Court of Audit, which is based upon normative research on government policy. During this workshop we will share our 7 years of experience as in-house design researchers and focus on the added value of generative research methodes ("creating") in performance auditing.

Is it worth the struggle? Come and find out for yourself!

## Walk-along interviews

Trainer: Bas Spierings

A walk-along interview is a method in which interviewer and research participant walk through the area under scrutiny together, allowing social and physical aspects of the environment to shape the conversation. We will start by discussing key methodological principles and ethical considerations for walk-along interviews, illustrated with examples from research projects.

Workshop participants will then engage in a practical exercise with this hybrid form of interviewing and observing. The workshop will conclude with a discussion on initial experiences with walk-along interviews and reflections on benefits and limitations of the method.

## Focusgroups: tackling challenges in practice

Trainers: Anja van der Voort en Lisa Tessensohn

Focus groups offer the opportunity to gather rich information that may not surface as easily in one-on-one interviews. However, organizing and moderating focus groups is no simple task. It requires careful preparation, and during the sessions, you may face challenges such as ethical dilemmas, group dynamics, and your own 'meta-thoughts.'

In this workshop, we will start with a brief theoretical introduction to focus groups, after which we will guide you through the practical aspects of conducting them. You will have the opportunity to experience the associated challenges firsthand, helping you to better understand how to navigate and anticipate potential pitfalls. Both before and during the execution of focus groups.

**Ethnography and observational research in daily life and organizational settings**

Trainer: Suzanne Roggeveen

Ethnography is one of the main designs in qualitative research. It is often used to study power dynamics, organizational structures, subcultures, meaning making and behavioural change. Usually, it is conducted by using various methods, like participant observation and in-depth interviews. Thanks to its tradition of triangulation and the extended time that is spent in the field, it is often seen as a rigorous design. However, it is also known that traditional ethnography is misused for colonialism and imperialism and can cause serious harm towards respondents when not used carefully. The design can also be seen as time consuming and expensive, which is a problem in times of acquisition and budget cuts.

This workshop addresses the colonial history of ethnography and discusses some of the theoretical and methodological underpinnings of ethnographic design, like thick description, positionality and ethnographic analysis. We will explore novel ways of conducting ethnographic research that try to address its problems, like decolonialized, focused, organizational and digital ethnography. After the theoretical part of the workshop, we will practice participant observation in the beautiful garden of the Rijksuniversiteit Groningen. Together we will discuss our findings and end the session by creating our own thick description!

**Making sense of everyday conversations: A practical introduction to micro-analysis**

Trainer: Ole Gmelin

From a discursive perspective, meanings and identities are not fixed. Rather, they are constructed within the context of everyday interactions. Whether it is in talking to a friend, a doctor, or to a researcher in the context of an interview: speakers jointly make and negotiate meaning while managing their relationships. The goal of micro-analysis is to make the moves in this discursive game visible, to learn about how language functions to construct the world - and to understand how speakers draw on and reproduce cultural conventions and ideas in the pursuit of the social business at hand.

In this workshop we will get to know some of the basic principles of micro-analysis, which draws on conversation and discourse analysis. We will explore how to ground analyses and find evidence for our interpretations in the conversational data. We will jointly reflect on how a qualitative approach focusing on how language functions to construct meaning can enrich qualitative work, asking: why say this in this way at this moment?

**Coding Discourses: Reflexive and Computer-Assisted Discourse Analysis with MAXQDA**

Trainer: Tamara Pataki | MAXQDA Professionelles Trainer-Netzwerk

How can qualitative data analysis software support discourse analytical research? And more importantly, how can it do so while maintaining the interpretive depth, theoretical rigor, and researcher reflexivity that critical discourse analysis demands?

This interactive workshop demonstrates how MAXQDA can serve as a powerful tool for conducting discourse analysis. Grounded in Foucauldian archaeology and critical discourse analysis traditions, participants will develop coding strategies that move beyond simple thematic occurrence counts to uncover the rules governing what can be said, by whom, and with what authority.

Drawing insights from reflexive discourse analysis, the workshop treats reflexivity as a practical, learnable process. Participants reflect on how their assumptions and the software itself shape interpretation. Participants will explore how theory-driven coding strategies can serve as a site of

reflexive engagement: making analytical decisions visible and making transparent how knowledge is derived from data.

This hands-on workshop starts with theoretical discussions of epistemological foundations of discourse analysis, including Foucauldian archaeology, the Sociology of Knowledge Approach to Discourse (SKAD), and reflexive discourse analysis (RDA). The workshops also includes live walkthrough of MAXQDA's coding, memo, matrix, and visualization tools for discourse analysis. Participants see how to design a theory-driven code system, identify discursive rules and formations, and use analytical features to map discourse patterns.Through hands-on exercises, participants develop coding strategies, apply codes to samples, analyze patterns, and experience what it means to code reflexively.

**Short bio:** Tamara leads the Community Relations Team at Verbi Software, the creator of MAXQDA and is a Certified MAXQDA trainer. She coordinates and conducts training on MAXQDA features. In addition, Tamara is currently pursuing a Ph.D. in International Political Economy at the Central European University Vienna focusing on knowledge production processes in international Organizations.

**Panel: using AI in Qualitative Research?**

Moderator: Maarten Derksen

In this panel four qualitative researchers will discuss the pros and cons of using AI in qualitative research. The panel will discuss the methodological, practical, and ethical/political questions that AI raises, such as: what role can AI play in the analysis of qualitative material? Is it practically still feasible not to use AI as a researcher, if many others do? Is there a way of using AI that avoids its ethical issues? The panelists that use AI in their research will describe how they do this and what benefits they experience. The panelists that do not use AI will explain why not.

**'You've assumed wrong!' Policy, Assumptions and Realist Evaluation**

Trainers: Maria Vliek & Gina van Dooren, Sira Consulting

Most policy evaluations serve to hold legislators accountable: did we achieve what we set out to do? Were we effective and efficient in our budget? This is often researched through "efficiency and effectiveness research", which typically uses a "Theory of Change" model to map how resources and activities are supposed to contribute to policy objectives (A leads to B leads to C). While this tells us if something works, it tells us very little about how it works. Yet this is precisely where opportunities arise for well-argued policy-improvements.

In recent years "realist evaluation" has gained attention. It asks: *what works, for whom, under what circumstances, and how*?  This approach analyses policy instruments in specific contexts, recognizing that their effectiveness largely depends on human behaviour. The first step is understanding the policymakers' assumptions: why do they think the policy will work? Only after understanding that logic, can we begin testing these hypotheses in practice. If the assumptions are correct, the policy is likely effective. However, if they are flawed (the most famous one being 'people are rational') or the context shifts, the reality may differ.

In this workshop, we'll explore the assumptions underlying policies. This isn't just about the "A leads to B" logic, but more so about the often-unspoken assumptions about human behaviour. Why do policymakers believe their policies will drive social change? Using a case study, we illustrate how such analysis can offer valuable insights for meaningfully improving policy.