

Parenthood in Science: Care, Careers, and Structural Inequality

Despite increasing awareness, academia remains far from achieving gender equality, especially when it comes to the compatibility of care work and scientific careers. *Parenthood in Science* invites you to critically reflect on how parenthood, the desire to have children, and unpaid care work shape academic trajectories, workplace culture, and knowledge production itself. This research-informed event combines a lecture and an interactive workshop to open dialogue, foster reflection, and build solidarity. It is designed not only for parents in academia but also for those who have a desire to have children and are seeking space, clarity, and empowerment around questions of parenthood and career.

Lecture: 10:30 – 12:00

Open to everyone

This lecture presents current data on the realities of parenthood in academia and explores the broader consequences for science, including structural inequalities and epistemological impacts. It also addresses the lack of institutional recognition of care work and discusses pathways toward sustainable transformation.

- Current data on parenthood and academic careers
- Structural inequalities and systemic barriers
- Impacts on scientific knowledge production
- The politics of care and recognition
- Strategies for change and empowerment

Workshop: 13:00 - 16:00

Open to parents and those who are planning to have kids in the near future

At some point, many people in academia are confronted with questions around parenthood, whether through personal desire, social expectations, or structural pressures. Yet there are few spaces to openly reflect on these questions. This workshop creates a supportive and confidential environment to explore personal perspectives on having (or not having) children, while also critically examining the structural realities of academia.

- Guided reflection on personal desires and decisions
- Open, solidarity-based exchange with peers
- Analysis of structural conditions in academia
- Empowerment through shared experiences
- Building awareness and support networks

About the trainer

Dr. Lena Eckert holds a Ph.D. in Gender Studies and is the CEO of icp – institute for critique and practice (gGmbH), a non-profit organization that focuses on research and education relating to care-work in political, academic and cultural contexts. Eckert has co-founded the "Network Motherhood and Science" in 2021 and has since been involved in providing professional development for university faculty in the areas of gender diversity and equal opportunities focusing on mothers, parents and other unpaid care-workers. As a trainer, her focus is on providing consulting services to research networks and institutes as well as offering individual consulting to researchers across all disciplines. She has published extensively on topics related to care and motherhood in academia and other fields.