

# Conference: The Laboratory Revolution

The Rise of the Laboratory and the Changing Nature of the  
University, 1850-1950

26-27 October 2017, University of Groningen, The Netherlands

Laboratories are the ultimate place where knowledge is created. What originally had been the workplace of chemists and alchemists, by the end of the nineteenth century had become a standard element in the infrastructure of science. The rise of the laboratory revolutionized the sciences in many ways and continues to do so. This development has been studied over the past decades by many historians, but the tremendous impact the rise of the laboratory had on the university is less well studied. In the nineteenth century, simple lecture halls were replaced by purpose built science laboratories, that could dominate the city scape. Even academic disciplines that on the face of it needed no laboratory space to develop, like astronomy, psychology and linguistics, each acquired their own laboratories. Also metaphorically, the laboratory became the paradigmatic site for scientific and scholarly research, as is shown by the historians, who liked to compare their libraries to laboratories. Finally, the nature of the academic community was tremendously changed by the rise of the laboratory, each laboratory becoming a small, self-contained community of professors, technical assistants, students, and administrative personnel.

The conference 'The Laboratory Revolution' intends to bring together scholars from different backgrounds to study how the laboratory changed both science and the university. By merging the expertise of historians of science and scholarship, historians of architecture, social and cultural historians, and historians of the university, the organizers hope to create a better understanding of the revolution brought about by the rise of the laboratory – a revolution that is still going on.

For further information, go to the website: [www.labrevolution2017.com](http://www.labrevolution2017.com)

## Key Note Speakers

- Antonio Garcia Belmar (Alicante University)

- Klaas van Berkel (University of Groningen)
- Ernst Homburg (Maastricht University)
- Alan Rocke (Case Western University)
- Geert Vanpaemel (University of Leuven)
- Kaat Wils (University of Leuven)

## Call for Papers

We welcome abstracts for papers on topics related to the conference theme. Possible themes include: National Traditions in Laboratory Science, Planning and Construction of University Laboratories, the Design and Architecture of Laboratories, Social Life in the Laboratory, the Differentiation of Laboratory Space, Laboratories as Teaching Units, and Instruments and Laboratories. See also the provisional program on the website of the conference.

Please send the abstract of your proposal to Professor Klaas van Berkel ([k.van.berkel@rug.nl](mailto:k.van.berkel@rug.nl)) by May 15, 2017.

The abstract must be no longer than 500 words, anonymized for the sake of blind reviewing, and sent as a doc or docx file (please do not use pdf format). The author's name and contact information (affiliation, address and professional status) should be specified in your e-mail message. If you are not sure whether your proposal fits in the program, feel free to contact the organizers at the above e-mail address. Notification of acceptance will be sent by June 23, 2017.

## Practicalities

The conference fee is € 75 for early registration, which ends on 30 June. After that date, the fee is € 100 (students pay a fee of € 50)

For further information regarding accommodation, travel and registration, see the above mentioned website or contact the organizing Groningen Congress Bureau: [info@gcb.nl](mailto:info@gcb.nl)

## Conference Organization

The conference is part of the program 'History of the University of Groningen (1614 to the present)', funded by the Board of the University of Groningen. The conference is also supported by the Faculty of Arts of the University of Groningen. Chair of the Scientific Committee is Professor Klaas van Berkel.