

2024 Network institute Research Visit – Final report

Title of the project	How the public uses, accepts and resists metaphors that shape online discussions about climate technologies
Duration of the visit	30 days
Start date of the visit	01/11/2024
End date of the visit	30/11/2024
Network Institute member	dr. Gudrun Reijnierse (w.g.reijnierse@vu.nl)
Visitor	dr. Anaïs Augé (anais.auge@uclouvain.be)
Visitor affiliation	Université catholique de Louvain

In November 2024, dr. Anaïs Augé visited the Language & Communication chair group at the department of Language, Literature, and Communication to collaborate with dr. Gudrun Reijnierse on a project that investigates how social media users engage in online discussions about novel climate technologies.

Goals of the visit

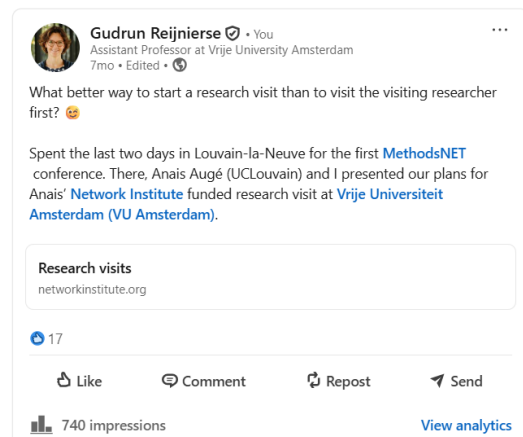
Originally, the main goals of the visit were to finish the research project “How the public uses, accepts and resists metaphors that shape online discussions about climate technologies” and to set the stage for future collaborations between Augé and Reijnierse, and between our respective research groups.

In the months prior to Augé’s visit, we started working on the project in online meetings, followed by a 2-month research stay of Augé at VU (funded by Fond National de la Recherche Scientifique [FNRS]). During this time, we came across a number of unanticipated project drawbacks which required additional time and effort to be resolved. These included issues with collecting data from social media, as well as the availability of posts/interactions displaying the phenomena of interest.

As a result of these drawbacks, we were not able to finish the project during the one-month NI research visit in November. Still, however, we have made good progress in the project, and benefitted from the input and expertise of both Reijnierse’s chair group and various Network Institute members, as described below.

Activities

We started the NI research visit with a ‘visit to the visiting researcher’, when Reijnierse joined Augé in Louvain-la-Neuve (Belgium) to present their work in



progress at the first MethodsNet conference. By engaging in discussions about methodological matters, we were able to further develop our project.

On the November 20th, we organised the interdisciplinary research symposium “Public responses to the language of science communication: uptake, acceptance, resistance” at De Bosbaan in Amsterdam, which attracted 20 (international) participants, for a full day of discussions about the role of language in science communication. Hosting 10 research talks, an interactive workshop and a keynote lecture by prof. Julie Doyle, the symposium fostered new networking opportunities.



In addition to these activities, Augé also presented the project during a Network Institute lunch (28 November), and during a seminar organised by the research group Public Engagement and Science Communication, in Utrecht (9 December).

We also organized multiple research meetings within Reijnierse’s chair group and at departmental level.

After the research visit, our work on the project has continued. We have presented

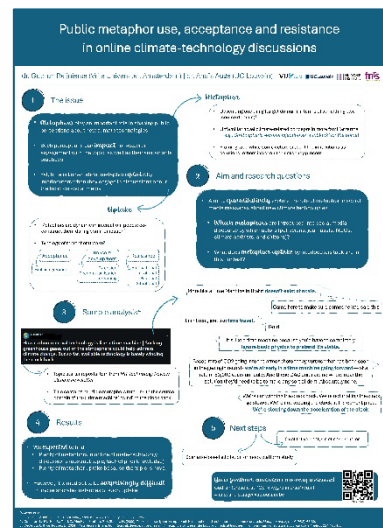
and will present the project at a number of conferences:

- May: PCST in Aberdeen [see poster to the right]
- August¹: LAUD symposium in Landau/Pfalz
- September: Languages and People conference in Vilnius

Future plans

One of the main outcomes of the research visit is that we have gathered a small group of researchers from Louvain-la-Neuve and Amsterdam to jointly continue working on the project. Next steps will include case study analyses of online climate technology discussions as well as a mock platform study.

Amsterdam/Louvain-la-Neuve, 19 June 2025



¹ Our abstract was also accepted for the RaAM conference in Southfield (MI), USA, but we decided not to attend that conference