

Heineken Young Scientists Award 2022 in the Humanities awarded to **Fleur Jongepier**



Fleur Jongepier
Photo: Bram Belloni

Amsterdam, 12 July 2022 – Philosopher Fleur Jongepier (1986), connected to Radboud University Nijmegen, has been awarded the Heineken Young Scientists Award 2022 in the field of Humanities. The jury praised her research into the growing power of algorithms and how this affects the human capacity for autonomy and self-knowledge. Jongepier is able to combine high-level fundamental research with an active and important role in the current social debate.

The Heineken Young Scientists Awards are awarded every two years to four highly promising young researchers working in the Netherlands. The winners are selected from four fields of science: Medical/Biomedical Sciences, Humanities, Natural Sciences, and Social Sciences. The Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences is responsible for the nomination and selection process. The award includes a cash prize of EUR 10,000 and a work of art. Previous laureates in the field of Humanities include Mark Dingemans (2020) and Maartje van der Woude (2018). The award was created in 2010 by Charlene L. De Carvalho-Heineken.

Jongepier holds up a mirror to society: when do we choose smart algorithms and when the individual?

About the study

Jongepier studies how the growing power of algorithms affects the human capacity for autonomy and self-knowledge. She raises the topical question of whether we can still make autonomous choices in the face of online manipulation. In doing so, Jongepier examines the tensions between 'algorithmic authority' and 'first-person authority'. Is it bad if we listen to algorithms more often than to individuals, and if so, why? And in which cases is it good to listen to algorithms rather than to individuals? Jongepier believes that when organisations increasingly rely on algorithmic systems, people are increasingly treated as objects. The fact that people have a point of view or a need becomes 'facts' about people that are used to guide or even manipulate them.

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Jury impressed by active role in social debate

According to the jury, Jongepier's appealing way of demonstrating the importance of in-depth scientific research and at the same time helping the public to form opinions is impressive. She asks questions and brings to the surface problems that society would otherwise ignore. Her active and important role in the current social debate translates into publications in *Trouw*, *NRC*, and *de Volkskrant* as well as in the prestigious *Times Higher Education*. In addition, she is one of the founders of the *Bij naderzien* philosophy blog. She also likes to sit in on talk shows every now and then.

About Fleur Jongepier

Fleur Jongepier (Eindhoven, 1986) studied philosophy at Utrecht University. She completed a research master's degree at Radboud University Nijmegen and received her PhD *summa cum laude* for her research on self-knowledge. She then held various appointments, including postdoctoral researcher at the University of Cambridge. Since 2018, she has been an ethics lecturer at Radboud University in Nijmegen. Recently, she and a colleague published a volume, *The Philosophy of Online Manipulation* (open access). In addition to the Heineken Young Scientists Award, she has been awarded a NWO Veni grant, a Niels Stensen Fellowship, and a NWO grant for a PhD in the humanities.