

## Call for Participation

### International Summer Workshop: *The Ethics of Storytelling*

**When: July 20–23, 2026**

**Where: International Graduate Centre for the Study of Culture (GCSC), Justus Liebig University Giessen, Germany**

In what has been described as an “age of total narrative,” storytelling plays an increasingly central role in public discourse, professional practice, and everyday life. Yet, systematic exchanges between research on narratives and applied narrative practices remain surprisingly limited. This workshop addresses this gap by examining how narratives operate in real-world settings: how they persuade, mobilize, include and exclude, stabilize identities, and shape ethical judgments across domains such as healthcare, management, organizational consultancy, environmental activism, education, and digital media.

Positioning itself within the rapidly expanding field of applied narratology, the workshop introduces an **ethical applied narratology** that foregrounds questions of responsibility, power, and consequence. It treats storytelling not as a neutral tool but as a culturally and politically charged resource whose use demands critical reflection. Participants will be invited to reflect on how narrative practices can be designed, evaluated, and intervened in to foster greater justice, reflexivity, and sustainability. To this end, the workshop deliberately moves beyond narratology’s traditional focus on literary texts and abstract models while retaining the field’s critical orientation toward narrative as a formative social and ethical force.

#### **Together and over four days, we will:**

- Explore how narratological **concepts** can be applied beyond literary studies;
- Examine the **ethical implications** of narratives in professional, institutional, and everyday contexts;
- Foster **narrative literacy**, enabling participants to critically assess, responsibly employ, and ethically evaluate storytelling practices;
- Encourage dialogue between scholars and practitioners **working across disciplines and sectors**;
- Contribute to the development of **socially responsible, ethically grounded approaches** to **storytelling** in an age of misinformation, AI-generated narratives, and narrative commodification.

By combining theoretical reflection with hands-on methodological training, this workshop addresses both the creation of applied narrative tools and the critical evaluation of narrative manipulation, with particular attention to ethics, power, and responsibility.

## Target Audience

The workshop is designed for:

- MA and PhD students, early career researchers, and established scholars from the humanities and social sciences;
- Professionals interested in ethical narrative practices (e.g. consultants, educators, artists, content creators, healthcare professionals).

We especially welcome applications from participants interested in combining theoretical reflections with applied or practice-based perspectives.

## Program Highlights

The workshop will feature **four one-day workshops** led by internationally renowned scholars, as well as a keynote lecture:

- Prof. Mari Hatavara (University of Tampere) – *The Travelling Methods of Narratology*
- Dr. Deborah de Muijnck (JLU Giessen) – *The Scandalization of Narratives in (Anti-) Social Media*
- Prof. Sjoerd-Jeroen Moenandar (University of Groningen) – *Narrative Consultancy and Its Application Across Professional Fields*
- Prof. Wojciech Małecki (University of Wrocław) – *Applied Empirical Ecocriticism and Narrative's Role in Environmental Advocacy*

## Keynote Speaker

Prof. Rita Charon, M.D. (Columbia University): *The Ethicality of Storytelling: Privacy, Confidentiality, and "Ownership" of Patients' Stories*

## How to Apply

Applicants are invited to submit the following materials:

- A short bio of approximately 150 words, including institutional affiliation and research or professional interests.
- A brief abstract / motivation statement of approximately 250 words, outlining:
  - the applicant's research or professional background,
  - their motivation to participate in the workshop, and
  - the relevance of their interests to the theme of ethical applied narratology.

## Application deadline: March 3rd

Applications should be sent to the following address: [phdnet@gcsc.uni-giessen.de](mailto:phdnet@gcsc.uni-giessen.de)  
Notification of acceptance: April 2026. More information can be found on [our website](#).

## Participation Fees

- External participants: 250 EUR.
- Reduced fee (100 EUR waiver) for members of the *GCSC*, *European PhDnet Literary and Cultural Studies*, and of the Universities of Tampere, JLU Giessen, Columbia University, the University of Groningen, and the University of Wrocław.