

*** CALL FOR PAPERS * Deadline: December the 5th, 2025 ***

**ENGAGING WITH CONSPIRACY THEORIES, FOSTERING DEMOCRACY:
DYNAMICS, DRIVERS, AND DEFENCES**

April the 9-10, 2026 | Charles University, Prague

Within the framework of the TaCT-FoRSED (*Tackling Conspiracy Theories by Fostering Resilience and Political Self-Efficacy in Democracies*) EU HORIZON project, the announced conference aims to engage primarily with scholars working on conspiracy theories within the broader field of disinformation/misinformation studies or related disciplines, while also preparing the ground for the foundation of a future learned society on conspiracy theories.

While follow-up conferences organized within the above-mentioned project during the next two years will focus on specific topics related to conspiracy theories (such as education and policy), this “opening” conference welcomes scholars analyzing a wide range of topics and methodologies, especially those connected to issues of resilience in democratic societies. Its main aim is to consolidate, develop and widen general knowledge about conspiracy theories by fostering an inter/transdisciplinary academic space with contributions from various disciplines such as political theory, historiography, anthropology, folkloristics, sociology, education, security studies, cultural studies, communication studies, journalism, media studies, digital humanities, game theory, social psychology, and literary history. We are looking for papers (and panels) particularly covering the following topics:

- a) How do we define “conspiracy theory” in the framework of disinformation/misinformation studies and security studies? How do these possible definitions differ from related phenomena such as “fake news”, “hoaxes”, “post-truths”, etc.?
- b) Drivers, dynamics, and implications of conspiracy theories for democratic societies and its resilience

- c) Connection of conspiracy theories with specific social structures and modes of sociopolitical organizations
- d) Conspiracy theories as resources and provocateurs for the development of polarising, potentially violent (group) identities, authoritarian and intolerant personality structures, and anti-democratic decision-making and conflict mechanisms
- e) Dynamics between conspiracy theory, folklore, and popular culture (e. g. urban legends, rumours and other narrative genres, vernacular speech and performances such as festivities, rituals, and other forms of expressive culture, etc.)
- f) Propagation dynamics of conspiracy theories and conspirational beliefs (e. g. by social media, digital technology, A. I., political behavior, vernacular culture, and more)
- g) Conspiratorial beliefs, behavior, and mentality both in individual and social contexts
- h) Mechanisms, entailments, causes & consequences of conspiracy theories
- i) Interventions and countermeasures against conspiracism at the level of the local communities, local and state administrative, the educational system, and democratic societies in general
- j) Tools for tackling and/or countering conspiracy theories in democratic societies.

We welcome individual papers, posters, and panel submissions.

Individual papers should include the author's name, title of the paper, affiliation, and an abstract of up to 250 words. Accepted papers will then be arranged into thematic sessions.

Panel submissions should include a panel abstract along with the names and information of a maximum of 5 participants (structured above).

Students may also submit *student posters* about their projects on conspiracy theory, which will be presented in the main room of the conference. They would then be able to receive feedback in person (also in form of a mini-workshop administered by a senior scholar in the field), and/or collect feedback in the form of notes left in a box adjacent to the poster.

All above-mentioned modes of scholarly contributions should be submitted to representatives of local Organisational Committee Petr.Janecek@ff.cuni.cz and Leonardo.Schiocchet@ff.cuni.cz until December the 5th, 2025 at the latest (in form of a e-mail text or an attachment in .doc(x), .rtf, or .pdf file who will forward them to the Scientific Committee to review.

Selected papers, posters, and panels will be announced on *December the 14th, 2025*, along with the names of the two keynote speakers and the conference's scientific committee. Along with the thematic panels, posters and the keynote speeches, the conference will also feature:

1. *A game workshop* designed as a tool for teachers to tackle conspiracy theory.
2. *A roundtable presenting the project TaCT-FoRSED.*
3. *A roundtable with P.I.s or members of past and present large projects on conspiracy theories.*
4. *A plenary session discussing the creation of the future learned society on conspiracy theories.*

**Please note that the conference will be *completely free*
(i. e. *without any conference fees*) for all participants.**

**The conference and all accompanying activities will be organized as in-person
(i. e. *not* hybrid event).**

Free lunches and coffee breaks will be provided.

**There will be limited number of discounted accommodation of university's hotel
rooms (please contact the organisers in case of interest).**

The organizers will be glad with any help to disseminate this Call for Papers

Dr. Petr Janeček

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