Call for Abstracts

NAFS Conference – Network for Empirical-Analytical Social Research on Muslims

The Network for Empirical-Analytical Social Research on Muslims (NAFS) invites scholars to participate in its upcoming network conference. The aim of the conference is to present current empirical research on Muslims in plural societies, to engage in methodological reflection, and to provide theoretical contextualization. At the same time, the meeting seeks to create space for scholarly exchange, networking, and the collective advancement of the research field.

Thematic Framework

Empirical research on Muslims operates within a field of tension shaped by societal ascriptions, institutional frameworks, individual interpretations, and everyday practices. It is not only empirically demanding but also theoretically and methodologically challenging—particularly in dealing with categories such as religion, belonging, difference, discrimination, and agency.

Against this backdrop, we invite contributions that engage, among others, with the following guiding questions:

- How are "Muslims" empirically constructed, addressed, or self-constituted in different social fields (education, family, public sphere, media, politics, digital spaces)?

- What role do religious interpretations, practices, and self-understandings play in the everyday lives of Muslims—and how can these be adequately captured empirically?

- How do societal power relations and structures of inequality (e.g., racism, othering, gender, class) shape the living conditions, attitudes, and scope of action of Muslims?

- What methodological challenges arise in empirical research on Muslims (e.g., categorizations, sampling strategies, researcher positionality, mixed-methods designs)?

- To what extent do comparative, intersectional, or practice-theoretical approaches open up new perspectives on established research questions?

Beyond these guiding questions, we explicitly welcome further empirical contributions addressing related topics, innovative methods, or theoretical perspectives. We also encourage submissions from scholars who are not primarily situated within the field of Islamic studies, but whose work offers productive shifts in perspective or new analytical approaches. Early-career researchers are especially encouraged to present their research.

Submission

Please submit an abstract (approx. 300 words) outlining the research question, theoretical framework, methodology, and key findings or working hypotheses.

Submission deadline: May 31, 2026

Conference venue and date: University of Münster, October 22–23, 2026

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