New Directions in Law-Based Explanations in the Sciences

Workshop programme • 14–15 September 2026 • LAK 2.06, Lakatos Building, LSE CPNSS

22	6	2	15 + 10
TALKS	**POSTERS**	**PANELS**	**MINUTES**
Including two jointly authored contributions	Two poster spotlights with 5-minute flash talks	One thematic panel and one closing panel	Presentation followed by questions in each talk slot

Format and practical information

- All times are British Summer Time (BST). Each talk consists of a 15-minute presentation followed by 10 minutes for questions and discussion.
- Poster flash talks are 5 minutes each, followed by collective discussion. Poster PDFs will remain available on the electronic screen and workshop website throughout both days.
- For questions, please contact Sepehr Ehsani at S.Ehsani@lse.ac.uk.

LSE

CPNSS
Centre for Philosophy of Natural and Social Science

Monday, 14 September 2026 | Morning

09:00–13:25 • Registration, opening, six talks, coffee, and lunch

Time (BST)	Programme	Presentation Mode
09:00–09:20	**Registration (LAK 2.06)**	Hybrid
09:20–09:35	**Sepehr Ehsani** · LSE CPNSS *Welcome, practicalities, and workshop aims*	In person
Session 1 • Reframing Law-Based Explanation — Pragmatics, Mechanisms, and Modelling		
09:35–10:00	**Andrew Wayne** · University of Guelph *A new pragmatics for law-based explanation*	Online
10:00–10:25	**Jens Harbecke** · Witten/Herdecke University *Mechanistic constitution as a natural law in Better Best Systems*	In person
10:25–10:50	**Sepehr Ehsani** · LSE CPNSS *Modelling scientific laws: From putative generalisations to nomological characterisation*	In person
10:50–11:10	Coffee break (LAK G.01C) and poster viewing (LAK 2.06)	–
Session 2 • Laws within Models and Mechanisms across Sciences		
11:10–11:35	**Patric Harting** · Lingnan University *Law-based explanations of chemical structure*	Online
11:35–12:00	**Jinyeong Gim** · Chonnam National University *Mechanistic explanation as law-based explanation: Reconsidering the role of laws in the organization of mechanisms*	Online
12:00–12:25	**Jidong Wang** · Fudan University / LSE *Laws in linguistics: Law-like generalizations and evolutionary models*	Online
12:25–13:25	Lunch break and poster viewing Poster presenters are encouraged to remain available in person or online for informal discussion	–

Monday, 14 September 2026 | Afternoon

13:25–17:20 • Poster spotlight, five talks, coffee, and a thematic panel discussion

Time (BST)	Programme	Presentation Mode
Poster Spotlight I — Three 5-minute flash talks followed by collective questions		
13:25–13:30	**Oliver Jin** · University College London *Description versus explanation: Unification in Mach and Kitcher*	Online
13:30–13:35	**Lina Mandal** · Jadavpur University *Do scientific laws explain reality? On laws, models, and the limits of explanation*	Online
13:35–13:40	**Yishu Zhuo** · University of Tennessee, Knoxville *Necessitated to act: The lawlikeness of human action*	In person
13:40–13:50	**Collective questions** Posters remain available throughout both days	Hybrid
Session 3 • Evidence, Narrative, and Law-Like Generalisation in Medicine		
13:50–14:15	**Laura Senis Villacé** · University of Valencia *From evidence to laws? Pragmatic constraints on nomological explanation in psychiatry*	In person
14:15–14:40	**Hamed Tabatabaei Ghomi** · King's College London *The narrative path to precision*	In person
14:40–15:00	Coffee break (LAK G.01C) and poster viewing (LAK 2.06)	—
Session 4 • Context-Dependent Generalisation across Domains		
15:00–15:25	**Mark Addis** · The Open University & LSE CPNSS *Context dependent lawlike generalisations in complex model based reasoning systems using category theory*	In person
15:25–15:50	**Laura R. Franklin-Hall** · New York University *Are there explanatory laws of pregnancy?*	Online
15:50–16:15	**Jennifer S. Jhun** · Duke University *Nomological machines and near-decomposability*	In person
16:15–16:20	**Brief transition to panel discussion**	—
Panel 1 • Explanations and Generalisations in Context-Sensitive Domains — 50-minute roundtable discussion		
16:20–17:10	**Barbara Bravi** · Imperial College London *Statistical and machine learning modelling in biology: considerations and examples from immunology* **Amir Feizi** · Gero AI *Machine learning and generalisations in research on age-related diseases* Opening perspectives, followed by brief responses from workshop speakers and audience discussion	In person
17:10–17:20	**Day-one synthesis**	In person

Tuesday, 15 September 2026 | Morning

08:50–13:00 • Arrival, six talks, coffee, and lunch

Time (BST)	Programme	Presentation Mode
08:50–09:00	**Arrival coffee (LAK G.01C) and day-two welcome (LAK 2.06)**	Hybrid
09:00–09:10	**Sepehr Ehsani** · LSE CPNSS *Day-two introduction*	In person
Session 5 • Laws, Explanatory Direction, and Causal Structure		
09:10–09:35	**Lina Jansson** · University of Nottingham *Do symmetries explain conservation laws? Or vice versa? Or do neither explain the other?*	Online
09:35–10:00	**Bryan Roberts** · LSE CPNSS *Is symmetry more fundamental than the laws of physics?*	In person
10:00–10:25	**John Donaldson** · University of Glasgow *Laws of nature and causal completeness*	In person
10:25–10:45	Coffee break (LAK G.01C) and poster viewing (LAK 2.06)	—
Session 6 • Extending Law-Based Explanation — Mathematics, Legal Inference, and Pedagogy		
10:45–11:10	**José Antonio Pérez Escobar** · UNED *Mathematical explanations, laws, and law-like principles: An underexplored connection in biology*	In person
11:10–11:35	**Stephan Leuenberger** · University of Glasgow *Law and inference to the best explanandum*	In person
11:35–12:00	**Philip H. Thonemann** · LSE CPNSS *How are laws in physics teaching and philosophy related?*	In person
12:00–13:00	Lunch and poster viewing	—

Tuesday, 15 September 2026 | Afternoon

13:00–17:00 • Five talks, poster spotlight, coffee, closing panel, and workshop close

Time (BST)	Programme	Presentation Mode
Session 7 • Laws, Ageing, and Precision Medicine		
13:00–13:25	**Peter Fedichev & Jan Gruber** · Gero AI / NUS *A minimal model explains aging regimes and guides intervention strategies*	Online
13:25–13:50	**Deniz Sarikaya** · Vrije Universiteit Brussel / University of Lübeck *Laws and theories in precision medicine*	Online
Poster Spotlight II — Three 5-minute flash talks followed by collective questions		
13:50–13:55	**Daian Vlad Bica** · Heinrich Heine University Düsseldorf *The mismatch problem is the chief challenge of the Best System Analysis*	In person
13:55–14:00	**Nanxin Wei** · University of Birmingham *Top-down laws and bottom-up mechanisms, companion in modelling*	TBC
14:00–14:05	**Brian Moon** · Perigean Technologies LLC *Beyond laws and mechanisms: Admissibility and the reconstruction of scientific explanation*	Online
14:05–14:15	**Collective questions**	Hybrid
14:15–14:35	Coffee break (LAK G.01C) and poster viewing (LAK 2.06)	–
Session 8 • Varieties of Lawhood and Generality — Typicality, Ceteris Paribus Laws, and Conservation		
14:35–15:00	**Ye-Eun Jeong** · Columbia University *What makes laws usable? Exceptionless laws, ceteris paribus practice*	Online
15:00–15:25	**Solal Azoulay** · University of Strasbourg *The epistemology of CP laws in experimental economics*	In person
15:25–15:50	**João Pinheiro da Silva & Ben Clark** · University of St Andrews / Michigan State University *Why conservation laws need not worry dispositionalists*	In person
15:50–16:00	**Brief transition to closing panel**	–
Closing Panel • New Directions in Law-Based Explanation — Laws, Creative Imagination, and Scientific Practice		
16:00–16:50	**Lorenzo Zucca** · King's College London *Potential parallels with legal philosophy and creative imagination* Opening perspective, followed by responses from workshop speakers and audience discussion	In person
16:50–17:00	**Mark Addis & Sepehr Ehsani** · The Open University / LSE CPNSS *SATS special issue, next steps, and closing thanks*	In person