



Call for Proposals for the ICA 2026 Preconference

## **Beyond the norm(al): Media use practices at the intersection of body, mind, and technology**

4 June 2026, 9 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. approx.  
Cape Town, South Africa

This preconference discusses diverse theoretical and empirical insights into how different special mental, bodily, social and spatial contexts shape media use and reception, aiming to address media use among groups of people and situations that are systematically excluded from most existing studies.

We invite contributions that conceptualize media use not only as a cognitive performance, but as an interplay of body, mind, and/or technology, situated within (unequal) bodily, social and special circumstances. The preconference's main focus is on media use (not media effects), i.e., the way content is being selected, processed and appropriated under such circumstances. By focusing on systematically excluded groups and situations—not necessarily small in number—we may better understand potential differences and learn how to integrate these insights more seamlessly into future research.

Examples of such contexts include media use while taking medications or using consciousness-altering substances; experiencing disability or neurodivergence; having a physical or mental illness; undergoing hormonal transformations such as during the menstrual cycle or menopause; using special technological aids; as well as media use in special cultural and geographical contexts, such as living outside conventional infrastructures, homelessness, rural isolation, incarceration or institutionalization etc.

By foregrounding these perspectives, we aim to highlight the diversity of media practices, that arise under unequal bodily, mental, social and technological circumstances and to challenge the prevailing notion of “normality,” which still privileges the experiences of healthy and neurotypical individuals as well as typical circumstances of life.

We explicitly welcome not only empirical studies but also theoretical or critical contributions and works in progress, fostering an open and inclusive space for exchange. We invite a wide range of international perspectives, with particular attention to contributions from marginalized contexts and underrepresented regions.

In addition, we will host a dedicated panel for student submissions. While these contributions will undergo the same review process as all other submissions, we will organize a student panel with more time dedicated to each presentation and an emphasis on support for doctoral theses and in-depth discussion from various perspectives.



## Submission and selection process

Extended Abstracts (800 to 1,200 words excluding references) should be sent as a PDF file to both [Laura Aleman](#) and [Celine Dorrani](#). Please remove any kind of information from the document that would identify the author(s), but clearly indicate if you are doctoral student. The deadline for submission is **31 January 2026**. Submissions will be peer-reviewed. All authors submitting will also be invited to review and decisions will be sent out by the end of February.

## Dates, conference fee, registration

This preconference is approved by the ICA 2026 organizing committee and is part of the official ICA 2026 conference program. The preconference will take place on 4 June 2025 (9 a.m. to 5 p.m. approx.) offsite. The location and conference fee will be announced as soon as possible.

## Organizers

If you have any questions, please feel free to approach the organizers Laura Aleman ([laura.aleman@lmu.de](mailto:laura.aleman@lmu.de)), Celine Dorrani ([celine.dorrani@uni-leipzig.de](mailto:celine.dorrani@uni-leipzig.de)), Felix Frey ([ffrey@uni-leipzig.de](mailto:ffrey@uni-leipzig.de)), Benjamin Krämer ([kraemer@ifkw.lmu.de](mailto:kraemer@ifkw.lmu.de)) and Maximilian Lechner ([m.lechner@ifkw.lmu.de](mailto:m.lechner@ifkw.lmu.de)).