

CALL FOR PAPERS

What is a philosophical problem? Karl Popper and Ludwig Wittgenstein University of Klagenfurt, 22–24 October 2026

The only documented meeting of Ludwig Wittgenstein with Karl Popper took place on 25 October 1946. Popper had been invited to give a lecture on “Methods in Philosophy” at the Moral Science Club of Cambridge University. His meeting with Wittgenstein was not particularly friendly: the thinkers, who would later become two of the most influential philosophers of the 20th century, could not agree even on whether philosophical problems exist or not. “The meeting was charged to an unusual degree with a spirit of controversy,” is stated in the minutes of the meeting.

The 80th anniversary of the encounter is the occasion to revisit the differences, connections, and similarities between the ideas of Popper and Wittgenstein. Participants of the three-day symposium at the University of Klagenfurt are invited to explore the gaps and bridges between Wittgenstein’s philosophy of language and Popper’s critical rationalism. The aim is to find connections that are fruitful for a philosophical investigation of problems.

The symposium is organised by the Karl Popper Foundation Klagenfurt and the Department of Philosophy.

Confirmed Keynote speakers:

David Edmonds

Ray Monk

Jitka Paitlová

Mario von der Ruhr

Those who would like to participate in the symposium with a presentation are requested to submit a 400-word abstract for a 30-minute presentation to Thomas Hainscho and Volker Munz (thomas.hainscho@aau.at, volker.munz@aau.at) by 15 June 2026.

The following non-exhaustive list contains some topics for which presentations are welcome:

- Are there genuine philosophical problems?
- What are the methods of philosophy?
- The relationship between Wittgenstein, analytical philosophy, and critical rationalism
- Reception of Wittgenstein and Popper
- Connections between students of Popper and Wittgenstein
- To what extent is Popper’s essentialism found in Wittgenstein’s philosophy?
- Is Wittgenstein’s philosophy of language useful for a theory of science?
- What contributions can critical rationalism make to the philosophy of language and vice versa?