

## Authors

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## **Æther: A research-and-writing workshop in Science and Technology Studies**

The aim of this teaching project is to design and develop an innovative, internet-based science magazine in the field of Science and Technology Studies (STS): [www.aether.ethz.ch](http://www.aether.ethz.ch). Students have the opportunity to critically engage with the future of digital scientific publishing, both conceptually and practically.

The project combines a historical and theoretical approach to scientific publishing with the implementation of an actual, digital publication. The aim of the project is to design and develop an innovative, internet-based science magazine in the field of Science and Technology Studies (STS). By conceptualising and developing a prototype magazine students will be given the opportunity to learn about, and engage with, current debates about the future of scientific publishing, while simultaneously shaping it pro-actively. In the light of recent discussions concerning open access, the digital humanities, and so on, how can we deploy digital technologies more purposefully and attractively to communicate our research results to the wider public?

### Success factors

- The collaborative work toward a product (= a publication) served as a major motivational incentive for students.
- Regular feedback sessions and teamwork in the process of designing, researching and editing the publication helped to engage students and ensure the quality of the results.
- Intensive, individual supervision of students / contact-hours.

### Innovative elements

The project systematically integrated research, teaching and science communications in the humanities by way of developing a joint “product” from scratch – including the development of an online/print publication platform, of individual research projects, and the writing and editing of research articles.

### Room for improvement

The teaching-format is demanding, both for students and teachers; there’s room for improvement as regards integrating this kind of seminar into the profiles of the various degree programmes. The “last mile” (after the end of the semester) in particular proved a little difficult to align with students’ schedules and expectations (re workload).

### Opinion of students

The feedback we’ve received was overwhelmingly positive. Students particularly emphasized the following items:

- Mix of regular contact-hours and group-work / feedback

- A concrete, attractive objective (= a joint publication), accompanied by a rich variety of seminar activities, including fieldtrips, presentations by and discussions with external guests and experts.
- The seminar enabled interdisciplinary / intellectual exchange as well as enabled students to bring their own expertise to the table.

### **Tips for lecturers**

- Encourage students to take on responsibilities (e.g. by delegating editorial tasks, mutual feedback on writing, etc.)
- The balance of systematic group-work and (intensive) individual supervision was a significant factor in successfully completing the project.
- Co-teaching is essential for this type of seminar.