

> Thursday, October 19<sup>th</sup>, 2023

10:30 – 12:00

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## **“SHOULD THEY STAY OR SHOULD THEY GO? THE INTERPLAY OF DIVERGENT BOUNDARY WORK STRATEGIES IN SHAPING FIELD RENEWAL IN BELGIAN PHILANTHROPY”**

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*Joint work with Benjamin Huybrechts (Iéseg) and Danielle Logue (USNW Sydney)*

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### **ABSTRACT**

The renewal of established fields has been depicted as a collective endeavour through which incumbents either seize external opportunities to expand the field, or undertake endogenous change within field boundaries. In this paper, we explore field renewal in the less documented case of incumbents diverging on which renewal avenues to adopt and how to deal with newcomer organizations. Based on the case of Belgian philanthropy, we suggest that diverging renewal avenues are supported by specific boundary work strategies, i.e., decisions to either include or exclude newcomer organizations into the field – in our case, social-mission platforms delivering philanthropic solutions in a more decentralized and technology-supported way. Our findings document the gradual prevalence of a field-expanding “affiliating” strategy at the expense of a field-maintaining “discriminating” strategy. Central in this process is the way in which incumbents following the affiliating strategy articulate symbolic and social boundary work to achieve field expansion. These findings contribute to refining our understanding of divergent approaches to field renewal and to documenting the combination of symbolic and social boundary work in favouring field expansion.

