

# Philosophical Perspectives on Origins of Life Research

A Day Workshop at the University of Cambridge  
Between the Leverhulme Centre for Life in the Universe, University of Cambridge  
and the Exploring Uncertainty and Risk in Contemporary Astrobiology (EURICA) Project, University  
of Durham

Tuesday 13 June 2023  
Faculty of Divinity, West Road

The two longer talks, at 2.30 and 4.00 pm, will be streamed.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/85795837364?pwd=SENldSsveUJFNzZqbXREY25SM1B4UT09>

---

9.00-10.30 am Two short presentations with accompanying discussion

Philipp Spillmann, "What is an unconceived alternative in astrobiology?"

Peter Vickers: "Confidence of Life Detection: The Problem of Unconceived Alternatives"

Sean McMahon: "False positives in life detection"

10.30-11.00 Break for Coffee

11.00-12.30 Three short presentations with accompanying discussion

Chris Cowie: "The concept of a biosignature"

Corentin Loron: "An information theory approach to biosignature and taphonomy"

Andrew Davison: "The Natural Origin of Life as a Theme in Christian Theology"

12.30-1.15 Break for Lunch

1.15-2.15 Three short presentations with accompanying discussion

Cat Gillen: Oumuamua: the 'problem' of the priors and its value to astrobiology"

Chris Greenwell: "Mineral – biomolecule complexes, challenges for identifying biosignatures"

2.15-2.30 Short break

2.30-3.30 Andrew Davison and Paul Rimmer: "Historical and Philosophical Perspectives on Quantifying 'Aliveness'" (streamed)

3.30-4.00 Break for Coffee

4.00-5.00 Cyrille Jeancolas: "Is astrobiology serious science?" (streamed)

Attendance in person is open to everyone associated with the Leverhulme Centre for Life in the Universe, or working in the area. To register your attendance, please email the Centre administrator at [admin@lcllu.cam.ac.uk](mailto:admin@lcllu.cam.ac.uk). For further information please contact Andrew Davison ([admin@lcllu.cam.ac.uk](mailto:admin@lcllu.cam.ac.uk)). All are welcome to join us for the streamed papers.

Image: Artist's impression of Corot-9b. European Southern Observatory. Used under creative commons licence.  
[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Artist's\\_impression\\_of\\_exoplanet\\_Corot-9b.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Artist's_impression_of_exoplanet_Corot-9b.jpg)