ININAUGURAL LECTURE

Where should we begin? — Science communication in a world in transition

DEPARTMENT OF APPLIED PHYSICS AND SCIENCE EDUCATION

INVITATION

Prof.dr. Margriet van der Heijden was appointed as a part-time professor of Science Communication in Physics at the Department of Applied Physics and Science Education at Eindhoven University of Technology (TU/e) on December 1, 2021. She will deliver her inaugural lecture on December 8, 2023.
The Executive Board of Eindhoven University of Technology cordially invites you to attend the inaugural lecture of Prof.dr. Margriet van der Heijden on **Friday, December 8, 2023, at 4.00 PM**. The public lecture will be delivered in the Blauwe Zaal of the Auditorium. You do not need to register. In case you can’t attend, the inaugural lecture will also be streamed live at https://vimeo.com/event/3817789 or can be viewed afterwards.

The title of the lecture is **‘Where should we begin? — Science communication in a world in transition’**

After the lecture, drinks will be served in the Senaatszaal.

All professors are invited to join in the cortège. If you would like to participate, please register in advance with the Office of Doctoral Presentations and Academic Ceremonies, phone +31 (0)40 247 37 42, email penp@tue.nl.

*Prof.dr. Silvia Lenaerts*
Rector Magnificus

After December 8, 2023, the text of the inaugural lecture will be available online at www.tue.nl/lectures.

Margriet van der Heijden obtained her MSc in theoretical physics at the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam in 1986. She then studied the quark structure of protons and deuterons at CERN and obtained her PhD in 1991 at the University of Amsterdam. After a period as a postdoc at the Dutch institute for particle physics, Nikhef, she turned to science journalism in 1995. As well as being a prolific writer of popular science articles, she was the head of the science desk at the newspaper *Het Parool*, editor-in-chief of the radio program *Hoe? Zo! Radio* and, between 2006 and 2015, the science editor of the newspaper *NRC*. In addition to being a professor here in Eindhoven, she is also a lecturer at Amsterdam University College, a columnist at *NRC* and a writer of acclaimed non-fiction books such as *Denken is verrukkelijk* (2021) and *Ongekend* (2022).

### About the lecture

In physics, theory and experimentation propel one another forward. At times, theory takes the lead, such as the prediction of the existence of the Higgs particle. At other times, experimentation leads the way. “Who ordered that?” US physicist Isidor Rabi famously exclaimed when the muon (a heavier electron) was unexpectedly discovered in 1936. When considering the relationship between science and technology, the common picture is that scientific discoveries enable new technologies. Yet steam engines, for example, existed well before the theory of thermodynamics and played an important role in developing this theory. Put differently: inextricably intertwined again. Last but not least, science and technology are each deeply interwoven with shared values, culture and collective imaginations in modern society.

During her lecture, Margriet van der Heijden will highlight how such relationships in turn shape science communication and the forms that it may take. This will bring her to the question: how does the advent of social media and of related phenomena like personal branding and fake news affect the role of science communication, especially in an era where society is being confronted with downsides of technological advancement like biodiversity loss and climate change? And in such a society in transition, how can one create inclusive and relevant means of science communication?