

Call for Papers – Gosteli Talks 2026

"Connected Across Borders: Swiss Women's Movements and their Transnational Entanglements"

Conference by the Gosteli Archive, History of women's movements in Switzerland, in cooperation with the Swiss Social Archives
4–5 June 2026, University of Zurich

Feminist movements in Switzerland have never been purely national phenomena. From the outset, struggles for rights, education, and labour were influenced by and connected to transnational debates. Swiss activists took part in international conferences, founded organisations that operated across borders, and aligned themselves with feminist struggles in other regions. These processes involved not only the reception of transnational knowledge, but also the active contribution of original impulses to international discourses and the sustained exchange of experiences, ideas, and strategies.

We invite scholars – especially early-career researchers – as well as activists to explore in greater depth the entanglements, processes of translation, and tensions between Swiss women's movements and transnational feminisms. We welcome contributions that examine both historical and contemporary aspects, highlighting the role of actors, networks, ideas, and places. We are interested in how Switzerland served both as a space of resonance and a point of departure for feminist transformations – and how feminist concerns were situated within global contexts. The aim is to make the transnational dimensions of feminist histories and presents in the Swiss context more visible and to reflect on them critically.

We welcome proposals from the fields of history, social and cultural studies, law, and related disciplines. Contributions from artistic or activist perspectives are also expressly encouraged.

Suggested Topics

The following thematic areas are intended as inspiration for submissions. Additional suggestions are very welcome.

– Networks, Circulations, and Translations

We are interested in contributions that explore transnational alliances, exchanges, and the circulation of feminist ideas, strategies, practices, and symbols. How were impulses from Switzerland carried abroad – and vice versa? What forms of translation were required to make feminism resonate across borders? Which networks of women's organisations connected Switzerland with other regions, and how did translation and adaptation transform the content?

– Issues – Struggles – Biographies

This panel focuses on core themes of feminist movements such as reproductive justice, sexual self-determination, conditions of labour, migration, legal equality, or political participation. The focus lies on thematic entanglements and debates within transnational contexts. Where can connections be identified, and where did divergences or boundaries emerge? Contributions may examine how transnational feminist impulses were negotiated, developed, or rejected locally, and what role individual actors played in these processes.

– Solidarity, Critique, Intersectionality

Feminist movements have always had to contend with difference – within their own groups and movements, and in dialogue with others. This panel addresses the possibilities and limits of solidarity: how did transnational debates on class, ethnicity, sexuality, or religion shape feminist practice in Switzerland? How did activists negotiate difference, exclusion, and belonging?

– Sites of Transnational Feminism

Feminist struggles have always taken place in specific locations – community centres, conference halls, migrant associations, protest marches, universities, international organisations, or virtual spaces. This panel looks at the spatial dimensions of feminist engagement: where did transnational feminist entanglements intensify? What role did cities, border zones, institutions, or digital platforms play in connecting activists within and beyond Switzerland?

Submission Guidelines

Please submit an abstract (max. 300 words) and a short biography (max. 150 words).

Abstracts may be submitted in German, French, or English.

The conference will take place on 4–5 June 2026 in Zurich.

Submission deadline: **31 January 2026**.

Please send proposals to: fabienne.amlinger@gosteli-archiv.ch

Notification of the selection will be given by **15 March 2026**.