

Beyond the hype: Towards a typology and toolkit for researchers interested in walk-along interviews.

Department: Human Geography and Spatial Planning

Research group: Urban Geography

Supervisor: Bas Spierings and Rik Huizinga

Email address: r.p.huizinga@uu.nl, b.spierings@uu.nl

Project description

Walk-along interviews are becoming increasingly popular among students and scholars across the social sciences who are interested in investigating mobile experiences and everyday practices in-place. 'Walk alongs' can provide important contextual insights to situate participants or social life in their complex and dynamic surroundings. Such mobile interviews are able to capture everyday practices and embodied experiences which are often spatially and temporally bound in ways that static research methods often miss or overlook.

However, there is a tendency of walk-along interviews being 'hyped'. The method then mainly is employed to be 'new and innovative' and 'to walk the extra mile' while its core methodological principles and ethical considerations are misinterpreted or even neglected. To raise awareness for and to address these concerns, this project develops a methodological and ethical typology and toolkit to guide researchers, students and scholars alike.

The project aims to systematically examine 1) a wide range of empirical insights and methodological and ethical reflections across the social sciences to understand *how* (not) to incorporate walk-along interviews in a research design 2) offer an essential guide to pragmatically self-assess *when* (not) to include walk-along interviews in a research design. The outcomes of the project will provide relevant input for the development of a typology and a toolkit.

As a Bright Minds assistant in this project, you will work in a research team with Dr. Bas Spiering and Dr. Rik Huizinga – two experts in the field of qualitative methods, walk-alongs and mobile methods in particular. Your activities will include 1) carrying out a literature review analysis based on a research question co-created with the team; 2) perform a thematic analysis based on a coding scheme developed with the team; 3) collaborate with the research team on the design of a walk-along typology; 4) participate in developing a 'walk-along' toolkit tailored to the needs of students; 5) co-author a blog entry for KWALON Online Blog Series (<https://www.kwalon.nl/blog/>).

Job requirements

- English proficiency;
- Experience with conducting a literature review, or a willingness to acquire these skills;
- Thematic analysis skills, or a willingness to acquire these skills;
- Affinity with qualitative methods and an interest in walk-along interviews and mobile methods.