

## **Alternative Media Archives: Challenges of longue durée research and preservation practices**

### **ACTIVATE WP4 Seminar 2**

**October 23-24, University of Lausanne and online**

The Activist, the Archivist and the Researcher: Novel Collaborative Strategies of Transnational Research, Archiving and Exhibiting Social and Political Dissent in Europe, 19th -21st century (aka [ACTIVATE](#)) is a Marie Curie Staff Exchange project launched in January 2025. This 4-year initiative explores practices of collecting, archiving, and promoting documents, objects, and data, contributing to a renewed European history of social and political dissent from the early 19th century to the present day.

The work package (WP) on [alternative media and digital activism](#) brings together media and audiovisual heritage institutions with interdisciplinary academic programs in sociology, history, cultural studies, and digital humanities. Its goal is to build research partnerships that explore how alternative social and media archives preserve and transmit the representations of political dissent through activist media practices, in historical and comparative perspectives. To do so it centers on the notion of 'mediactivism' developed by Dominique Cardon and Fabrien Granjon. This term refers to forms of mobilization that focus their critique on dominant media and/or traditional mechanisms for producing information. Generally embodied by alternative expressions and the counter-cultural forms typical of the 1960s and 1970s, this link between social criticism and the media will be explored over a wide chronological spectrum, including various types of media such as posters and leaflets, the satirical press, left wing publishing, photography, documentary and agitational cinema, as well as activism on the Internet and social media networks.

[A first hybrid ACTIVATE seminar](#) was organized in La Contemporaine and focused on the questions of the audiovisual archives' role in the politics of preservation and presentation of countercultural, alternative media. With this second seminar – offered to consortium members and anyone else who is interested in – co-organised by the Cinémathèque suisse, the University of Lausanne, and CEU/Blinken OSA Archivum, we further extend theoretical reflection and aim to present a range of case studies related to the challenges of archiving media activism from both a long-term and transnational perspective. The seminar will discuss theoretical approaches and archival collections embodying the entanglements of social transformation initiatives with the development of alternative media or alternative media ecosystems.

We invite proposals related to one of the following broadly defined areas:

- 1) Reflections on conceptualizing and historicizing media activism and/or alternative media from a transnational and context-specific perspectives.
- 2) Mapping archival collections within and beyond the Activate consortium that contain countercultural audiovisual media sources.
- 3) Challenges posed by the preservation and promotion of various media, including film, photo, video, and sound archives related to various forms of political activism in democratic and authoritarian contexts.
- 4) Approaches to heritage preservation in state, private, and community archives and elaboration of novel, participatory archiving practices.

The seminar is conducted in a hybrid mode on site and online and is open to consortium partners and external contributors.

To apply: send your presentation abstract up to 300 words and your CV to [archivum@ceu.edu](mailto:archivum@ceu.edu)

Subject: ACTIVATE Seminar 2 Mediactivism

Application deadline: August 31, 2025. Acceptance notification will be circulated by September 10, 2025

Organizing Committee

François Vallotton (UNIL)

Oksana Sarkisova (CEU/Blinken OSA Archivum)

Achilleas Papakonstantis (Cinémathèque suisse)



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