

Candidate Profile



Birgitta Meex (47)

Assistant Professor of German linguistics and organizational and technical communication at the Arts Faculty of the KU Leuven, Antwerp Campus

- Founding member and spokesperson of tekombelgium
- Secretary of the Executive Board of tekomeurope

Academic background:

After having obtained my MA degrees in Translation Studies (1991) and Germanic linguistics and literature (1993), I worked as a research and teaching assistant at the University of Antwerp. In 2001, I received a PhD from the University of Leuven with a dissertation on spatial semantics in German. In April 2012, I completed the international trainer level certification examination, as a result of which I became certified as a Technical Communicator (tekomeurope). Since then I have become more and more involved in tekomeurope and technical communication.

Professional career:

I am an Assistant Professor of German linguistics and organizational and technical communication at the Arts Faculty of the KU Leuven, Antwerp Campus. I have published research articles in the fields of cognitive semantics, corporate communication as well as technical and medical communication. My current research interests are focused on (1) users' technical content navigation behaviour, (2) the interface between the content creation process in the source language and subsequent localization and translation, and (3) designing curricula for teaching and learning technical communication. In the past three years, I expanded our curriculum to integrate new teaching and research topics in the area of technical communication.

Professional experience in technical communication:

I am a certified trainer in technical communication (tekomeurope), a founding member of tekombelgium and the Secretary of the Executive Board of tekomeurope. As the founder and spokesperson of the Initiative Committee tekombelgium, I organize events on technical communication in Belgium that are open to professionals, university staff, and students and aim at offering training and networking possibilities. Besides that I coordinate a new course in technical communication in my university's "postgraduate programme in specialized translation"

(<https://www.arts.kuleuven.be/home/opleidingen/manamas/emt/emt12>).

In this practically oriented introductory course, I try to motivate and inspire students with a background in language and communication for the fascinating world of technical communication. I also supervise students with their bachelor's and master's thesis projects on topics in the domain of technical communication.

Finally, I am one of the eight university partners in the EU-funded project "TecCOMFrame" (Technical Communication Competence Framework), which was launched in 2015 to develop a joint European

academic qualification and competence framework for the training of technical communicators (www.teccomframe.eu). The framework will help to build a solid academic and curricular basis for the growing field of technical communication.

Goals:

My objectives as a delegate for tekombelgium are threefold. My first objective is to connect and support all interested technical communication professionals across Belgium and Europe. Since both the field and profession of technical communicator are to date relatively unknown and often undervalued, my aim is to enhance the visibility and recognition of the occupational profile. My second objective is to actively engage in tekomeurope's international projects and working groups and grasp the opportunity to contribute to decisions that affect Belgian stakeholders in the broad field of technical communication. My third objective is to build or strengthen partnerships (industry-university cooperation, interuniversity cooperation, and cooperation with established institutions and associations) to raise students', graduates', and HR professionals' awareness of the profession and convince them of its big potential in terms of added value. Such collaborations obviously respond to the need for education and training as well as for research in technical communication. With the "TecCOMFrame" project an important step is made in this direction.