

Organization across boundaries

in cooperation with the University of Trier

February 21st/22nd 2019

5th Forum Organizational Education Research 20th/21st February 2019
Pre-conference for scientists in qualification stages

CALL FOR PAPERS

The present society is an organization society. In an organization society boundaries are mainly drawn, stabilized, transcend and dissolved again by, through and of organizations. For organizations, boundaries are constitutive. Boundary issues are relevant to identity and therefore important for the future viability of any organization, but also for society as a whole. Organizations not only create and stabilize boundaries by their functioning, but they also transgress own boundaries and also those that have been drawn from other social actors, processes to technical operations. In fluid forms of organizations or networks boundaries are either reorganized, made temporarily porous by means of special social practices or even completely dissolved. The methods and practices required for this are constantly being redeveloped and further developed within the framework of management approaches and are also widely discussed in numerous scientific discourses. Thereby, the boundaries of research fields and disciplines are regularly confirmed, exceeded and again drawn and structured. In other words, borders are becoming more and more important not only as a subject of scientific research, but also appear to be productive on the one hand, and inhibiting, on the other hand. The conceptualization of the relationship between organization and boundaries as well as the study of change and stability of organizational demarcations are therefore of fundamental importance for the formation of organizational education and its practice.

The scientific, but also the political-programmatic interest in the topic of organization is, above all, an intensive examination of the problem of the legitimacy of traditional boundaries and new demarcations. Distinctions make the inside and the outside of an organization distinguishable from other social contexts. Organizational demarcations create social affiliations. They create the claim to shared perceptions, values, and attributions of meaning and collective identities. The importance of corresponding demarcations, their productive character for the individual and organizational practice is visible here. In contrast, rigid boundaries and rigid structures at the level of organizational structure formation challenge the transformability of organizations by hindering individual and organizational learning in, from and between organizations.

In relation to the specific structuring and changing of these manifold overlapping relationships and demarcations between organizations and persons, a multitude of theoretical and empirical questions arise which generate numerous organizational educational tasks and discursive links. The aim of the conference in Trier is to map and discuss the social and organizational relevance and reflexivity of organizational boundaries in order to further theoretically and empirically enrich the relevant debates with organizational educational perspectives.

Preliminary structure of the conference:

The provisional structure of the conference provides the following priorities:

- **Theoretic relationships of organization and boundary.** This is about basic organizational educational and interdisciplinary conceptualizations of the relationship between organization and boundary. There are already a large number of organizational theories and methodological approaches in which the phenomenon of the border is central. These include, for example, systems theory, neo-institutionalism, micro-political approaches, contingency theory, or cultural and practice-theoretical approaches. They all provide concepts, theories, and methods whose relevance and productivity can be discussed for organizational educational theory development and research.
- **Empirical studies of the pedagogical work of and with demarcations.** Organizational boundaries are a sociopolitical controversial topic as well as a phenomenon in day to day practice. Organizational boundaries often contradict the societal demands for equality and justice. For Educational organizations in particular, the reflection of boundary issues is indispensable, since the purpose of inclusion and integration became vitally important in the field of education. Dealing with boundary issues, their production, transgression, affirmation or delegitimization is an integral part of organized educational practices. Issues of demarcation, extension and self-limitation of organizations therefore always imply a special social and educational responsibility, which must be discussed.
- **Organizational demarcations under the conditions of digital transformation.** In the course of progressive digitization, the assertion of relevant organizational boundaries is subject to plausibility pressure from various sides. On the one hand, in the observation of social contexts, horizontal concepts of organization take the place of distinct individual or organized hierarchies and actors. This applies, for example, to network models of distributed action power aimed at nodes and their multiple relations. On the other hand, technology-based information processing and multifaceted production of meaning transcend traditional boundaries of socio-cultural accessibility. However, the newly created social spaces also regularly establish new limits to the participation of different cultural, social status-related or generational rigidity and permeability. This raises questions about the future constitution, assertiveness and leadership of organizations, about the mode of balancing organizational stability and mutability or about facilitating individual participation through organizational educational interventions.
- **Organized hybridity, hybrid organizations. Cross-border objects, practices and symbolic forms.** Institution-theoretically derived plural institutional contexts, models of hybrid organizations based on organizational theory, or actor-centered models of multi-rationality refer to organizations that cross sectoral boundaries. Social exchange across borders requires specific practices, technical-social infrastructures, specific objects and symbolic forms. They are either produced specifically for this purpose or made in the course of border crossings. Empirical investigations as well as theoretical work on this topic address questions such as:

How and what happens in the transgression of one or more boundaries, how certain evaluations, characteristics, identities, equalities and differences are produced, suspended and modified as well as the question of the practical function of demarcations.

- **Organizations and Transnationality:** Organizations are equally confronted with national boundaries – understood as interconnections of differences in rights, territories, authorities and languages – as well as supra-national regulatory forms and co-operation requests (keywords: Europeanisation, globalization). Nation states and supranational associations shape (social) infrastructure, regulate markets and fields of work, limit the scope for action of organizations with labor law and corporate law, support or prevent the influence of civil society movements on organizations, and so on. However, organizations are not only subject to these boundary issues, but are themselves boundary workers, which influencing political decisions, making location decisions, generating cross-border contact zones, identity-creating cultures, etc. A perspective of transnationality opens up the possibility of these contingent and complex boundary works analyze and thereby examine both traditionalizing and hybridizing processes in relation to the „(supra-)national”.

We invite all interested parties to submit an abstract in English or German.

- The lectures in the forums are scheduled **for 20 minutes** each (+ 20 minutes discussion).
- A pre-conference will serve scientists in qualification stages to present and discuss their own research projects which do not have to be related to the conference topic (Interested parties should contact Dr. Nicolas Engel: nicolas.engel@fau.de).

We invite you to submit suggestions for contributing to one of the forums and include an **abstract of your contribution (1,500-2,000 characters)** that highlights the link to the conference outline and includes theoretical, methodological, empirical or conceptual background of your contribution. Please provide relevant references. In the abstract you are welcome to indicate to which forum you would like to assign your contribution. All suggestions are reviewed by the program committee. The program committee reserves the right to modify the structure of the conference after reviewing the submissions through a thematic reorientation of individual forums in the event.

Please send your **abstract by 05.09.2019** to:

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