



Call for Papers

4th Witten Conference on Institutional Change

“Institutional Pathologies.

What can we learn from severely malfunctioning economic and political organizations, institutions and networks?”

The Witten Institute for Institutional Change (WIWA) invites submissions of papers and organized sessions for the 4th Witten Conference on Institutional Change. The conference is sponsored by WINIR, the World Interdisciplinary Network for Institutional Research.

The conference will focus on **“Institutional Pathologies. What can we learn from severely malfunctioning economic and political organizations, institutions and networks?”**.

It will take place on **1 and 2 February 2018 at Witten/Herdecke University** in Witten, Germany. Keynote speakers are Heikki J. Koskinen (Helsinki), Hartmut Rosa (Jena), and Rasmus Johnson (Copenhagen, CBS)

There is a growing research literature dealing with dysfunctional organizations within economics and political science. But the topic of "social" or "institutional pathologies" also finds increasing attention within social psychology, social philosophy and other disciplines. The conference seeks to improve our theoretical understanding of pathologies in a variety of different institutions both formal and informal as well as in networks whose structural and functional properties may differ from the general features of organizations. Objects of research include political, scientific, medical, bureaucratic, artistic, military, and media institutions, organizations and networks. This is not only a scientifically demanding task, it is also a practically very important concern. Moreover: Normative and evaluative questions cannot be avoided, and must be grounded and justified, in discourses about institutional pathologies.

The 4th Witten Conference on Institutional Change aims to identify promising interdisciplinary approaches (in economics, social philosophy, political science, social science, psychology, theoretical medicine, legal studies and other relevant disciplines) with a view to progress towards the synthesis and integration of empirical research, theory construction and modelling of institutional pathologies.

Key questions (non-exclusive) are:

- Does corruption support or hinder economic development? What other social miseries can be explained as symptoms of institutional pathologies (e.g. chronic warfare and violence, massive poverty, pervasive mistrust, high suicide rates, militant fundamentalism, terrorism)?
- Do self-enforcing institutions help to stabilize economic and political organizations? Is self-enforcement a proxy for “institutional health”?
- How do notions of institutional pathologies connect with discourses about legitimacy, efficient and effective goal-attainment, institutional rationality and irrationality?
- Can conceptualizations of disease, illness, malady be modified and re-construed in ways that make them heuristically applicable to diverse social institutions, organizations, and networks?

- Are there other models from disciplines such as economics, organizational theory, clinical psychology, or systemic therapy that are more suited to the task?
- What are suitable evaluative and normative standards of institutional “health” (normalcy, well-functioning, “salutogenesis” etc.) “illness” and “disease” for models of social pathologies, and how can we best justify and ground such normative standards?

We invite submissions for individual papers (400 words max.) from any relevant discipline addressing problems of conceptualizing and dealing with institutional pathologies. Please send your abstracts to conference.wiwa@uni-wh.de. **Deadline for submission is 30 October 2017.**

Selected papers will be published as a special issue of *Schmollers Jahrbuch*, a peer-reviewed international economics and social sciences journal. Other selected papers will be included in a book project, depending on their specific orientation.

SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE WIWa:

- Matthias Kettner (Philosopher & Psychologist)
- Jens Harbecke (Philosopher)
- Elke Krahnemann (Political Scientist)
- Dirk Sauerland (Economist)
- Joachim Zweynert (Economist)

FORMAT:

The conference will take place at Witten/Herdecke University and is planned for two full days. There will be an informal get-together at the evening of 31 January and a conference dinner at 1 February. Apart from regular sessions, there will be three keynote speeches. Depending on the number and quality of submissions, a poster session with additional papers may be organized.

FEES AND REIMBURSEMENT POLICY:

The conference fee is 100 €, including the conference dinner.

There is a reduced fee of 80 € for WINIR members and of 50 € for students.

Travel costs and accommodation have to be covered by the participants, except for invited speakers and invited chairpersons.

IMPORTANT DATES:

The extended **deadline for submissions** is **20 November 2017**. Authors of accepted papers will be notified by **30. November**.

Completed drafts of accepted papers are due **by 30 December**, and will be made available for download on the conference website.

For any questions, please contact

Matthias Kettner, Head of the Scientific Committee, (Matthias.Kettner@uni-wh.de) or

Dirk Sauerland, Director of WIWa, (Dirk.Sauerland@uni-wh.de).

More information about the WIWA Institute and the conference on <https://www.uni-wh.de/wiwa-en>