

## Call for Papers

### **“Theory construction and methodological development in higher education research”**

10<sup>th</sup> annual conference of the German–speaking Society for Higher Education Research

Kassel (Germany), April 9 – 10, 2015

The German–speaking Society for Higher Education Research (Gesellschaft für Hochschulforschung, GfHf) was founded in 2006 to provide a platform for researchers in the field of higher education from Germany, Austria, Switzerland and Luxembourg. The society aims at creating networks among researchers from all over the world as well as promoting professional exchange, interdisciplinary research and the dissemination of research results. Alongside other activities, the society organises annual conferences on current and relevant topics in higher education research. These conferences provide the opportunity to meet fellow researchers and discuss the latest research results in different subject areas related to higher education.

In 2015, the 10<sup>th</sup> annual conference will take place from April 9 to 10 at the International Centre for Higher Education Research Kassel (<http://www.uni-kassel.de/einrichtungen/en/incher/home.html>).

This year’s focus on “Theory construction and methodological development in higher education research” pursues two aims: Firstly, methods and theories employed in higher education research should be critically assessed. Secondly, recent theoretical and methodological developments in scientific disciplines and interdisciplinary research areas relevant to higher education research should be opened up. Thereby, theory construction and methodological developments are viewed from an external as well as an internal angle. Both perspectives are equally important in creating scientific innovation and sustainable progress.

#### Internal perspective

Are there specific theories and methods in higher education research? If so, what is their development potential?

How to address challenges of specific theories and methods within the research process?

Does the proximity of higher education research and higher education development create new methodological and theoretical challenges?

Which knowledge can be gained from combining quantitative and qualitative methods respectively different theoretical perspectives and which problems arise?

Which potential does secondary analysis of existing data sets offer – which methodological challenges arise and which theoretical models can be tested?

Which theories and methods in higher education research lead a “niche existence” and what could be gained if they were taken into account?

#### External perspective

What can be learned from an intensified interaction between theory construction and methodological development in higher education research on the one hand and other research areas such as empirical education research, organisational research, and science studies on the other hand?

Which role do scientific disciplines and their development dynamics play for the methodological and theoretical progression of higher education research?

Which impact has the rapid progress in information and communication technology for the methodological development? Is a closer interaction with technical sciences required?

Can theories originating from natural sciences be used to illustrate change processes in higher education?

These questions should be understood as exemplary. Other topics relevant for the subject of the conference are explicitly welcome. Above all, proposals are requested which are embedded in the research context of higher education research rather than those primarily looking at theories and methods in an abstract manner.

Childcare can be organised on request.

Please submit your proposal by email to the local organisation committee ([gfhf.incher@uni-kassel.de](mailto:gfhf.incher@uni-kassel.de)) until **December 15, 2014**. Proposals should not exceed 500 words. All proposals will be reviewed and applicants will receive definite response by **January 15, 2015**. The proposals will be reviewed based on relevance regarding the conference's topic. Additionally, the plurality of approaches will be taken into account to allow for a broad perspective.

#### Local organisation and programme committee

University of Kassel

International Centre for Higher Education Research Kassel (INCHER-Kassel)

Prof. Dr. Georg Krücken

Dr. Albrecht Blümel

Dr. Otto Hüther

Dr. Isabel Steinhardt

Further information:

[www.hochschul-forschung.de/jahrestagungen/](http://www.hochschul-forschung.de/jahrestagungen/)