

Organizations and Institutions in the Era of Crises

Call for papers for the 6th Alberta Institutions Conference (and PhD Workshop)
June 24-26, 2021, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada



Amidst the current pandemic that has swept the world, it seems a timely opportunity to contemplate the durability and resilience of organizations and institutions. The current crisis related to COVID-19 is one of many crises we have faced and are facing (e.g., 2008-09 financial crisis; Ebola; rise of populism; climate change; displacement/mass migration). It may not be too much of a stretch to consider this the era of crises. How are our organizations and institutions responding? How are they coping with stress, transforming, disappearing, or enabling new forms of organizing and governing? We seek to explore these kinds of questions and their implications for organizational institutionalism at our next triennial Alberta Institutions Conference.

Our aim, as always, is to bring together diverse institutional scholars from all career stages, including PhD students, to discuss these and related topics. We are also delighted to announce that **Renate Meyer** (University Professor, Head of the Institute for Organization Studies, WU Vienna) will provide the keynote address.

We invite papers (our preference is for empirical papers) that explore topics and questions such as:

- How do institutions shape the resilience or responses of organizations in the era of crises? How do they render some matters emotionally significant, make other matters invisible, or provide more neutral foundations for action? How do they help and hinder collective sense-making and mobilization?
- How are institutions eroded, subverted, or made durable during such disruptions? How do NGOs and other actors from world society challenge or promulgate crisis response? What is the role of social media and other forms of communication? How do algorithms hinder or foster the spread of information/disinformation and moderate emotion?
- What kinds of new institutions or organizations are being created? How is the era of crises affecting the creative destruction of organizations and institutions? What kinds of new technologies and forms of organizing might emerge or become more potent drivers of socio-economic change (e.g., blockchain, artificial intelligence)?

- How do organizational responses to the era of crises influence institutions? How can actions at the micro- or meso-levels lead to longer term modifications of previously taken-for-granted values and beliefs that underpin institutions and social life? Certainly, consideration of crises and coronaviruses brings us back to the centrality of norms (i.e., the right, or what ought to be done) and values (i.e., the good, or what is worth doing). And how do crises afford "cover" for potentially diverting, subverting, and transforming extant norms and values? These questions are normative and axiological, but also deeply practical.
- Has the era of crises enabled more or different forms of organizational corruption? And wrongdoing? How might fake news be caused, connected or implicated in organizational and institutional dynamics?
- The notion of "infection" offers a radically different imagery for thinking about institutions. For instance, why might some institutions be more susceptible to infection than others (whether literally or figuratively)? Why such different institutional responses to infections (such as COVID-19)? Concomitantly, is there a role for ideas such as institutional "inoculation" and "immunity"?
- In response to COVID-19, the question of "restarting" has become paramount. What role do institutions play in these processes? For instance, worker safety seems critical, but occupational health and safety agencies appear to offer no assurances. There seems to be a considerable amount of variation in and across nation-states that merit our attention.
- With all these topics in mind – and mindful of a potentially turbulent global and political environment – where do we find the true powers and limitations of institutions? How do the powerful and powerless seek to co-opt, subvert, or survive them?

Conference Details

The Sixth Triennial Alberta Institutions Conference, sponsored by the **Alberta School of Business**, will be held from Thursday, June 24 to Saturday, June 26, 2021 at the Westin Edmonton, in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada. Approximately 25 papers will be selected for presentation.

PhD Paper Development Workshop

The PhD Paper Development Workshop, co-sponsored by *Organization Studies* and *Organization Theory*, will be in the afternoon on Thursday, June 24 at the Westin Edmonton, in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada. Participants are encouraged to arrive on Wednesday, June 23. If you are a Ph.D. student interested in participating, please make this clear when submitting your abstract for consideration (We ask that you put "PhD workshop abstract" in the subject line of your email submission).



Fees

There will be a conference fee of CDN\$300 for all attendees (the fee will be waived for Ph.D. students).

Deadlines/Submission

- Abstract submission (approximately 500 words): November 27, 2020
- Notification of acceptance: January 31, 2021
- Submission of full paper (maximum 8,000 words): May 1, 2021
- Use the subject line "Alberta Conference Abstract" and email your submission to: ahusak@ualberta.ca

Organizing Committee

Emily Block, Tony Briggs, David Deephouse, Joel Gehman, Vern Glaser, Royston Greenwood, Tim Hannigan, Bob Hinings, Dev Jennings, Michael Lounsbury, Trish Reay, Angelique Slade Shantz, Chris Steele, Madeline Toubiana, Marvin Washington, and all of the University of Alberta.

As it becomes available, additional information will be posted at: AlbertaInstitutions.com