

Call for Presentations / Call for Papers
International Conference “Rethinking Social Capital”
March 26-27, 2015, Salzburg/Austria

held by
the Centre for Ethics and Poverty Research/University of Salzburg,
the international research centre for social and ethical questions (ifz Salzburg) &
the Social Festival *Tu was, dann tut sich was. (Keep the Ball Rolling.)*

Concepts of *social capital* play a well-established role in a number of academic disciplines and continue to grow in popularity in the discourses of the sciences as well as those of civil society. The relevance of social capital as an individual, collective and universal resource has often been described in literature, as have its most common manifestations such as shared values and norms or reciprocal trust. Commonly membership of clubs or associations are considered here as a reference point, but also other links such as kinship, friendships, neighbourhoods, job relations, social strata, local/regional ties etc., are acknowledged as important. While generating such apparently positive effects, however, being based on a kind of belonging – a belonging that is not always of one’s own choice – social capital on the other hand also contributes to social inequalities and an unequal distribution of power as well as opportunities to partake in social life. In a nutshell, social capital is discussed quite controversially on the basis of different conceptualizations (e.g. by Putnam, Coleman or Bourdieu), but nevertheless as an element that is fundamental and constitutive of various forms of societal coexistence.

The conference “Rethinking Social Capital” aims to step out of well known paths of discourse by seeking new perspectives on social capital and ways to acquire and nourish, maintain and foster it.

Topics of interest include (but are not limited to):

(i) How can people be motivated to bring in their social capital on behalf of the wellbeing of others with respect to their local communities? How are individual biographic parameters and different surrounding conditions in people’s everyday lives to be taken into account? And what makes the difference between (loose) contacts and (reliable) social capital?

(ii) With a focus on initiatives that do not require membership, and are built on informal structures (e.g. neighbourly help or supported groups) or on project-related forms of engagement (e.g. citizens’ initiatives): how do new forms or alternative formats of participation and civic engagement – beyond formats of e.g. traditional clubs or associations – contribute to the development and growth of social capital? How can social capital come into effect at individual, neighbourhood, local or regional level?

(iii) Regarding the operationalization of social capital: what do we actually measure when we measure social capital? What are appropriate indicators and what are misleading indicators, and based on what grounds and (normative) assumptions are indicators chosen? Which methods of measuring are predominant and which can be described as best practice? And what significance do social and spatial contexts have with regard to measuring social capital?

(iv) We are also open to proposals which discuss surprising or hitherto neglected aspects of social capital in addition to the topics described above.

The conference “Rethinking Social Capital” is organized by the Centre for Ethics and Poverty Research/University of Salzburg (CEPR) together with the international research centre for social and ethical questions (ifz Salzburg). Both institutions are concerned with questions of social cohesion, civic engagement, preconditions for a good life, and social coexistence and alleviation of poverty and social exclusion. Interest in these topics has found one manifestation in a participatory project on civic and social commitment (*Tu was, dann tut sich was.*, or *Keep the Ball Rolling.*, see next page) that was initiated in 2011 by ifz Salzburg and CEPR. Proposals that relate to the mentioned topics of interest and/or deal with alternative or new formats of participation and civic engagement are especially welcome.

Abstracts of approx. 300 words should be submitted to Elisabeth Kapferer:
elisabeth.kapferer@sbg.ac.at

EXTENDED DEADLINES (as at Dec. 09)

Deadline for submission is **January 18, 2014**. Notification of acceptance will be given by January 30, 2015.

Invited colleagues are asked to prepare a paper for the **conference proceedings** (approx. 6,000 words) which will be published in 2016. Deadline for submitting **paper drafts** is March 12, 2015.

The conference will include lectures and discussions and aims at providing enough time for open discussions. Participants are thus asked to prepare **short presentations** (approx. **ten minutes**) on the main issues of their topic. **Poster presentations** are welcome.

Conference fee: 100 € / reduced fee for students: 75 € (to be paid in advance).

For more information please contact:

Elisabeth Kapferer – elisabeth.kapferer@sbg.ac.at

Centre for Ethics and Poverty Research, University of Salzburg

<http://www.uni-salzburg.at/zea>

Institutions and organizing committee

Centre for Ethics and Poverty Research/University of Salzburg – ZEA (www.uni-salzburg.at/zea):

The Centre for Ethics and Poverty Research (ZEA) at the University of Salzburg is an interdisciplinary research organization with multiple integrations in national and international institutions and networks. It is dedicated to the scientific treatment of social-ethical issues with particular reference to the phenomena of poverty and social exclusion. The aim of the ZEA is the promotion, recognition and establishment of poverty research as a separate scientific discipline.

international research centre for social and ethical questions – ifz (www.ifz-salzburg.at):

As an international research centre for social ethics, the ifz is a place where research on questions of how to improve people's lives is made possible and discernible. It is a place for interdisciplinary approaches on socially relevant issues. The ifz aims to be a platform for ideas and solutions that serve our society, the church and the economy; it wants to achieve that goal through its academic work and by providing a meeting place, where academics and non-academics have the opportunity to meet.

Austria's first Social Festival: *Tu was, dann tut sich was*. (*Keep the Ball Rolling*.)

The idea behind *Tu was, dann tut sich was* is very simple: it is about supporting committed people and institutions in realizing small project ideas that aim to increase the quality of life in their respective communities and regions. Founded in 2011, the social festival *Tu was, dann tut sich was* does not only provide an organizational framework for the implementation of such ideas, but those who successfully submit a project will also receive financial support.

A number of Austrian private foundations fund the social festival and support it through their expertise in fostering social projects. Those private foundations are organized as a non-profit association called *SInnstifter*. The members of the *SInnstifter* are ERSTE Foundation, ESSL Foundation, Katharina Turnauer Private Foundation, Humer Private Foundation, Schweighofer Private Foundation, Andra Private Foundation, Unruhe Private Foundation and Dreyer Charity Fund.

See www.tu-was.at (German only).

“Rethinking Social Capital” – organizing committee

Clemens Sedmak: <http://www.uni-salzburg.at/index.php?id=32603&L=1>
<http://www.kcl.ac.uk/artshums/depts/trs/people/staff/academic/sedmak>

Andreas Koch: <http://www.ifz-salzburg.at/andreas-koch/>
<http://www.uni-salzburg.at/index.php?id=22767&MP=44-44784>

Isabell Gstach: <http://www.ifz-salzburg.at/gstach-isabell/>

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