Prof. Claudia Jonczyk Sedes, Universität Neuchatel, Schweiz
Location: N.N.
Time and Date: 4. December 2024 14:00 to 15:30

Title:

Learning to network: Between individual agency and collective network churn

Abstract:

Social network research has demonstrated increasing interest in individual agency. In this study, we adopt a dynamic perspective and a multilevel approach to investigate how individuals' networking develops over time. We argue that the efficiency of individual networking evolves over time through a learning process, with individual engagement in networking *(agency)* and overall network dynamics (i.e., change in network composition) *(structure)* accelerating or hindering this evolution. In an empirical study of 5435 members across 81 networks of a large business association, we find that while individuals share fewer business opportunities over time, the revenue generated from shared opportunities increases, thereby showing an increase in individual networking efficiency over time. Furthermore, we find that individuals' active engagement in the network accelerates networking efficiency. At the network level, new members joining and old members leaving both reduce the conversion of shared opportunities to revenue and slow down the learning process. By elucidating the dynamics of individual-level networking and its interaction with overall network-level renewal, our work contributes to the literature on network agency, network dynamics, and cross-level network effects.