

Call for Abstracts

Ad Hoc Group “Research in the Pandemic”

at the Congress of the German Sociological Association and the Austrian Sociological Association, 23-25 August 2021 in Vienna

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Societal responses to the current pandemic have created two extreme situations for research:

- Research fields that are considered relevant to fighting the pandemic face strong expectations concerning timely, secure, and unambiguous results. Access to resources and publication opportunities have been eased. Many researchers have more or less radically changed their research by switching to pandemic-related topics.
- Research that is not relevant to fighting the pandemic experiences the same fate as much other work in society by being unexpectedly interrupted or forced to proceed under drastically changed conditions. Access to laboratories becomes impossible laboratory animals had to be culled, and infrastructures for research become inaccessible. Access to research objects and infrastructures outside the university (e.g. archives or interviewees) is not permitted, communication processes ceased or were moved to online formats.

In addition, we witness unpredictable disruptions of societal services on which time for research depends such as childcare, schooling, or others. First investigations show that female researchers are disproportionately affected by the interruptions of these services.

Both the intensification and the interruptions of research have consequences for research processes and academic careers that may extend far beyond the end of the pandemic. The *ad hoc* – group will bring together sociological studies on pandemic-driven changes in research and explore the potential of the two extreme situations of intensification and interruptions for a deeper theoretical understanding of chronological structures and conditions of research that we took for granted until the pandemic hit. Topics include, but are not limited to, the following:

- What can analyses of attempts to speed up pandemic-relevant research and of interruptions of other research teach us about the dynamics of research and scholarly communication?
- Which dependencies on infrastructures and conditions of research that have been neglected by science studies are revealed by pandemic-driven interruptions?
- What can we learn about the impact of societal background conditions on the success of researchers in competitions for recognition and resources? How does social inequality affect researchers’ abilities to cope with pandemic-driven changes?

Please send your abstract (a maximum of 2,400 characters including spaces) by April 20th to Jochen.Glaeser@tu-berlin.de.