Guidelines and Criteria for the Submission of Short Papers at EGOS Colloquia

Short papers should focus on the main ideas of the later full paper, i.e. they should explain the purpose of the paper, theoretical background, the research gap that is addressed, the approach taken, the methods of analysis (in empirical papers), main findings and contributions. In addition, it is useful to indicate clearly how the paper links with the sub-theme and the overall theme of the Colloquium, although not all papers need to focus on the overall theme. Creativity, innovativeness, theoretical grounding and critical thinking are typical characteristics of EGOS papers.

Your short paper should comprise **around 3,000 words** (inc. references, appendices, and other material).

Submission deadline for short papers for the (main) 42nd EGOS Colloquium in Bergamo, July 9–11, 2026:

- Tuesday, January 7, 2026, 23:59:59 CET

The deadline is unchangeable and therefore **extensions can not be granted**!

Formatting your short paper

Your short paper should comprise **around 3,000 words**, according to the following format:

- Font: 12 pt, Arial or Times New Roman

- Margin left/right: 2.5 cm

- Line spacing: 1.5

- Use APA style for your citations

Do not use capital letters in your paper's title, unless they are proper nouns (e.g. "London", "Thomas"), quoted titles, or if it is the first word after a colon or hyphen. For example: *Mark Twain's "The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn": Summary, analyses, and quotations.* Do not write your title in ALL CAPS.

Please **state your name** (and that of your co-author/s, if applicable) + affiliation + email at the top of your short paper (because no [single/double blind] peer review).

Short papers should be submitted as a **pdf or docx file**. Please do not upload txt files!

Steps prior to uploading your short paper

- To upload a short paper, you must be a **registered user** on the EGOS website.

    - If you have never been an EGOS member, never uploaded a short paper for one of the previous EGOS Colloquia, or never attended an EGOS Colloquium before, you need to **register on the EGOS website**. Click here and follow the instructions. Once you have an EGOS member number and password, please **log in to the member area** "MyEGOS" and follow the instructions for uploading your short paper listed below.

- If you are an active (or former) EGOS member, **log in to "MyEGOS"** using your email [or your EGOS member number] and your password.

## Uploading your short paper

You can **only upload one short paper** with your EGOS member number! If your short paper is co-authored and you have already submitted a (single-authored) short paper to another sub-theme, then your co-author (one of your co-authors, respectively) has to upload this co-authored short paper by using their EGOS member number. Please note: You may only appear as **co-author in a maximum of TWO further short papers**!

- In the MyEGOS section of the website, click on **Submit your short paper**.

- Fill in the form.

    - Do not use ALL CAPS for your paper title.

    - As the uploader, you are the main author. Add all co-authors.

    - Upload your paper as pdf or docx.

- If you want to re-upload you short paper because you submitted it to the wrong sub-theme or have an updated version, you can do so until the deadline:

    - In MyEGOS, you will see Status: Edit your short paper

    - Click delete your short paper application.

    - Submit your short paper again.

If you have any further questions, please contact the EGOS Executive Secretariat.

Sub-theme 67: Social-Symbolic Work and the Technologization of New Ways of Working: A Reflexive Perspective
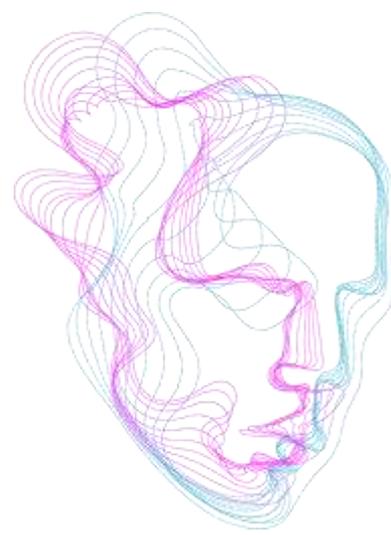
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Call for Papers

Scholars have long debated the question: can institutions be critical in changing the society we live in? Ongoing discussions explore how we should contextualize institutions to better understand the systemic mechanisms through which our societies, and the organizations embedded in them, function (e.g., Amis et al., 2018, 2020; Lawrence et al., 2013; Willmott, 2015). Adopting this perspective allows us to examine the underlying motivations driving the social changes we are currently witnessing, such as the recognition, challenge, or outright disregard of **systemic inequality**; the ongoing struggle to defend or erode diversity, equity, and inclusion (Aliberti et al., 2024; Creary, 2025); the bright and dark sides of post-2020 hybrid work models and **technologization** processes, and the emerging feelings of fear and denial regarding **megatrends**, such as climate change, technologies, new health challenges, as well as new ways of working (Guston, 2014; Todisco et al., 2024).

Questions as "Why are these societal changes occurring?", or "How do individuals and organizations respond?" are widely debated in scholarly literature by researchers focused on the role of institutions, deserving in-depth reflection in a society where **both public and private organizations** increasingly influence people's experiences of workplaces and societies. By taking such positions, we can work together to explore the role of human actions within our societies, as well as their implications for future generations.

The **social-symbolic perspective** (Lawrence & Phillips, 2019) provides a framework for analysing how human actors deliberately construct new social-symbolic worlds. This perspective encompasses work related to the self—our emotions, identities, and career choices—the organizations we inhabit, including their boundaries, technologies, and our interactions with them, and the institutions in which both are embedded (Barberá-Tomás et al., 2019; Lawrence & Phillips, 2019; Zietsma & Lawrence, 2010). These dimensions of work can be analysed through any meaningful patterns within a social system, whether material (e.g., physical artefacts), discursive (e.g., language and communication), or relational (e.g., social interactions). This perspective thus provides a valuable toolkit for understanding the interconnectedness of individual, organizational, and institutional efforts in **driving social change**—or more frequently, in **maintaining the status quo** (Amis et al., 2018, 2020).

Two crucial aspects to consider in this regard are the **reflexivity** (e.g., Mandalaki, 2023) and **positionality** (e.g., Jacobson & Mustafa, 2019) of both researchers and participants in our research projects. What personal motivations, perspectives, backgrounds, experiences, sensitivities, and resources drive individuals to act in ways that transform institutions? The construct of "worlds of concern" (Creed et al., 2022)—which is a reflexivity exercise—has recently been used to establish a connection between individual level of awareness and engagement with a social issue and our potential to intervene in it (Aliberti et al., 2024).

As part of this overall discussion, recent work has focused on discriminatory and exclusionary practices across organizations and societies (e.g., Aliberti et al., 2024; Creary, 2024, 2025; Karakulak & Lawrence, 2024), as well as discussions on how new ways of working are, rather than making us freer, actually increasing our oppression (e.g. Ashikali et al., 2021; Charbonneau & Doberstein, 2020). In this respect, for example, studies have linked such rapid technological progress to changes in identity, emotions, relationship management, and perceptions of inequalities in organizations and societies (Bankins & Waterhouse, 2019; Todisco et al., 2021; Tomo, 2023).

Moreover, the contexts of these studies vary. Some focus on **private corporations**. For instance, Aliberti, Bissola, and Imperatori (2024) identified various forms of social-symbolic work employed by consultants and DEI professionals in Italian branches of professional service firms—often to challenge but, more commonly, to reinforce the conditions that allow ethnic discrimination to persist. Creary (2024) explored these contradictions in DEI

approaches with a specific focus on allyship programs, while other scholars have highlighted the unintended consequences, and even paradoxes, of these initiatives more broadly (e.g., Creary, 2025; Leslie, 2019).

Different national contexts and institutional backgrounds are also considered. In this respect, the **public sector** is of course very relevant for the study of institutions. Recent work seeks to explore the role of public organizations on these issues (e.g., Bertz et al., 2024; Tuominen, 2024). For example, Tuominen (2024) recently applied the lens of institutional work to analyze change within a Finnish city administration, identifying distinct patterns of reflexivity that drive institutional transformation. Similarly, Karakulak and Lawrence (2024) explored the case of Turkey, examining how gender discrimination is addressed through partnerships between public administration and NGOs. Another relevant context is that of **digital transformations** (e.g., **technologization**), analyzed in relation to the ethical and cultural challenges posed by emerging technologies in the workplace—particularly their impact on issues such as inequality, surveillance, and algorithmic bias (De Vaujany et al., 2021; Todisco et al., 2021; Zuboff, 2022).

Different methodologies and perspectives can be employed to explore these issues. For instance, applying a ritual lens to institutional analysis provides valuable insight into the delicate interplay between stability and change. Organizational rituals function as key mechanisms of social control, shaping employee experiences through communicative signalling, relational coordination, and affective influence (Islam & Sferrazzo, 2022). Adopting a reflexive and critical stance, scholars have also experimented with diverse research and writing approaches. Encouraging alternative ways of writing (e.g., Boncori, 2022; Mandalaki, 2023) can deepen our understanding of institutional fields, including explorations grounded in personal and subjective experiences (Dorion, 2021; Tomo, 2023). Furthermore, in the public sector, analyzing the perceptions and experiences of public employees fosters the possibility of understanding the relational dimension in the workplace, encouraging discussion on the critical issues of new ways of working (Babapour Chafi et al., 2021, Todisco et al., 2024).

In this sub-theme, we invite scholars to enrich this ongoing dialogue by exploring the dynamics of institutional, organizational, and self-work and the interaction between these forms of work. We encourage contributions spanning multiple levels of analysis and welcome theoretical and empirical approaches, aiming to deepen our understanding of these interconnected processes and their implications. Finally, while most research has focused on Western countries (mainly the United States and Europe), we welcome contributions from different national contexts. In line with the aim of this sub-theme to embrace critical reflexivity and positionality for the study of social changes, we embrace qualitative and critical methods.

Exemplary questions to be addressed include (but are not limited to):

- How can the socio-symbolic perspective, when applied to digital transformation processes, illuminate the role of institutions (e.g., the public sector, policy makers) in navigating ongoing social changes?

- How does systemic inequality manifest in hybrid work models, and what roles do organizations and institutions play in addressing it?

- What role does public backlash against hybrid work models play in sustaining systemic workplace inequalities, particularly for marginalized groups?

- What insights does reflexivity in organizational studies provide regarding the intersection of institutional work, gender, and systemic oppression in the workplace?

- What are the key challenges in achieving institutional change within private and public organizations, and how do dependencies on these organizations either complicate or facilitate the process?

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