

CALL FOR PAPERS

Workshop Score/CSO/CARR: The Organization of Knowledge

29-30 May 2012

Workshop venue: Stockholm School of Economics and Score

In the collaboration between Score, CSO and CARR, financed by a grant from STINT, Score hereby invites to a workshop on one of the themes for this collaboration: "The Organization of Knowledge".

The particular topics for the workshop is mainly developed in discussions between Score and CSO scholars, and are intended to both represent ongoing research at the three research centres and among our close friends, and work as a starting point for further discussions and new research topics. One idea of the workshop is to scan the opportunities for a joint publication that represents current research. A second idea is to build a platform for discussions of further collaboration and new projects.

Although we look forward to many interesting papers (full or short papers according to the EGOS standard) it is possible to participate and contribute in other ways, as a commentator, by giving a presentation, or as a dedicated participant. Feel free to think creatively about how to relate to the workshop theme and the specific topics elaborated on in the following.

The organization of knowledge

The theme for this workshop stems from the following observation: organizational scholars have paid attention to the importance of knowledge about organization, leadership, management and governance for the forming and functioning of organizations and public policies; meanwhile, STS scholars (and more generally social scientists interested in the production of knowledge) have devoted some attention to the role of organizations and processes of organizing on the shape, content and use of knowledge; yet there still remains much to be done in the way of understanding the linkage between the two topics. We suggest "the organization of knowledge" as a workshop theme to capture this interlinkage and more generally the interplay between two major characteristics of contemporary societies.

The purpose of the workshop is to develop our common and individual knowledge regarding the organization of knowledge. We will also explore and mobilize ongoing research within our own organizations and networks.

We understand the organization of knowledge in two distinct but supplementary ways. First, organizations and more broadly organizing (as a process) have consequences on the kind of knowledge that is produced and how it is transferred (or not). In other words, organizations shape the production of knowledge: in their forms, contents and uses. Second, knowledge is a fundamental form of action that has consequences for what organizations do: i.e. knowledge shapes what organizations do (or don't do), it provides incentives, resources, myths and symbols, it defines what is possible, legitimate, or sustainable.

Both approaches can be broken down in the following questions for discussion. Some possible topics are listed in order to illustrate these.

1. How organizations shape the production of knowledge

A first way to address this subtheme is to analyze and compare different organizational forms involved in the production of knowledge. The hypothesis is that there is a link between: 1) organizational forms, arrangements or processes, 2) the procedures implemented to produce, provide or diffuse knowledge, and 3) the types of knowledge produced. Possible topics where this hypothesis could be tested are: universities and research institutions; health assessment agencies; clinical research; think tanks; international organizations. In some circumstances, it could be necessary to take a specific look at professions, as they may be involved in both organizational processes and knowledge production.

A second way to address this subtheme is to look at how the production of knowledge is organized in different fields, with a special focus on “new emerging fields” where emphasis is placed in setting up (sometimes innovative) formal arrangements. These fields are often at the crossroads between fundamental research, applied research, and policy or management options. Possible topics include: disaster management, synthetic biology, social marketing, chemical assessment, industrial and research clusters, and guidelines in the treatment of diseases. In some circumstances, the objective might be to create a new profession or scientific discipline.

A third way, rather more difficult, is to ask the question: how does the organization of knowledge maintain some issues invisible? How does it produce uncertainty? How does it take part in “undone science”? Possible topics here could include workplace safety. Here the hypothesis is that in many cases of known or unknown unknowns, organizational processes are involved in producing uncertainty.

2. How knowledge shapes or is used by organizations

A first way to address this subtheme is to analyze evaluation processes, and more precisely how knowledge is processed and used to assess an organization or a policy, and how this in turn affects the way the organization or the policy operates. A possible topic could be universities and research, for instance, looking both at the organizations created to undertake the evaluation and how they process knowledge in order to achieve some form of appraisal, and the organizations evaluated in order to understand how they react or anticipate these procedures and reform their structures in order to perform better. Another topic could be the recent reform in policy evaluation in France, and the key role played by economists (and economic theories) in this context.

A second way is to analyze the trend toward evidence-based policymaking and the use of knowledge in decision-making processes. What types of organizations or organizing processes were set up to provide this form of knowledge? What were the underlying theories and instruments? What were their implications?

A third way is to study the use of knowledge in the shaping of organizations. Topics could include here the production of standards and the role of consultancy firms, which both rely on different forms of knowledge to determine the adequate rules and procedures organizations must implement.

Finally, a fourth possible question would be to discuss the specific role of knowledge produced by the social sciences in the shaping or reforming of organizations or organizational

processes. How are social sciences mobilized to produce an understanding of organizations and organizational processes? How is this knowledge used? By whom?

Workshop details

The workshop will take place at Stockholm School of Economics and Score, 29-30 May, 2012. Those interested in participating are asked to register by April 5th to: ann.linders@score.su.se. When you register you are also asked to submit an abstract (maximum one page) and indicate if you plan to give a full or a short paper, or if you go for a presentation or acting as a dedicated participant. Among the participants some are likely to be asked to be commentators. Last day for full paper, short papers according EGOS-standard or an abstract for a presentation is May 18th.

We expect a rather limited number of participants (30-40 persons) in order to make the workshop a true *workshop*. Therefore, mainly people from the organizing research centres are invited. But others from our networks that we believe should be part of the workshop are kindly asked to contact the organizing committee if they are interested in participating.

Score will provide for (international) travels, food and accommodation (two nights). Please indicate already when sending abstracts if you need a hotel reservation.

Updated information about the workshop will be available at:

www.score.su.se

Workshop committee

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