

# CHER VIENNA 2023



## Call for Proposals CHER 35th Annual Conference

Higher Education Institutions as Change Agents in  
Society: Perspectives on Adaptation and Impact

August 30<sup>th</sup> to September 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023

Institute for Higher Education Management  
WU - Vienna University of Economics and Business  
Vienna, Austria

<https://www.wu.ac.at/ihm/cher-2023/>

## Conference theme

The changing role of higher education institutions (HEIs) in society has become a point of reference among policy makers, university leaders and the academic community across the world. Being among the oldest institutions to date, universities have always been subject to changes in their institutional environments. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, however, these changes have become more rapid and disruptive. Societies are not only confronted with multifaceted challenges related to sustainability, technology, social disparities and geopolitical tensions, but also a situation of crisis resulting from a global pandemic, war, energy shortages and inflation.

In this sense, HEIs are both objects and subjects of societal change. They are impacted by transformations in society, but they are also in a position to create impact on society. Expectations have been growing with the diffusion of New Public Management, changing state funding and steering models, proliferation of auditing activities, and with HEIs becoming organizational actors with defined goals, strategies and accountability structures.

Responding to changing societal conditions requires new forms of organizing and adaptive capacity in HEIs. Adaptation is thus of key importance in enabling HEIs to respond to changes in their institutional environments. However, adaptation itself is multifaceted, context-bound and subject to historical path-dependencies, and organizational responses can range from continuity to disruption, or even paradoxical adaptation.

Questions related to how higher education institutions adapt to multiple and often conflicting societal demands, the relation between adaptation and legitimacy or risk, and how through adaptation, HEIs can become more active change agents in society are of central interest to this year's conference. Both theoretical and empirical contributions that provide a perspective on adaptation with respect to four key areas: education, research, third mission and impact, as well as governance, innovation and internationalization are welcome. Some guiding questions for each area are provided below but they are by no means exhaustive. Other research questions or topics suited to the conference theme are encouraged.

## Conference format

The conference will have five tracks. In addition to the tracks, the conference will offer opportunities for interaction and exchange through roundtable discussions, editorial workshops, networking spaces and mentoring possibilities for early-career researchers. More information about these opportunities will be available on our conference website.

## Important dates

Abstract Submission: 28<sup>th</sup> of February, 2023

Notification of Acceptance: 31<sup>st</sup> of March, 2023

Early Bird Registration: 1<sup>st</sup> of May, 2023

Submission of full papers for publication: 31<sup>st</sup> of July, 2023

## Track 1: Education

- How are HEIs adapting their teaching and learning in response to rapid digitalization, enhanced by the global pandemic? What are the implications for pedagogy and student achievement?
- To what extent are HEIs adapting their teaching and learning in response to calls for diversity, ethics, sustainability and social responsibility?
- How do HEIs respond to a growing demand for re-skilling and up-skilling and with that to an increasing trend in short certification, stackable credits and micro-credentials?
- How do HEIs respond to demands for more novel models of teaching and learning?
- How are HEIs adapting teaching and learning to make it more responsive to societal needs? How do these changes influence the identity of HEIs and its members?

## Track 2: Research

- How are HEIs adapting to new models of knowledge production?
- What patterns of adaptation can be observed with respect to multi-disciplinarity, (international) collaboration, open science or research dissemination? What variations exist across types of institutions and disciplinary fields?
- How do contradictory policy objectives, such as open science and restrictions on knowledge dissemination (e.g. security measures, export controls) influence the research and researchers in HEIs?
- How do HEIs and scholars respond to calls for more socially impactful research?
- In what way do external forces, including competition, policies and funding, publishers and rankings influence the content, quality and assessment of research?

## Track 3: Third mission and impact

- What do we know about the social, environmental, economic and cultural impacts of HEIs? Who are those impacted by HEIs and through what mechanisms?
- How do HEIs organize for impact? How do they adapt their strategies, structures and practices in order to strengthen their impact on society, the economy and the environment (e.g., regarding equity, diversity, inclusion, sustainability)?
- How do HEIs manage the quality of their third mission activities? What processes and systems are in place and do they lead to desired outcomes and impacts?
- How do HEIs adapt their performance management and incentive structures for staff and students to strengthen internal commitment to impact?
- What is the role of actors (internal and external), and top-down and bottom-up initiatives in strengthening the impact of HEIs?

## Track 4: Governance, innovation and internationalization

- What role do different (internal and external) stakeholders play in the steering of HEIs? How is competition shaping the governance of universities? How do networks and alliances influence governance models in HEIs?
- What are more innovative models for HEIs and how have they impacted the perception of universities?
- What are new patterns in internationalization and how are HEIs, staff and students adapting to them?
- How have faculty models changed over time and what is their impact on HEIs' delivery on their core mission? What new models are needed to adequately manage the quality of HEIs?
- Which governance models best enhance innovation in HEIs across the world?

## Open Track: Current topics in higher education research

An open track will be organized for high-quality contributions that do not have a specific fit with the four areas outlined above, and are not explicitly connected to the main theme of the conference. This track is equally important and welcomes papers addressing current topics in higher education research.

## Submission of proposals

Participants are invited to submit a proposal for a **paper**, a **poster** or a **panel** on a topic that is relevant to the conference theme. A paper presentation refers to a presentation delivered by one or several authors or collaborators on a particular research topic. A poster presentation is generally suitable for preliminary studies or early stage research projects. A panel generally comprises a series of 3-4 presentations on a common research topic delivered by a group of authors facilitated by a moderator. For a panel format, a joint proposal is expected.

For submission, please use the templates available on our website. More detailed instructions on what is expected for each submission format is provided in the templates. Abstracts for all three formats need to follow the structure provided in the templates and should not exceed 1000 words. Please submit your structured abstracts by the 28<sup>th</sup> of February, 2023 on the conference website. All abstracts will be peer reviewed and applicants will be informed on the results of the review process by the 31<sup>st</sup> of March, 2023. Authors are expected to submit their full papers by the **31<sup>st</sup> of July, 2023**. Selected papers will follow a regular peer review process and will be published in a special issue of the European Journal of Higher Education corresponding to the conference theme.

## Program committee

Barbara Sporn (WU Vienna, CHER Board of Directors)  
Maria João Rosa (CHER Board of Directors, General Secretary)  
Hugo Horta (CHER Board of Directors, Chair)  
Georg Krücken (CHER Board of Directors)  
Terhi Nokkala (CHER Board of Directors)  
Justin Powell (CHER Board of Directors; Chair, CHER 2024 Conference)  
Wenqin Shen (CHER Board of Directors)  
Taru Siekkinen (CHER Board of Directors)  
Marek Kwiek (Chair, CHER 2025 Conference)  
Marijk van der Wende (President of EAIR)

## Organizing committee

Barbara Sporn (WU Vienna, CHER Board of Directors)  
Bernhard Böhm (WU Vienna)  
Ana Godonoga (WU Vienna)  
Verena Herbsthofer (WU Vienna)

## Contact information

Conference website (will be updated regularly): <https://www.wu.ac.at/ihm/cher-2023/>  
For any conference-related questions, please contact us at [cher2023@wu.ac.at](mailto:cher2023@wu.ac.at)  
You can follow updates on the conference on our [LinkedIn](#) page.

## Conference Fees

The conference fees comprise an **all-inclusive package**, which covers participation in the 3-day conference, lunches and coffee breaks, the welcome reception and the gala dinner including cultural activities.

### Early Bird (before May 1)

Member	EUR 400
Non-member	EUR 550
Doctoral students	EUR 250

### Regular (after May 1)

Member	EUR 550
Non-member	EUR 700
Doctoral students	EUR 300

## Other information

Information on registration, the conference program, and travel and accommodation options in Vienna will be provided on [our website](#) in due time.