



The International  
Association  
for the Study of  
the Commons



Call for Abstracts:

## IASC THEMATIC WORKSHOP: CONCEPTUALIZING THE NEW COMMONS: THE EXAMPLES OF KNOWLEDGE COMMONS & SEED AND VARIETY COMMONS

June 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup>, 2018, Oldenburg, Germany

New Commons – including Knowledge Commons, Cultural Commons and Global Commons – have become an increasingly important research subject in Commons studies. As they reach beyond the sector of natural common-pool resources, theoretical and conceptual advancements are required. The widened scope also calls for a revised focus on collaboration and new forms of community governance and participatory processes of New Commons. From a normative perspective, the New Commons feature a quite diverse set of values; e.g. re-democratization, re-embedding of the economy, social equality and individual freedom. Those aspects as well need systematic investigation and ethical reflection.

*RightSeeds* – a research project by the University of Oldenburg, the Institute for Ecological Economy Research and the University of Göttingen - explores commons-based approaches to variety breeding, seed production and seed usage. A Commons orientation in the seed and variety sector provides a promising approach in reorienting the agricultural sector towards the international sustainability goals of food sovereignty and agrobiodiversity. The project employs a transdisciplinary research approach by integrating perspectives from the fields of economics, ecology, political science and philosophy, and collaborating with seed initiatives, companies and NGOs in Germany and the Philippines.

Both the synthesis of different research perspectives and the sound analytical investigation of arrangements in specific fields of application of the New Commons, such as Seed and Variety Commons, promises to

strengthen their systematic understanding and their challenges in practice.

### Objectives

We invite researchers to participate in an international workshop to advance conceptual-theoretical and organizational perspectives on the New Commons.

The focus will be on the creation and management of Knowledge Commons and Seed & Variety Commons as two fields of application of the New Commons. A fruitful exchange and synthesis of perspectives between these two application fields will help to generate practical knowledge, (inter)disciplinary conceptual sharpness and promote the research agenda of the New Commons.

The workshop aims at adding to the understanding of Knowledge Commons and Seed & Variety Commons by especially addressing the following questions:

- How can Knowledge Commons and Seed & Variety Commons, respectively, be conceptualized and analyzed?
- What are the core organizational challenges in the fields of Knowledge Commons and Seed & Variety Commons?
- What political strategies, institutional arrangements and organizational structures are suitable for overcoming these organizational challenges?
- How can Seed & Variety Commons and Knowledge Commons mutually enrich one another?





## Specific Research Themes

We invite theoretical and conceptual contributions from current research, not restricted to, but particularly on the following issues:

- Theoretical advancements of Seed and Variety Commons and New Commons
- Perspectives from the Global South and Global North on New Commons
- Polycentric governance of Global Knowledge Commons and biodiversity/ plant genetic resources
- Global Commons character of Knowledge Commons and Seed & Variety Commons
- New Commons as means for personal wellbeing and re-democratization
- New Commons as means for social-ecological transformation

Additionally, we welcome contributions addressing organizational challenges of the New Commons:

- Successful knowledge integration
- Alternative (business) models for financing the New Commons
- Structural and institutional barriers
- Protection from privatization
- Assessing the social-ecological outcome of the New Commons

## Outline and Keynotes

The workshop includes keynotes and paper presentations, followed by both focused discussion of individual inputs and working groups. We envision a joint publication and emerging synthesis as results from the workshop.

## Keynote Speakers:

- **Brett M. Frischmann**  
Villanova University
- **Silke Helfrich**  
Commons-Institut e.V.
- **Jack Kloppenburg**  
University of Wisconsin

## Target Audience and Application Procedure

The workshop is open to scholars from interdisciplinary Commons research worldwide. To ensure a high quality exchange of ideas and a workshop working atmosphere, we will select no more than 25 participants.

Abstracts of 300-500 words excluding keywords and references should be sent to [rightseeds@uol.de](mailto:rightseeds@uol.de). The deadline for application is February 25<sup>th</sup>, 2018. All abstracts will be double-blind reviewed. The papers will be selected based on their scientific quality, originality, and how closely they relate to the main workshop themes.

Notification of acceptance will be given by mid March, 2018. The workshop language is English. The registration fee is 80€. A reduced fee of 60 € is applied for IASC members.

## RightSeeds Research Group

Carl von Ossietzky University Oldenburg  
Prof. Dr. Stefanie Sievers-Glotzbach  
Department of Business Administration,  
Economics, and Law  
26111 Oldenburg, Germany  
[rightseeds@uol.de](mailto:rightseeds@uol.de)

## Key Dates

June 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> 2018

Location: *Schlaues Haus*, Oldenburg, Germany (<http://schlaues-haus-ol.de/about-us/>)

**Deadline for Abstracts: February 25<sup>th</sup>, 2018**

Notification of Acceptance: Mid March, 2018

Participation Fee: 80€, reduced fee for IASC members: 60€

Registration deadline: 30<sup>th</sup> March, 2018