

Call for contributions

### **EMMIR International Conference 2018**

#### **Linking Scholarship and Activism in Migration Societies: Critical Inquiries**

December 13-15, 2018

Carl von Ossietzky University of Oldenburg, Germany

Being involved in Migration Studies as teachers, researchers and students, we are personally, but also as practitioners in a field of study, confronted with the question if and how to actively participate in the social, cultural and political controversies in migration societies. In these days, the public engagement with migration seems to be shaped specifically by prevailing nationalist discourses which are frequently combined with a populist rhetoric and gender-based justifications calling for increased securitisation and the closure of international borders influence policy-making. The pervasive politicisation of migration issues also finds its way into the current migration research agenda. Not least these developments force us to pose a number of foundational questions in migration studies: How do scholars and students engage with what is going on in the migration societies they study as well as live in? How do academics and professionals position themselves? Should migration scholarship align with activism? Does activism benefit from being grounded in scholarship? Who is producing knowledge about migration and society and how is it used?

The conference will address these and other questions, frictions, and gaps connected to different forms and understandings of action and activism, social movements and social justice. It is spurred by the need to reflect and engage on the role of scholarly work beyond the often exclusive environment of the academy and explores conceptualisations of activist scholarship. The aim of the conference is to facilitate dialogical spaces in which conversations about the responsibility and accountability in academia and civil society emerge, as well as about politics of knowledge production and dissemination. We delve into the core of the type(s) of understanding(s) of academic knowledge production and the diversity of positions guiding them. This includes the necessity to address diversity and power relations, questions of race, class and gender. What does queer and feminist activism/ scholarship contribute? Do we need to rethink our migration studies curricula and research practice to support pressing social justice needs? If so, what should be done and how do we do it?

The conference is hosted by EMMIR and organised jointly by EMMIR students, alumni, lecturers, professors and researchers involved. EMMIR is an African-European Master program established in 2011 that focuses on migration and human mobility from transdisciplinary perspectives. It has attracted students and scholars from every continent, including those whose work relates closely to social justice causes or who openly pursue an activist approach.

We call for papers and contributions by participants whose current work and interests bridge academia and activism in migration studies and related fields. Some of the questions to be addressed include:

- How is this “bridging work” conceptualized?

- Is it about being a public intellectual? Is it about being the “academic arm” of a given social movement?
- Which are the resources that academics, researchers and activists can tap into in order to contribute to knowledge production and to create connections between the spheres?
- What are the foundational ideas and concepts of activism in the specific context of migration? How are those translated into actions and by whom?
- What are the decision-making structures and procedures? Who is representing whom, for what purposes?
- How is pro-migration activism related to other activist movements, especially queer-feminist and anti-racist ones? How could pro-migration activism be problematic?

We envision the following themes to structure the conference:

1. Scholarly activism and engaged interventions in migration societies;
2. Epistemologies and knowledge politics;
3. Decolonising epistemology in migration societies: indigenous knowledges;
4. Decoding heteronormativity and patriarchy: queer and feminist theory, intersectionality and activism;
5. Alternative methodologies and conceptual approaches - art and activism;
6. Partnerships between academia and civil society;
7. Responsibility and ethics in research and activism.

We invite contributions in the form of either a) full paper presentations; b) input presentations for mentored junior scholars' workshops; c) round table discussions; d) research project posters; e) forms of activism. Additionally, we invite suggestions for alternative formats aiming at participant-driven and practice-oriented sessions and workshops, based on interactive exchange among participants. Our conference also serves as a space for emerging scholars/students in the field of migration and related areas. They are invited to share their internship and fieldwork experiences, research and thesis work perspectives with other scholars and activists.

**For submissions** kindly send an abstract of your work and choice of format and a short bio note. The abstract should not exceed 500 words and the bio note 150 words maximum. In case you would want to suggest a format, you are welcome to- including a short description (150 words).

**Deadline for submissions:** July 1, 2018 at [emmir.conference@uol.de](mailto:emmir.conference@uol.de). Selected participants will be notified by the end of July. For further information and inquiries kindly use the above email please.

This conference pursues diversity and acknowledges the importance of accommodating in the best possible way participants' multilingualism. Translation services may be arranged, **please contact us in advance**.



**Organizers:** European Master of Migration and Intercultural Relations (EMMIR; [emmir.org](http://emmir.org)), Center for Interdisciplinary Research on Women and Gender (ZFG) Center for Migration, Education and Cultural Studies (CMC) and Carl von Ossietzky University Oldenburg (School of Linguistics and Cultural Studies, School of Education).