

Call for Papers

For a small Workshop on

“Measuring Path Dependency – The Social-Constructivist Challenge”

September 5-6, 2005, Hosted by the Free University of Berlin

Path dependency has become a popular notion, not only in economic history and social studies of technology, but also in management and organization research. However, the reference to path dependency is often made in a rather loose way. The concept implies much more than simply the insight that “history matters” in processes of technological and organizational change. Technology dynamics, especially in its soci(et)al-constructivist versions, has been able to show how paths emerge and stabilize (cf. Garud and Karnøe (2001) *Path dependence and creation*). To show its explanatory usefulness, path dependency is in urgent need of empirical operationalization and measurement. We understand ‘measurement’ in a broad sense (taking the measure of), and thus see it as a particular challenge from a social-constructivist perspective.

The workshop will be entirely devoted to this question of how to ‘measure’ path dependency. A small number of researchers will be invited to present the empirical contexts of their projects, their understanding of path dependency or creation, and their ideas on how to measure path dependency in the context of their projects. The workshop is part of an ongoing research project by the Research Group “Inter-firm Networks” (Prof. Jörg Sydow, Free University of Berlin; Prof. Arnold Windeler, University of Technology Berlin) on creating technological paths in the field of next generation lithography (for an outline, see http://www.tu-berlin.de/~soziologie/Tuts/Wp/TUTS_WP_2_2004.pdf). The workshop will be organized in collaboration with Prof. Arie Rip of Twente University in the Netherlands and the Doctoral Program “Research on Organizational Paths” that is located at the Free University in Berlin (www.pfadkolleg.de). The workshop is sponsored by the Volkswagen-Foundation.

If you are interested in actively participating in this workshop, please send a two-page outline of your research project, stating the context of your research, the importance of the concept of path dependency in it, and your present ideas on how to measure path dependency to the two organizers of the workshop, Jörg Sydow (sydow@wiwiss.fu-berlin.de) and Arnold Windeler (arnold.windeler@tu-berlin.de) by **July 31, 2005**.