

**Call for Papers for the 17<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the Forum for Early Career Policy and Public Administration Researchers (FoJuS)**

**“Politics and Public Administration in Times of Political Polarization and Societal Diversity”**

**March 12 and 13 2024, Technische Universität Braunschweig**

High cultural and social diversity as well as the exacerbation of ideological conflicts, coupled with a simultaneous increase in complex and profound societal problems and crises, currently pose significant challenges to politics and public administration. In light of a highly polarized and mediatized public atmosphere as well as a fragmented political landscape, the design and implementation of public policies is continuously exposed to high levels of ideological contestation and societal resistance. Thereby, both political actors and administrative agencies are faced with the expectation to reconcile the increasingly diverse needs and interests of the citizenry in the design and execution of policies. Meanwhile, the dynamics and scope of the ongoing transformation processes require comprehensive new approaches to the steering and regulation of society as well as high levels of innovation and adaptation in public institutions.

Cultural and social diversity as well as the current trends of political polarization may however also provide the opportunity to improve the legitimacy and the problem-solving capacities of the politico-administrative system. Intense ideological controversies may contribute towards stimulating democratic discourses in politics and society and by this improve the participation of citizens in political decision-making processes. Moreover, while policy implementation is exposed to higher levels of public scrutiny administrative acting may become more efficient and responsive. Apart from this, the inclusion of minority citizens in the workforce of political organizations and administrative agencies can reduce unequal treatment and discrimination in citizen-state interactions.

In the upcoming annual meeting of FoJuS we want to address the various implications these dynamics have for both policy-making and implementation. Thereby, possible questions include, but are not limited to:

- How do politics and public administration deal with controversial policy programs and issues? Which conflicts and dilemmas are individual actors, organizations and institutions faced with in light of competing and contradictory interests and values?
- Which kind of tensions can be observed between political and administrative logics of action? How do trends of political polarization affect the relationship between political, administrative and societal actors?

- Which patterns do ideological and partisan-political lines of conflict follow? What role do different policy fields and contents play? In what way matter regional inequalities and the entanglement of decision-making authorities and implementation structures in the context of multi-level governance?
- Which role do non-governmental actors play in the development and shaping of ideological disputes and the mobilization of societal interests?
- What significance do the interests of societal minorities have and how are they included in the political process? How do they affect the direct interactions between bureaucrats and citizens as well as recruitment and promotion practices in the public sector?
- Which opportunities and risks pose digitalization, artificial intelligence, and social media to the articulation of societal interests and discourses in the context of a polarized political and public atmosphere? How do they affect different forms of political participation and citizen encounters with public administration?
- Which normative questions do processes of political polarization and societal diversity raise from the perspective of democracy theory?

We would like to tackle these and other questions from the various perspectives of policy studies and public administration research at the 17<sup>th</sup> annual meeting of FoJuS. We welcome both qualitative and quantitative empirical contributions as well as conceptual articles in German and English. We also appreciate methodological diversity and welcome analyses based on interviews, survey data, documents, or (quasi-) experiments.

As usual, we also welcome contributions that are still at a very early stage as well as excerpts from dissertations. We will also have open panels for contributions that are not directly related to the topic of the conference.

A presentation at the upcoming annual meeting of FoJuS may also be easily combined with participation in the section meeting of the DVPW Section Public Policy and Public Administration, which will take place immediately following on March 14 and 15 at the TU Braunschweig. It has its thematic focus on multilevel governance.

Please submit your abstracts (between 300 and 500 words) via email to Laurin Friedrich ([laurin.friedrich@uni-due.de](mailto:laurin.friedrich@uni-due.de)) by November 8, 2023. Notification of abstract decisions will be sent by November 22, 2023.

We are looking forward to an exciting annual meeting with many interesting contributions!

The speakers of FoJuS

(Svenja Bauer-Blaschkowski, Sandra Plümer und Laurin Friedrich)