



## Call for Papers

# STS-hub.de 2023: Circulations | Open Topic Panel

How do we practice STS in Germany? How do different approaches to practicing STS in Germany relate to each other and which topics stimulate interdisciplinary and integrated STS research? Which institutions and actors participate in German STS research communities? To jointly engage such questions, we initiate *STS-hub.de*, a series of meetings in the form of 'hubs' that aim to connect existing STS networks, associations, research groups and individual scholars. The pilot *STS-hub.de* is scheduled for March, 15<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> 2023 at the Human Technology Center in Aachen. In addition to our [Call for Special Topic Panels](#), we hereby invite submissions of individual papers for an open topic panel on the theme *circulations*.

Circulation is a key organising principle of present-day societies. This open topic panel may feature both empirical studies and critical reflections on the circulation of research objects, knowledge, instruments, experts, and skills in technoscientific configurations. We particularly welcome contributions that could approach circulation through the lens of STS concepts such as *infrastructure*, *translation*, *design*, *power*, and *care*, and which address the following questions:

*How are scientific concepts, methodologies, instruments, and technologies translated when circulating from one place to another?* Technoscientific entities circulate and transform within heterogeneous relational webs (through paper, air, bodies, models, data, markets, images, hashtags). To follow how technologies, such as the renowned Zimbabwe Bush Pump and the Pap smear, circulate and are reconfigured locally to be made applicable in different contexts, we need to study practices of translation. The examination of circulations within complex systems, such as electricity grids, power plants, and air traffic, enables a better understanding of how scaling is being enacted at local, regional, and global levels.

*Who has the power to control the scale, speed, and directions of circulation within networks?* While some knowledge is made to circulate at high speed among communities of experts and wider publics, other knowledge is perceived to better remain confined to the laboratory – knowledge about CRISPR-babies is a case in point. Once it's "out there": who governs the flow of knowledge? who turns it into a matter of concern? For example, knowledge about the safety of childhood vaccinations or climate change circulates in and through online communities, where it becomes increasingly difficult to negotiate the difference between 'scientific facts' and 'fake news'. This has generated new debates about the circulation of knowledge and the epistemological status of truth.

*How are circulations enabled and constrained by social, material, economic, environmental, and other infrastructures?* The case of COVID-19 is a prime example for studying circulation. Its rapid spread and circulation through our communities has turned the virus into a critical object of research. For knowledge about the virus to be produced and disseminated, the peer review system has been accelerated to facilitate the circulation of ideas, drafts, and publications. Likewise, digital platforms have afforded the circulation of virological concepts across disciplinary and professional boundaries.

*How can STS scholars enact circulations with care in our interdisciplinary engagements, interactions with our informants, public communication, and academic writing?* Circulations are power saturated practices – they can come at high costs for some while benefiting others. Costs and profits often emerge from the intertwinement of different systems of circulation. E.g., the circulation of socioeconomic value is contingent on the material circulation of waste in oceans as well as knowledge about their contamination. The circulation of digital literacy can be a means of empowerment as well as of epistemological colonisation. To circulate or not evokes questions of solidarity and of violence. Is there a responsibility of STS to resist, disrupt, or prevent certain forms of circulation? Which circulations do we care for maintaining?

If you like to contribute, please send a plain text abstract (250 words) plus a short biographical note (80 words), Name, Affiliation, if possible ORCID identifier, as well as your agreement that we may publish your abstract & bio, licenced via Creative Commons (CC BY 4.0), by **November 11<sup>th</sup> 2022** to [open@sts-hub.de](mailto:open@sts-hub.de).

STS-hub.de 2023 is jointly organised by Stefan Bösch, Paula Helm, Stefan Laser, Ingmar Lippert, Jan-Hendrik Passoth, Jan-Felix Schrape, Cornelius Schubert, Mareike Smolka, Jan-Peter Voß, und Lisa Wiedemann (alphabetical order).