

‘Othering’ and Polarisation

– bringing researchers with different perspectives together

A call for expressions of interest for participating in a Lorentz Workshop

Topic

Sharp stereotyping as the ‘other’ can occur when politics or society is deeply polarised (as on Brexit in the UK) or when a particular group is politically denigrated (e.g. immigrants by the AfD in Germany). It may be argued that such ‘tribal’ or group behaviour is natural to humans, being deeply social and political creatures. However when such divisions are too deep they can impede dialogue and thus challenge the fabric of liberal society and democratic politics.

The processes and contexts of such ‘othering’ and polarisation have been studied from many perspectives, but this knowledge is spread across many different fields, including: political science, social psychology, agent-based simulation, cultural and cognitive anthropology, history, linguistics, conflict studies, bridge-building practitioners, economics and sociology. This workshop will these fields together to compare their approaches, find common elements and start to map out the journey towards a more holistic and nuanced account.

Lorentz Workshops

In a Lorentz workshop, groups of researchers spend five days together, discussing and developing ideas. There are two venues: Lorentz Center@Oort and Lorentz Center@Snellius, for group sizes up to 55 or 25 participants. Both provide personal working space for all participants, as well as lecture rooms and a casual common room. New contacts and collaborations are typical outcomes of Lorentz Center workshops. Workshops organized by researchers from a wide variety of different backgrounds are welcomed. For more details, see their website: <http://www.lorentzcenter.nl>

Target Dates for Workshop

We would like the workshop to happen during a week in June 2020.

What to do if you are interested in participating

If you are interested in participating in this workshop (assuming our proposal is accepted), then please send *Bruce Edmonds* (bruce@edmonds.name) an email stating the following:

- Your name and preferred email address
- The gender you identify with (or none)
- Your status: Professor? PhD student? Early stage researcher? Practitioner? etc.
- Your areas of expertise and ‘home’ discipline (if relevant), including any practical experience working with individuals or groups in this area
- A brief (!) paragraph stating your interest in the workshop topic

We will use this information to compile the application so we can demonstrate the range of perspectives, kinds of people, career stages and gender balance in the application. In the case of having too many people expressing an interest we will select those most involved in the topic and so as to include a variety of perspectives, but such selection would occur in October 2020.

Deadline for such emails: *Sunday 19th May 2018.*

Organisers

- *Julia Eberlen*, Center for Social and Cultural Psychology, Université libre de Bruxelles, BE
- *Bruce Edmonds*, Centre for Policy Modelling, Manchester Metropolitan University, UK
- *Lusine Grigoryan*, Bremen International Graduate School of Social Sciences and Ruhr University Bochum, DE
- *Wander Jager*, Groningen Center for Social Complexity Studies, University of Groningen, NL
- *Geeske Scholz*, Institute of Environmental Systems Research, Osnabrück University, DE