



Call for Papers:

## **Beyond Western Liberalism: Mapping Blind Spots in IR Norms Research**

Annual Conference of the GGS –  
Giessen Graduate Centre for Social Sciences, Business, Economics and Law  
(University of Giessen)

Convened by  
GGS section “Norms and Changes in Global Politics”  
in cooperation with  
DVPW thematic group “IR Norms Research”  
Institute for Peace Research and Security Policy at the University of Hamburg  
Institute of Political Science (University of Duisburg-Essen)  
Peace Research Institute Frankfurt (PRIF)

Confirmed Keynote Speaker:  
Prof. Jeffrey T. Checkel (Simon Fraser University)

*Date:* **2<sup>nd</sup> – 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2019**

*Place:* **Justus-Liebig-University Giessen, Main Building, Ludwigstr. 23, Giessen**

IR norms research has developed a significant body of knowledge on the question of how norms affect international relations. It has established approaches in IR that do not only take material or rational interests into account, but also the implications, meanings and effects of ideas, norms and identities. It shows how norms matter in international relations, how they come into existence and change over time. Even though IR norm research has established a geographical focus both in the global North and the global South, the substantial focus of the norms being discussed often lies on liberal or so-called Western norms, or on norm entrepreneurs who promote Western or liberal standards of appropriateness in an international context. Accordingly, a critical strand of norms research has developed over the past years, criticizing an overly ‘Euro-centric’ or ‘Western-centric’ perspective, and encompassing a broader understanding of norms as processes rather than fixed entities. It contributes to the further development of IR norms research, which is not only limited to norms as the object of research, but also takes the position of the researcher and the larger context of norms into account. This approach requires going beyond a simple ‘good v. bad’ distinction of norms, and to develop a more in-depth understanding of the standards and models that serve as yardsticks for the evaluation of norms and normative orders.

Against the backdrop of these current discussions in IR norm research, the conference aims to move beyond as well as rethink the established paradigms in IR norm research.

The conference conveners seek proposals for papers addressing, but not limited to, the following topics:

- Ambivalences of the Western liberal paradigm in IR norm research
- Norm evolution and non-Western liberalism
- Good or bad? Investigating the quality of illiberal norm entrepreneurs
- Legitimacy and legitimation in (non-) Western environments: sources of norm evolution, contestation, and abuse
- Beyond the social sciences: IR norm research and neighboring disciplines

The conference conveners invite scholars from all academic levels to present their research. The GGS provides limited funding (accommodation, travel expenses) for early career researchers. Please indicate your request for funding in your paper proposal.

Paper proposals with a title, a maximum of 300-500 words, and up to 5 key words can be submitted to: [janne.mende@sowi.uni-giessen.de](mailto:janne.mende@sowi.uni-giessen.de).

Deadline of submission: **31<sup>st</sup> August 2019.**

We are very happy to host Jeffrey T. Checkel, Professor of International Studies and Simons Chair in International Law and Human Security at Simon Fraser University, who will give a keynote lecture on the first day of the conference, followed by a joint dinner.

The conference, organized by the GGS section “Norms and Changes in Global Politics” (University of Giessen) in cooperation with the Institute for Peace Research and Security Policy at the University of Hamburg), the Institute of Political Science (University of Duisburg-Essen) and the Peace Research Institute Frankfurt (PRIF), is part of a workshop series of the DVPW thematic group “IR Norms Research” within the DVPW section “International Politics”. The conference is the launching event to a number of follow-on workshops in 2019 and 2020 organized by the cooperation partners.

Information about the GGS section “Norms and Changes in Global Politics”:

[http://www.uni-giessen.de/faculties/research-centers/ggs/research/sections/normsandchanges?set\\_language=en](http://www.uni-giessen.de/faculties/research-centers/ggs/research/sections/normsandchanges?set_language=en)

Information about the DVPW thematic group “IR Norms Research”:

<https://ib-normenforschung.weebly.com/>