

## **The 4<sup>th</sup> NKL Annual Conference.**

### **Life, knowledge and democracy during COVID-19**

The 2th NKL PhD training event, and 4th NKL Annual Conference, will take place online December 7 and 8 2020. The call is open for all interested parties. An NKL-member meeting will take place December 9 (the agenda will be available at the NKL homepage in due time).

#### **Topic**

The COVID-19 pandemic has changed our world. Which ones of these changes are here to stay, and what a post-COVID-19 world should look like, is the subject of much debate. Is the pandemic a threat to democracy, as more people long for a “strong leader” in times of crisis? And what does it say about the state of our democracies pre-COVID-19 that the most vulnerable are hit the hardest? Moreover, is the pandemic strengthening solidaristic bonds, or does it lead to a greater fragmentation and polarization within and across countries? What role do digital practices play in these processes?

#### **A. Call for abstracts for the NKL Annual Conference December 7th**

Abstract can be up to 350 words, with deadline October 23th. The abstract are to be submitted to:  
[inigo.demiguelb@ehu.eus](mailto:inigo.demiguelb@ehu.eus)

CALL: For the NKL-conference we welcome abstracts that engage with these issues presented above. In particular, we look forward to contributions that address, empirically and conceptually, the following questions:

1. What challenges does the COVID-19 crisis pose to democracies, societal institutions, professional work and daily life, and how? What roles do digital practices play in this? What are possible solutions?
2. The restrictions on movement/traveling and social interaction during the COVID-19 pandemic have had a severe impact on our way of living and working. How is the pandemic changing practices and understandings of solidarity? What new practices of mutual support have been emerging throughout the crisis, and how have digital technologies facilitated or impeded these?
3. Past knowledge on pandemics and new specific knowledge on COVID-19 have been distributed online and offline. This knowledge includes forms of knowledge ranging from “alternative” knowledge and marginalized information to the deliberate spread of misinformation and conspiracy theories. What constitutes misinformation and disinformation in the context of the on-going pandemic, and what does it do to our societies? How can the spread of misinformation and anti-science sentiment be countered without merely reinforcing and reiterating institutional and knowledge hegemonies?

4. How does privacy and data protection rights conciliate with needs and strategies that are used and/or developed by individuals, groups, organizations, institutions, governmental bodies during the COVID-19 pandemic? What are the main threats to these rights?

### **B. Call for abstracts for the NKL 2th PhD-training event December 9th**

Abstract can be up to 500 words, with deadline October 23th. The abstract are to be submitted to [inigo.demiguelb@ehu.eus](mailto:inigo.demiguelb@ehu.eus)

To provide support with specific research projects, a PhD-training event will be organized by a multidisciplinary group of NKL members. If you would like to participate, please submit an abstract focusing on an empirical, analytical or theoretical challenge that concerns digitalization, digitization, or the digital sociology.

Participating PhD students will be expected to do a 10 minutes presentation on the basis of their submitted abstract (if accepted). A short list of texts will be distributed to the accepted students that will need to be read prior to the event. After the PhD-training the PhD-students, will be invited to revise their abstracts, informed by the discussions and training. Participants will receive a certificate to confirm their participation. . In the same way as the PhD-training event in Ljubljana 2019, it will be up to the PhD-student's home university and supervisor(s) whether they accept the PhD-training event as part of the PhD-students official training.

### **Organisers of the conference and PhD-training event**

Professor Inigo DeMiguel, chair PANELFIT, Duesto University of Bilbao

Professor Anna Lydia Svalastog, chair NKL-network, Østfold University College

Professor Barbara Prainsack, University of Vienna, Director CeSCoS, University of Vienna

