

EGOS Standing Working Group proposal (2024-2027)

## **Reinserting professional work(ers) into organizations**

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### ***I. The SWG's research domain and academic aims***

#### ***A. Introduction***

In this document, we propose a new EGOS Standing Working Group (SWG) - '*Reinserting Professional work(ers) into Organizations*'. First, we outline a brief rationale for the theme based on the growing empirical, theoretical and policy significance of the area including an explanation of how it fulfills the EGOS criteria for the formation of SWGs. We then provide an overview of four distinct but interconnected sub-themes which we would develop through the SWG. In the following sections, we provide details on the proposed structure, governance, activities and expected outputs of the SWG, including detailed descriptions of the sub-themes.

#### ***B. Rationale***

Professions have long been seen as occupying a central role in the development of western industrial societies. As relatively skilled and specialized workers, professionals tend to retain greater control over their work even when it is performed within large

professional or non-professional organizations (Abbott, 1988; Freidson, 1988). Furthermore, professionals often have strong ties to their profession and take their cues for what constitutes appropriate behavior from the profession itself rather than from the organizations in which they work. Professional work, however, is increasingly embedded in large and heterogeneous organizations and has become diverse, fragmented, and specialized. In this milieu, long standing perceptions of professional autonomy and independence are often challenged since professionals have to cooperate with a number of other professions and occupations in the delivery of services (Evetts, 2011). Services that were once seen as the domain of a single profession (Ahuja, Fothcoming; Seabrooke and Henriksen, 2017) are now regarded as too complex, requiring the expertise of multiple professionals. These changes have led to the erosion of professional autonomy, causing potentially significant changes to professionals' workplace status (Currie et al., 2012; Martin et al., 2009). This has broader social implications because professionals — by way of their formal training and socialization processes — are often bestowed with a high social status and such 'changes in professional categories (i.e., boundaries of knowledge, expertise, and judgment) cannot help but redefine economic and social categories' (Suddaby and Viale, 2011: 429).

The characteristics of many professionals render many of an organization's tools of influence and control ineffective or at best partially effective (Alvesson and Kärreman, 2004; Greenwood and Empson, 2003; Sharma, 1997) such that organising professionals is often likened to the problem of 'herding cats' (von Nordenflycht, 2010). The difficulties of organising a professional workforce can be most salient during times of change, particularly if the changes require professionals to modify their own work practices as this can be viewed as a threat to their professional autonomy (Tucker et al., 2007) and has direct consequences for professionals' abilities to claim and control their jurisdiction within their work setting. The oft-noted conflict between organizations and professions can be understood as arising not only from control over the professionals' technical work (e.g., attempts at standardization or improving efficiency), but also from competing claims about who controls how the organization's resources are deployed and the processes governing the workflow. Whereas scholars are often concerned with management intruding on professional autonomy, professionals, by enacting autonomy and control broadly (outside of their technical work), may also be

intruding on management and their ability to implement organizational change. All of this raises crucial questions for organization studies about changing forms of organizing, structures of employment and how these changes impact experiences of workers (McKinsey Global Institute, 2018) and the social order that shapes and is created by work (Barley et al., 2017; McKinsey Global Institute, 2017).

The intersection of these two vectors—professions affected by managerialism/organizations and professions shaping management/organizations—can be clearly observed at the ‘coalface’ of how individual professionals cope with at times contradicting demands in everyday practice in terms of their work and identities (Bévort and Suddaby, 2016). Meanwhile, although much has been written about how professions manage jurisdictional boundaries through task-related interaction in organizations (Barley, 1986; Bechky, 2003; Carlile, 2002; Huising, 2015), we still poorly understand the process through which professionals try to shift their professional jurisdiction while having to navigate organizational constraints. Indeed, most studies conceptualize a jurisdictional shift as an informal process, neglecting the role of the formal organizations in which professionals are increasingly embedded (Bechky and Chung, 2018). Likewise, these workers and organizations are part of a wider context in which technical and ethical issues are changing, notably in the normative turn which extends far beyond traditional concerns with professional ethics towards a wider sense of individual and collective social responsibility. This brings together professional work and workers as a focus and is the central theme of the proposed SWG where we hope to explore their *work and identities*.

Organization theory, in its formative years, was concerned with how the growth of management and organizations shaped contemporary society in terms of class, status and the occupational division of labour, for example, and how occupational groups and elites legitimated their ‘right’ to control and shape organizations. However, these issues have been gradually replaced by research questions that include more managerial or seemingly technical orientations (Hinings and Greenwood, 2002; Stern and Barley, 1996). As a result, extant organization and management theory has remained partially distinct from studies of the work of occupations, even those intimately related to management (Bechky, 2011).

In short, this SWG will primarily be concerned with exploring interrelated questions about professional work and workers such as their configuration, identity, inequalities, interconnections, and broader organizational and societal roles and impact. It will do so from different theoretical, methodological, and disciplinary positions in relation to national, international, and transnational contexts. These themes will be developed in the proposed sub-themes as annual streams:

1. *Professionals, professional work, and social responsibility*
2. *Technology (re)shaping professional services and identities*
3. *Professional pluralism/New patterns professionalization*
4. *Professional inequality*

Each of the above (detailed in Section III below) raises its own issues and questions, but together they make a broad contribution to organization and management theory. Firstly, they contribute to our understanding of professions not simply as a form of organization but as practices that continue to comprise and shape multiple occupational projects. Therefore, and secondly, they will help to foster multi-disciplinary debates between scholars of organization and management theory and those of work and occupations. Thirdly, a focus on work(ers) provides a valuable level of theorizing in relation to identity, organizations, knowledge, and institutions. Fourthly, the group will help constitute a new community of scholars that is distinct from, but complementary to, those formed in earlier SWGs such as on professional services firms and management occupations.

## ***II. The organizing of the SWG***

### *1. Governance structure*

The proposed SWG is coordinated by Sumati Ahuja, Masashi Goto, Stefanie Gustafsson, Daniel Muzio, Lucie Noury, Frida Pemer, Kurt Sandholtz and Andrew Sturdy. This group of scholars vary in their degree of seniority and experience and originate from different countries and related academic traditions (Australia, Japan, UK, France, Sweden, and USA). In addition, individual annual streams, and special events, will include early career researchers and some highly reputed specialists in the role of panelists. Muzio, Sturdy, Pemer, Gustafsson, Ahuja and Noury have worked together in successfully convening a number of recent EGOS conference streams.

**Sumati Ahuja** is Senior Lecturer at University of Technology Sydney, Australia. Sumati is an early career scholar (ECS) whose research focuses on the changing world of professional work and examines how professional workers negotiate changes to their work practices. Sumati has published in journals such as *Human Relations*, *Management Learning*, *Construction Management and Economics* and won a best paper award for *Journal of Professions and Organizations*. She has been an active participant at the EGOS colloquia and will be co-convening sub-theme 'Professional work(ers) past, future and present' in 2023, together with Lucie Noury and Andrew Sturdy.

**Masashi Goto** is Associate Professor at the Research Institute for Economics and Business Administration, Kobe University, Japan. He is an early career scholar (ECS) whose research focuses on professions and technological change, in particular how professionals maintain their identity while innovating their services. He has published sole-authored books and journal articles, including those in the *Journal of Professions and Organization*. He has management experience in professional service firms, as Partner with Deloitte, Principal at Booz & Company (current PwC) and Project Manager at the Boston Consulting Group.

**Stefanie Gustafsson** is a Senior Lecturer in Organisation Studies at the School of Management, University of Bath, UK. Her research examines how professionals experience their work and careers, and the organisations they are part of. More specifically, she is interested in the dynamics of career (im)mobility in the professions, professionals' experiences of critical career transitions, and how professional workers navigate the various, at times, conflicting demands of modern professional workplaces. Stefanie's research has been published in journals such as *Organization Studies*, *Human Relations* and the *Journal of Vocational Behavior*. She serves on the editorial board of *Human Relations* and has organized symposia and sub-themes at various EGOS conferences. She is also Co-Director of the Future of Work Research Centre at the University of Bath.

**Daniel Muzio** is Professor of Management at the University of York. Daniel's research focuses on professions, professional services firms, and knowledge intensive

occupations/organizations. Daniel has published extensively on these topics in management, sociology and geography journals including: *the Journal of Management Studies*, *Organization Studies*, *Human Relations* and the *Journal of Economic Geography*. He is a General Editor of the *Journal of Management Studies* and founding editor of the *Journal of Professions and Organization*. He is also one of the editors of the *Oxford Handbook of Professional Services Firms*. He serves on the boards of *Organization Studies* and *Human Relations*. Daniel has organized streams and symposia at international conferences including: EGOS, the Academy of Management, Critical Management Studies, the International Sociological Association, World Congress of Sociology and the International Labour Process Conference.

**Lucie Noury** is Assistant Professor of Management at Audencia Business School in France. Lucie is an early career scholar (ECS), and her research focuses on the contemporary evolutions of professional work and of the organization of professional service firms. She has a specific interest in the way professionals find meaning in their work, experience work-life balance, and construct their identities, as well as in new forms of organization of professional work. Lucie was a co-convenor of SWG8 'Digitalization and Artificial Intelligence: Reshaping Professional Service Firms, Professions, and Expert Work' in 2020 and will be co-convening sub-theme 'Professional work(ers) past, future and present' in 2023, together with Sumati Ahuja and Andrew Sturdy.

**Frida Pemer** is Associate Professor at the Department of Management and Organization and House of Innovation at Stockholm School of Economics, Sweden. Her research centers on digital transformation and professional services, and she currently leads three research projects exploring i) the digitalization of expertise, ii) the creation of ecosystems for learning in professional services, and iii) the identity formation in virtual teams in professional service firms. She has published her work in journals like *Human Relations*, *Journal of Professions and Organizations*, *JPART*, and *Journal of Service Research*. She has organized the Oxford Said Annual Conference on Professional Service Firms in Stockholm and been the co-convenor of SWG8: 'Professional wrongdoing - governance and regulation' together with Andrew Sturdy and Claudia Gabbioneta at EGOS 2021.

**Kurt Sandholtz** is Associate Professor in the Marriott School of Business, Brigham Young University. He studies embedded professionals, whose work takes place almost entirely inside large, complex organizations. He is also interested in how technological change influences jurisdictional dynamics in the system of professions. A qualitative researcher, Kurt has done field studies of the human resources and engineering professions and co-authored an award-winning paper exploring how the professional values and practices of academic science influenced the emergence of a new type of organization, the dedicated biotech firm. His research has been published in *Organization Studies*, *Organization Science*, and *Strategic Entrepreneurship Journal*. He was actively involved in prior EGOS colloquia, presenting papers in 2016, 2017, and 2018.. Kurt is also Director of the Management Communication program at the BYU Marriott School of Business.

**Andrew Sturdy** is a Professor of Management and Organisation at the University of Bristol in the UK. His research relates directly to the proposed SWG theme, and he has published widely in this field, including on consultancy and identity. He is on the editorial board of numerous journals including *Journal of Management Studies*, *Organization* and *Organization Studies* and has co-edited a number of journal special issues (including *Human Relations*, 2008; *Management Learning*, 2011, 2007; *Organization*, 2003; *Scandinavian Journal of Management*, 2009) and 3 books. He was Associate Editor of the *Journal of Management Inquiry* and co-edited the *Oxford Handbook of Management Ideas*.

## 2. Convening

The SWG's sub-themes at the annual EGOS colloquium will be chaired by at least two of the proposed coordinators. Furthermore, for each sub-theme, we have included co-convenors who are in an early stage of their career. These early-career scholars (ECS) will also be involved in various additional events such as the sub-plenary, the PWD, special issue and other publications plans. We believe that this approach will ensure continuity and quality whilst giving opportunity to talented, emerging scholars to develop their organization and academic leadership skills. Table 1 provides an overview of our sub-themes and the national composition of our delivery team.

*Table 1: Overview of proposed EGOS Subthemes and conveners*

<b>Year</b>	<b>Theme</b>	<b>Convenors</b>
1 2024	<i>Professionals, Professional work, and social responsibility</i>	Andrew Sturdy, UK Stefanie Gustafsson, UK ECS: Lucie Noury, France
2 2025	<i>Technology (re)shaping professional services and identities</i>	Frida Pemer, Sweden Masashi Goto, Japan ECS: Sumati Ahuja, Australia
3 2026	<i>Professional Pluralism/ New patterns of professionalization</i>	Stefanie Gustafsson, UK Kurt Sandholtz, USA ECS: Masashi Goto, Japan
4 2027	<i>Professionals and inequalities</i>	Daniel Muzio, UK Lucie Noury, France ECS: Sumati Ahuja, Australia

### 3. Succession

All of us are experienced in organizing conference tracks and most of us have successfully worked together so, in case of any unforeseen ‘crisis’, any one of us could easily step into the annual organizing team (see Table 1).

Table 2 details our plans and division of labour with regards to additional activities and events connected to the proposed SWG.

*Table 2: Overview of SWG events/activities and people in leading roles*

<b>Year</b>	<b>Activity/event</b>	<b>Leading role</b>
0	Communication with EGOS board	Lead coordinator of the sub-theme
1 All	Media/non-traditional outputs Value of professionalism Pre-conference event/Oxford University press	Lucie Noury, France Frida Pemer, Sweden Andrew Sturdy, UK
2 2025	Special Issue JPO	Daniel Muzio, UK Masashi Goto, Japan
3 2026	PhD workshop/Engaged scholar network	Stefanie Gustafsson, UK Daniel Muzio, UK Sumati Ahuja, Australia
4 2027	Sub plenary and forum to engage with local area with technology focus	Frida Pemer, Sweden Masashi Goto, Japan



#### *4. Feedback from participants*

In addition to regular communications via e-mail, the proposed coordinators will organize meetings twice a year, once on the Saturday just after the EGOS conference and once (via Zoom) in early February (after the submission of short papers). These will be used for planning the SWG's annual event in terms of (1) paper evaluation, (2) agenda setting, (3) coordination, and (4) reporting. The coordinators will seek to obtain feedback from the participants informally during the sessions, but also formally via a brief questionnaire that will be handed out at the end of the conference. Based on this feedback and the broader processes of sensemaking of the coordinators, plans for the next year will be adapted and a clear division of tasks will be agreed upon.

#### *5. Communicating with the EGOS membership and Board.*

The SWG coordinators will inform the EGOS board at the end of each year by providing an overview of (a) activities, (b) results, (c) evaluations, and (d) plans for the next year. The lead coordinator of the sub-theme will be responsible for annually reporting to the EGOS board.

### **III. Annual activities and program of the SWG**

#### *1. Pre-Colloquium activities*

In addition to organizing regular sub-themes, we in our launch year will host a social event in conjunction with the Oxford University Press and *Journal of Professions and Organization*. This is designed to raise awareness of the SWG and stimulate networking between scholars who share an interest in and commitment to the theme. We will also organize a PDW at Academy of Management (AoM) annual conference, to promote latest research projects within the community of this SWG and invite submissions/participation, targeting scholars from a broad range of disciplines and geographies.

#### *2. The SWG's EGOS Colloquium program*

The main component of our application is represented by our four annual sub-themes which are outlined below.

(1) *EGOS 2024: Professionals, Professional work, and social responsibility*

This theme brings together some traditional concerns of professional work such as ethics and an altruistic ethos, with the wider normative turn in the wake of inequality, climate and financial crises towards more 'socially responsible' ways of organising. In particular, we aim to explore, debate and critique the socially responsible nature of professional work in terms of both *how* (and if) it is performed, the *services it delivers* (Fisher, 2004) and the *tensions* underpinning it. While what constitutes social responsibility is necessarily contingent and contested, there is still a need to theorise practices (Mitnick et al., 2021) and politicise research (Ergene et al., 2021). Further, in the professions literature there is surprisingly little consensus on what it means to serve the social good, or professions' social intent in the first place (Goode, 1957). Yet, the centrality and growth of professional actors such as advisers to governments/citizens and firms in this space makes our focus all the more pressing.

For example, we ask what are the consequences of climate change policy becoming a site of professional jurisdictional conflict or one where accountability is lost by acting as technocrats or 'servants of power'? Likewise, how might professional services firms, large and small, organise and reward (or disincentivise) work in a way which is consistent with, say, a post-growth philosophy and services? Is it necessary? What (new) forms of governance can they adopt to do so and how are they implemented in practice? The stream will be concerned mainly with where professional discourses, practices and debates interconnect with those of social responsibility rather than each one on its own. Thus, for example, how might 'greenwashing' or 'woke capitalism' by professional service firms and their clients reflect or undermine professional ethics or employee control? How are tensions addressed between the status and aims of professions to develop and legitimise expertise and those of the socially responsible services they provide? To what extent do professions monopolise policy spaces nationally and transnationally and with what outcomes for the work of professionals, clients, and their employees? And what are the obstacles created by the professions themselves that might hinder professionals from engaging in broader social issues? In addition, this theme will explore the experiences and struggles of professional workers themselves

as they seek to actively contribute to the social good through their everyday work and careers, and how this might impact their professional identity. This is because we still know little about the different ways through which professionals engage in social issues, how their professional expertise might be an important resource or boundary in acting in more (or less) socially responsible ways, and the role that clients may play in facilitating or hindering this.

(2) *EGOS 2025: Technology (re)shaping professional services and identities*

This theme takes stock of and further advances the expanding scholarly conversations about technology and professional services. We aim to deepen, explore, and integrate our knowledge about recent changes driven by (the design of) technology and the implications for organizing professional services, both in terms of existing professions and new ways of organizing expertise in society.

The interaction between technological changes and knowledge workers has long been studied (e.g., Barley, 1986). Renewed interest has arisen, however, in the recent rise of digital technologies, such as platforms, artificial intelligence and block chain (Smets et al., 2017; Kellogg et al., 2020). The continuing significant expansion of technological capacity, almost substituting human professionals in many task areas, can enact and reveal new modes of professional services and professionals' organizing (Galperin, 2017). Although the emerging studies in this field have reported important changes such as in business model and professional service firm (PSF) characteristics (e.g., Armour and Sako, 2020; Kronblad, 2020), our knowledge is still limited and unorganised.

Thus, we ask questions about the shift in existing professional services at multiple levels (professions, PSFs and individual professionals) such as: How do professionals maintain or innovate professional institutions in the rise of 'disruptive' technologies? What explains the diversity of responses to those technologies across individual professionals/PSFs/professions? How does the rise of new technologies maintain or change professionals' work? How do professionals manage their professional identity with changing professional services? How do new technologies affect professional careers? And how is professional practice built into technology?

To explore the wider implications beyond existing professions, this stream also considers emerging new ways of organizing knowledge work and expertise that have become possible and increasingly relevant due to technology development. At the basic level, new technologies can provide opportunities for professionalization of new expertise linked with those technologies, exemplified by the prominent case of data scientists. In addition, new information technologies for sharing and matching expertise shift the coordination and distribution of expertise, often bypassing the traditional professional arrangements, observed in the rise of gig economy platforms and cloud-based organisations. Furthermore, digital technologies can diffuse and reshape the memory of traditional expertise, which can provide opportunities for revitalization of neglected expert occupations, as shown by the rise of craft. Lastly, the new, technology-enabled ways of organizing knowledge work and expertise may also lead to institutional and societal rearrangements.

Thus, we also ask questions such as: What areas of expertise seek to professionalize in the digital age, and how? How does the coordination and distribution of expertise in society change with developing technologies? How does the form of new technologies affect the identities and the work of traditional expert occupations? What will change (and remain the same) in the work of expert occupations through continuing technological changes?

### *(3) EGOS 2026: Professional Pluralism/ New patterns of professionalization*

Distinctions between autonomous and heteronomous types of professional organizations (Scott, 1965), professions and semi-professions (Etzioni, 1969) collegial, corporate and mediative forms of professionalism (Johnson, 1972) and Anglo-Saxon and Continental models of professionalization (Burrage and Torstendahl, 1990), indicate that professions have always been characterised by a significant degree of multiplicity and pluralism. Such pluralism has increased over time in light of political, technological and economic developments which have weakened if not dismantled many traditional professional structures, practices and impacted on professional identities. As such, what it means to be a professional and the nature of professional work has become increasingly complex and multifaceted where professionals frequently operate at the intersection of multiple demands and

boundaries, facing competing expectations and more fluid professional membership (e.g., Ahuja et al., 2017; Battilana, 2017; Anteby et al., 2016).

In this stream, we focus on such pluralism by concentrating on the multiple bundles and constellations of professional tasks, identities and relations but also intersecting demographic attributes, captured through intersectionality, that professionals navigate (Ramarajan, 2014), as well as the more pluralistic communities and clients with whom they interact. Thus, we ask questions such as, how do professionals craft identities at the intersection of multiple, i.e., three or more, demands? And how do they navigate the tensions of such complexity? How do organizations address the demands of increasingly diverse professionals? How do professionals respond to the needs of more pluralistic client communities that express concern for broader societal concerns, such as climate change and racial inequality? What are the implications for traditional professional concerns and the organisation of client relationships?

Secondly, increased pluralism applies to professional organizations themselves as they become more differentiated in terms of their governance (partnership versus public ownership), practices and organizational structures (P2, MPBS and new virtual forms of organizations). We explore this development by asking, what are the opportunities and challenges that professionals face when operating in these multiplex organisations? What are the different organisational constellations that emerge in this context? And what are the implications for professional work in a broader sense?

Finally, we also consider multiple pathways that occupation groups may pursue in order to accomplish professionalization. Whilst these have historically centred on negotiations with the nation state (Larson, 1977), overtime alternative pathways including negotiations with international organizations (Arnold, 2005; Suddaby et al., 2007) or multinational corporations (Muzio et al., 2011; Hodgson et al., 2015) have grown in significance. More recently, occupations focusing on grand challenges such as CSR practitioners (Brès et al., 2019; Iatridis et al., 2021) may even be experimenting with alternative pathways which dispense of traditional notion of closure and monopoly in favour of more open and inclusive forms of organizations. Similarly, as concerns for social mobility have increased, professional organisations are searching for new, more inclusive routes to professional career attainment. As such we ask, what are the legitimacy concerns of these new multiplex pathways?

Do they have potential to broaden the traditional base of professional resources and the utilisation of traditionally unappreciated skills and assets?

*(4) EGOS 2027: Professionals and Inequalities*

This theme is concerned with professions as exclusionary social structures, which seek to restrict opportunities to a limited circle of eligible candidates to maintain their professional status (Parkin, 1979; Witz, 1991). Inequality and social justice are long standing concerns in academic research and public policy. They affect individual and collective wellbeing and may potentially diminish growth and productivity and undermine trust in key societal institutions. For instance, substantial academic research shows that women, ethnic minorities, and individuals from less privileged backgrounds tend to be disadvantaged. To give one example, professional service firms (PSFs) generally (e.g., accounting, engineering, legal, and architecture firms) have a long history of male domination in which women find it difficult to 'identify and negotiate the ephemeral nature of professional demeanour' (Haynes, 2012: 502). Furthermore, the most powerful professional services firms derive from a handful of developed and largely Anglo-Saxon economies and are instrumental in maintaining and extending a capitalist and neo-liberal world order, thereby helping to reproduce neo-colonial practices and relationships (Boussebaa, 2015). At its most extreme, professions have directly supported inequality by helping corporations and wealthy individuals to minimize, if not entirely elude their tax liabilities (Muzio et al., 2016). Many of the traditional exclusionary norms in the professions are perpetuated even as the organizational and professional environments continue to shift.

Yet, professionals can also help to address inequalities inherent in the system of professions. Access to professional jobs and careers is an established route to upward social mobility. Women in many developed economies represent the majority of new entrants in various professions, whilst black and minority ethnic (BME) individuals are often over-represented compared to their share of the population (Tomlinson et al., 2018). Similarly, professions have an active role in the fight against inequality, by participating in the development and implementation of new products (micro-financing), practices (feminist

consulting), organizations (social enterprises), regulations (new profit allocation rules for MNCS) and policies (international debt relief).

To better understand the complexity of inequality in the professions, we need a rich repository of conceptual material to account for fluidity and complexity while drawing attention to ongoing subtle processes of exclusion. Thus, we also ask questions such as: In what way can professions exacerbate existing inequalities? How can professional practices take alternative forms such as feminine/feminist consulting (e.g. Blanchard, 2021)? Can professions be part of the solutions and help tackle inequality as a grand challenge? This subtheme aims to provide an important opportunity to advance scholarly debates on how professionals can act as both barriers and solutions to inequality and thereby develops some of the issues in the sub-theme on social responsibility, as well as professional pluralism.

In addition to our commitment to attract a large variety of different researchers from a broad range of regions and intellectual traditions, our selection procedure contemplates that:

- Each abstract will be reviewed by the 3 acting convenors for that year, who will then discuss acceptance/rejection decisions and a preliminary sub-theme program with the other coordinators.
- Whilst quality and fit with the theme will remain the main assessment criteria, we will also take diversity (in terms of provenance, coverage, perspectives, and approaches) into consideration.
- Abstracts that are rejected will receive developmental feedback.

### 3. Networking

The SWG draws on and seeks to strengthen current linkages with established PSF centers at Oxford University, The Professional Associations Research Network (PARN), Bristol, and Stockholm PSF Hubs. The SWG will develop new linkages with University of Technology Sydney (UTS) Business school, Centre for Business and Sustainable Development (CBSD). We aim to run a SWG sub plenary on Professions and future of work and a PDW at Academy of Management (AoM) annual conference. These will be connected to the development of a special issue in *Journal of Professions*

*and Organization* which will focus on the sub-themes of this SWG. In organizing this, the coordinators will draw on their experience and established relations with AoM and the Oxford Professional Service Firms. Finally, we plan to consolidate the whole SWG program in an edited book with a renowned academic publisher.

#### *4. Other Activities*

The SWG aims to develop an online community using publicly available electronic collaboration tools (e.g., Slack). The objective is to promote and facilitate research collaborations among SWG participants during and beyond the annual conferences. The online platform can open channels with various topics, such as search for friendly reviewers, formation of writing groups, search for research collaboration partners (for this SWG at future EGOS and beyond), as well as notifications of news on this SWG and new research publications. The platform also allows SWG participants to invite other interested scholars to the community. These supports not only enhance the inclusion of early career scholars, but also help all community members easily develop networks by enabling direct communications among members.

### ***IV. Participation in the SWG***

#### *1. List of scholars who endorse the SWG proposal*

Please see *Appendix 1* for an overview of the 50 scholars from 13 different countries and 42 institutions who endorse the SWG proposal.

#### *2. Anticipated participation*

This SWG is likely to attract wide participation. Its themes represent areas of growing interest, with an increasing number of research centers, special issues, edited collections, and conference streams. An indication of the prospects of the proposed SWG is the success of previous streams and SWGs in related, but distinct areas. For example, an SWG on professional service firms (2003-) attracted c40 submissions p.a. and one on management occupations (2016-) received c49 submissions p.a. The proposed SWG has a different emphasis, more on the changing nature of work and workers in organizations and professional rather than management occupations. It also has a new and diverse team and research network, albeit with some links to related EGOS communities (e.g. Sturdy and Muzio have been previous SWG convenors).



### *3. Ensuring interdisciplinary perspectives*

We are highly committed to promoting and drawing further attention to the SWG in the academic community and across various networks by:

- Involving scholars at different stages in their careers and from different countries and disciplinary backgrounds in the decision-making process.
- Leveraging existing networks that the coordinators have in a number of key scholarly associations and learned societies across a range of disciplines. These include EGOS, the Academy of Management, Critical Management Studies, The British Academy of Management, Nordic Academia of Management, The International Sociological Association (ISA), Law and Society Association (LSA), The European Sociological Association (ESA), the Australian and New Zealand Academy of Management (ANZAM) Asia-Pacific researchers in Organization Studies (APROS), The International Association of Strategic Management (France) and the Academic Association for Organizational Science (Japan).
- Networking within the annual PSF conference, the *Journal of Professions and Organization*, the established PSF centers, The Professionalism and professional occupations jiscmail list, as well as the AOM Management Consulting and Organization and Management Theory divisions.
- Using our own large personal mailing lists developed as part of our own research in the area and through the organization of previous EGOS sub-themes. We will also reach out to key academics active in this field, as evidenced by participation in recent special issues and edited volumes on topics related to our SWG.

### *4. Ensuring diversity*

We are highly committed to seeking equal gender representation each year. In addition, we will make very explicit in the call for papers that we encourage theoretical and empirical work as well as the use of innovative or critical approaches from diverse research traditions including Eastern Europe, Latin-America and the Asia-Pacific region.

### *5. Ensuring openness to access of interested outside scholars*

We firmly believe that this SWG should be truly open to any researcher working on the core themes and not be restricted to a small group of 'insiders'. Our use of online networking platform, explained in 'other activities' in the previous section, will strongly support the open and flexible access for diverse scholars.

## **V. Targeted outputs**

### *1. Planned collective publications*

The second sub-theme will constitute a basis for a special issue (SI) in the *Journal of Professions and Organization*. The EGOS track supported by an AoM symposium will act as important forum for attracting and developing paper for this SI. In this venture we not only have the support of two of the JPO editors one of whom is also a coordinator on this SWG, but we can also draw on our extensive experience in successfully completing special issues in a number of leading journals (please see list below). Below we list some examples of successful special issues edited by the proposed SWG coordinators:

Ahuja, S., Noury, L., Parker, M., Sturdy, A. and Tyler, M. (Forthcoming), Boredom at Work, *Organization*.

Heusinkveld, S., Sturdy, A. and Werr, A. (2011), The Co-consumption of Management Ideas and Practices, *Management Learning*, 42 (2).

Muzio, D., Brock, D. and Suddaby, R. (2013). Professions and Institutional Change. *Journal of Management Studies*, 50(5).

In addition to initiating and stimulating publications in leading academic journals, we will also consolidate the entire SWG program in an edited volume. The coordinators have experience not only in publishing with renowned publishers, but also in successfully organizing edited volumes on related topics:

Muzio, D., Ackroyd, S. and Chanlat, J.F. (Eds) (2007). *Redirections in the Study of Expert Labour: Established Professions and New Expert Occupations*. Basingstoke: Palgrave.

Sturdy, A., Clark, T., Fincham, R., & Handley, K. (2009). *Management Consultancy: Boundaries and Knowledge in Action*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

## 2. Activities in support of teaching and practical application

In addition to organizing academic sessions at the annual EGOS conference (and other conferences) and initiating academic output in terms of articles and books, the proposed SWG coordinators will also assist participants and EGOS members in teaching and/or facilitate the practical application of the knowledge within the SWG's domain in the following ways:

The SWG draws on and seeks to strengthen current linkages with established PSF centers at Oxford University, The Professional Associations Research Network (PARN), Bristol, and Stockholm PSF Hubs as well as develop new linkages with University of Technology Sydney (UTS), Australia, Business schools' recently established CBSD Engaged scholar network. All these centers employ specialist who are involved in teaching and in joint projects with practitioners. In these ways we seek to facilitate the practical application of the knowledge within the SWG's domain.

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