

Call for Abstracts for the organized session

**Socio-Material Network Analysis:
Relating Individuals and Physical Contexts**

at the conference

Networks in the Global World 2016

**Multiple Structures and Dynamics:
Applications of Network Analysis to European Societies and Beyond**

July 1-3, St. Petersburg, Russia

www.ngw.spbu.ru

Deadline: March 1st 2016

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Social practices and encounters are always spatially patterned and subject to the powerful influence of the material contexts they are embedded in (Urry 1995). This involves multiple nonlinear effects as materiality both gives opportunities to, and puts constraints on, human activity. Things and physical spaces can constitute stimulating working environments, provide platforms for debates and cooperation, promote mutual learning of people, and provide cohesion of groups and organizations. At the same time, they can turn into objects of envy and competition and impact the (re)production of material and symbolic barriers between people and groups. Different objects are associated with different meanings, provoke various emotional responses and have different potential to generate motivation, trigger communication, and maintain identity and sociality. Network analysis can be useful to conceptualize how structures of physical contexts and social structures constitute each other. This session welcomes network-theoretical elaborations on the complex, dynamic processes in which human relations shape and are shaped by material contexts.

In the framework of the session we also propose to consider the methods of tracing cross-level links between individuals and material objects / spaces, as well as within-level relations between material objects and/or spaces themselves. One of the possible issues to discuss is the potential and limitations of sociological ethnography (e.g. qualitative observations and photo-elicitations) and interviews. Another issue is related to how qualitative methods can be effectively combined with quantitative ones, such as sociometric surveys. Finally, we suggest reflection on how the empirical data collected with mixed methods can be further subjected to formal analysis - jointly approaching material and social dimensions with such network analysis techniques as bipartite and multi-level network analysis, and open discussion of the methodological challenges in such complex research designs.

Please submit your abstract (not exceeding 200 words) [here](#) before **March 1st 2016**.

When submitting, don't forget to select the session title "**Socio-Material Network Analysis: Relating Individuals and Physical Contexts**" from the list.

The conference [website](#) provides additional information.

We are looking forward to your contributions.

Email any questions to anisya.khokhlova@gmail.com or netglow@spbu.ru.