Open Call for Participation of PhD students

International PhD course on Economic Geography

Main theme of the course 2018:
Geography of innovation, networks and transitions

Place
Utrecht University, Utrecht, The Netherlands

11 September 13.00 pm – 14 September 18.00 pm
30 October 10.00 pm –2 November 18.00 pm

Local organizers:
Ron Boschma (Utrecht University/Stavanger University)
Bjorn Asheim (Stavanger University)

Co-organizers:
NORSI (Norwegian Research School in Innovation)
University of Stavanger
University of Agder

Guest lecturers:
Pierre-Alex Balland (Utrecht University)
Abigail Cooke (University of Buffalo)
Alessandra Faggian (Gran Sasso Science Institute)
Rune Fitjar (Stavanger University)
Koen Frenken (Utrecht University)
Simona Iammarino (LSE)
Anders Malmberg (Uppsala University)
Andrea Morrison (Utrecht University)
Andrés Rodriguez-Pose (LSE/University of Stavanger)
Michaela Trippl (University of Vienna/University of Agder)
Bernard Truffer (EAWAG, Utrecht University)
Elvira Uyarra (Manchester University/Western Norway University of Applied Science)

Deadline of registration
1 June 2018

Content of course:

The course aims to provide an introduction to contemporary research perspectives and approaches in economic geography. The core questions of this discipline – related to the role of place and space in processes of economic development – have in recent years attracted interest not just from geographers but also from economists and other social scientists. This course will debate recent theoretical developments (with special attention to evolutionary and institutional economic geography), and will discuss recent advancements in methodology and empirical analysis in economic geography.

A key theme is the study of the geography of innovation, knowledge, networks and transitions. There is increasing awareness that (different types of) networks enhance knowledge diffusion and innovation. The study of networks is a key topic in economic geography because it deals with the fundamental questions whether places or networks, and local or global networks matter for innovation. In addition, new tools in social network analysis have become available to analyse the role of (local) networks in regional development. Social network analysis has provided new insights to the cluster literature. Moreover, the spatial configuration of networks also change over time. What drives network dynamics is an emerging topic in economic geography. And, there is an expanding literature on the geography of transition which attracts a lot of attention.

This course takes up the following questions with respect to the main theme: to what extent need firms to be proximate in order to enhance innovation? What kinds of knowledge need to be recombined to enhance regional development? How does the geography of innovation look like? What kinds of network configurations are conducive to regional innovation? Who matters in networks of innovation? And how do networks of innovation evolve over time? How do regions diversify over time? Which types of agents induce structural change in regions? What is the role of migrants for regional development? How do institutions affect the development of new growth paths? What kind of regional policy is needed to enhance regional innovation? What types of smart specialization policies could work? Which regional features favour the transition towards more sustainable development? And what kinds of (institutional, evolutionary) theories are needed to accommodate these questions?

It is these questions what makes economic geography such an exciting research field. Currently, many social scientists besides economic geographers are working on these topics, making it a cross-disciplinary endeavour. It is fair to say that many theoretical, conceptual and empirical issues still remain to be solved. Leading experts that are currently working on these research frontiers will take up these challenges, and discuss the latest insights. Network analysis will take a prominent part. A computer practicum will be organized in which students will learn to use and apply social and dynamic network analysis. And students learn how to analyze transitions towards sustainable development. PhD students will acquire the latest knowledge concerning these theoretical, methodological and empirical issues.

The organizers will participate actively in the course. Other leading experts will be invited to present the latest developments with respect to the geography of knowledge, innovation, networks and transitions, and provide comments on the research projects of the PhD students and feedback on the paper that PhD students have to write.

Who can apply?
PhD students in economic geography and human geography, as well as PhD students in related disciplines such as innovation studies, economics and social sciences

Attendance:
maximum of 25 PhD students

PhD students:
Each PhD student will get 45 minutes to present and discuss his/her PhD project (20 minutes presentation, 25 minutes discussion). A senior researcher and a PhD student will act as discussants for each PhD project.

Each PhD student has to select a topic among the ones that are addressed in the September meeting and write a paper on that topic (max. 3,000 words). This paper has to be submitted to the local organizer a week before the October/November meeting. During the October/November meeting, the student will get feedback from a senior researcher and receive a grade, if sufficient. The best paper will win an award.

Course fee:
200 euro, excluding expenditures concerning accommodation costs, travel costs and dinners

Registration

Deadline of registration: 1 June 2018

Potential candidates of the course should provide the following information:

(1) name and affiliation
(2) in which year did you start your PhD
(3) supervisors
(4) summary of own PhD project (min. 500 words – max. 1,000 words)

Please register by email to the local organizer Ron Boschma: ron.boschma@circle.lu.se

Applicants will be informed about their participation on **15 June 2018** at the latest.