Interim Meeting

University of Florence (Italy), 4-6 July 2019

Call for Sessions

Professions and Society

Facing the challenges of marketization, globalization and digitalization

Professions are facing multiple challenges. The neoliberal rhetoric in Western societies modified the equilibria between agents of regulation, undermining social closure mechanisms, which are typical of classic professions, and discouraging the institutionalization of new ones. Both old and new professions are thus more exposed to market regulation and a process of rationalization, associated with the promotion of managerial/organizational cultures. Marketization and managerialism imposed new objectives. Organizations became the places of change, challenging professionalism as dominant logic, offering new sources of identity and power to professionals. Public sector services also developed forms of "hybrid" or "new" professionalism. Recently, technological change affected both professionals and customers. Professionals found in the ICTs new modes of expression to respond effectively to the growing demand for professional services. Digitalization, then, brought along substantial changes in the ways expert knowledge is produced and transmitted, and implied a democratization of knowledge, which modified the power balances between professionals and clients/users. In the background, globalization and the rising number of professionals in developing countries led to a new division of labor between Global North and South. The combined effects of these processes are producing radical changes in the relationship between professions and society. Such changes affect practitioners' careers, roles, and tasks, as well as their earnings and statuses. Trust relationships are also called into question.

Following a two-step procedure, ISA RC52, at first, invites to submit **SESSION proposals** that address these issues in all areas of the professions, either from a comparative or a one-dimensional—e.g., a professional group—perspective. Proposals of joint sessions with other RCs are also welcome.

Suggested topics are, but are not limited to:

- The growing role of the market as a base for legitimizing professionalism;
- The trends towards de-regulation/re-regulation in professional acknowledgment;
- Organizations as sources of professional identity and power;
- "Hybrid" or "new" professionalism in public sector services;
- The impact of new technologies and digitalization on professions;
- The changing nature of professional knowledge;
- The increasing inequalities within and between professional groups;
- The upsurge in precariousness and insecurity among professionals;
- The effects of globalization on professionalism;
- Processes of professionalization in the Global South;
- The challenges of migrations, cross-bordering, and transnational mobility;
- The tensions between "global" and "local";
- The changing relationship between professionals and clients/users;
- Ethical problems in the interactions between practitioners and clients/users;
- Users' experiences in accessing professional services;
- The role of "trust" in legitimizing expert knowledge;
- The contribution of professions to "social innovation" processes;
- Theories and concepts for the interpretation of professional change.

Please, send your proposals via e-mail to the local organizers (rc52florence2019@gmail.com), no later than **31 December 2018**. Proposals must be sent in word files and written in English, in the form of Call for Papers, and must include:

- Session title;
- An abstract of no more than 200 words;
- Name(s) and contact details (affiliation, country, e-mail) of the session organizer(s);
- Short biographical note(s) of session organizer(s) (max 50 words each).

Session organizers play a crucial role in ensuring the success of their sessions and the meeting on the whole. Their role includes:

- Reviewing and deciding on the acceptance or rejection of the papers submitted to their sessions;
- Liaising with local organizers and session participants.

Please, note that all session organizers must be ISA RC52 members in good standing, and are required to register and pay the registration fee.

All submitters will receive e-mail notification on the acceptance or rejection of their session proposals by **15 January 2019**.

Once the selection of sessions is completed, a **Call for Papers** will open on **1 February 2019** and will close on **29 March 2019**.

The conference website is now available: http://www.rc52florence.unifi.it.

The Call for Sessions and the Call for Papers will, however, be available also on the ISA RC52 website (http://www.isa-sociology.org/rc52.htm) and blog (https://researchcommittee52.wordpress.com/).

Save the dates!

Local organizer and contact person:

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