

Symposium on higher education as a public good

Call for Proposals

The Editors of *Educational Philosophy and Theory* and *Philosophy and Theory in Higher Education* (Michael Peters and John Petrovic, Eds, respectively) along with the Chair of the Philosophy and Theory of Higher Education Society (PaTHES, Søren Bengtson) and the Vice President of the Philosophy of Education Society of Australasia (PESA, Sonja Arndt) invite you to contribute a paper to a symposium on higher education and/or the university as a public good. Papers submitted for presentation at the symposium will also be considered for publication in special issues of both journals.

The symposium will take place as an online event jointly organized by PaTHES and Philosophy of Education Society of Australasia PESA on March 28, 2023.

Abstract

In a now classic explication of public goods, Paul Samuelson (1947, 1954) distinguishes between private consumption goods and collective consumption goods. Samuelson's basic definition is that a public good is one that – having been produced for a given individual or group of individuals - can be consumed by more than those for whom it was initially intended at no extra cost. This is also known as being non-rivalrous. Another traditional characteristic of a public good is that it is non-excludable; anyone can receive its benefits. The two primary characteristics of public goods make them unamenable to market production or, at least, quite difficult to deal with through market processes.

How should we re-examine this theory, especially as it applies to education? How can we rethink the public generally and public goods specifically and how have these notions changed over the last half century? Do we need to reconsider them in late capitalism? Universities, as traditionally viewed as connected to the idea of *the* public good, are navigating between various expectations of knowledge production, impact, and societal partnership – not all purely linked to the notion of public goods. Universities and higher education programmes have been accused of consumerism, protectionism, extractivism and neo-nationalism. Does the idea of the university as a societal and cultural institution need to be re-enacted and perhaps even re-thought? How can thinking about higher education or the university as a public good inform such re-enactment?

For this symposium, we seek proposals that address these kinds of question and, ultimately, how such examinations inform where and how higher education fits as public goods, if they do. While not an exclusive list, we welcome proposals dealing with the following general topics around public goods:

- Origins of public goods and the public
- Expanding orthodox understandings of public goods
- Implications of expanding conceptualizations of the public goods as local, global, translocal
- The transformation of the Public Sphere / Rethinking the public sphere in the 21st century
- Globalization & multiplicity of the public
- Global public goods
- Private vs Public provision of “public” goods
- Knowledge & science as global public goods

- Environmental public goods
- International comparative understandings of the public and what is a public good
- Trust and the erosion of public goods

More specifically, authors might consider some of the following guiding questions:

- How might the concepts of 'public goods' and 'the public good' play out, either in relation to the university or the educational processes of higher education? Do they play out differently across the disciplines?
- Which non-economic goods might come into play as far as higher education is concerned?
- Are there significant distinctions to be observed between 'public good' and 'social good' in the context of the university?
- What implications arise for university leadership from debates around public goods or the public good?
- How might tensions be addressed between national and global public goods?
- Can helpful classifications be developed to help in distinguishing different kinds of public goods for the university?
- What pedagogical implications arise from considerations of public goods and the public good?
- In relation to universities and higher education, are there other key concepts to be identified that are contiguous with 'public goods' and 'the public good' (such as 'public sphere'; 'public realm'; 'public mission'; 'public intellectual')?

Process

- Proposals should not exceed 600 words
- Proposals can be submitted directly to ssbe@edu.au.dk with "Public Goods" in the subject line.
- Proposals should have a separate cover page including author name(s), affiliations, email address, and time zone.
- Proposals will be considered by the organizers and authors will receive notification of acceptance or rejection for presentation in the symposium.
- A limited number of authors accepted to present will subsequently be invited to develop their presentations into articles. Invitation does not guarantee final acceptance as all articles will go through a double-blind review process.
- The organizers assume sole authority to assign an article to one of the two journals.

Timeline

- The proposal deadline is December 31, 2022.
- Authors will be informed of acceptance/rejection into the symposium by February 1, 2023.
- The symposium will be held on March 28, 2023.
- Invitation to develop the presentation into an article by April 11, 2023.
- Authors will then be contacted by the Editor of the journal to which their article was assigned for a specific submission-to-publication timeline. The editors will provide a minimum of four months for article submission.