

## Two-day workshop

# Doing meaningful and impactful research: having something to say and reaching a broader audience

2-3 March 2023

UQ Business School, The University of Queensland

Conveners: Mats Alvesson & Jorgen Sandberg



### **Background**

Key for social scientists is to have something to say not only to academics but also to a broader audience, such as students, practitioners, and educated public. This requires an understanding of how to generate knowledge that are experienced as interesting and relevant in terms of new ideas and other forms of intellectual insights. However, contemporary research is often a matter of getting published (in the right journals): a mixed blessing in terms of having something original and valuable to say outside a small micro-tribe of like-minded researchers. Research studies therefore mostly add marginally to existing knowledge and mainly reproduce prevalent worldviews, ideas, and models. Much research follows recipes, is standardized and texts are typically formulaic.

### **Aim**

The aim of this workshop is to discuss and exemplify how academics can improve idea generation and methodologies that enable researchers to generate more interesting, imaginative, engaging, and impactful research. In other words, to be able to have something to say both academically and practically.

## **Program**

The workshop consists of one ‘seminar’ day and one ‘practice’ day: The first day consists of a series of seminars and discussions, which provide an overview of the (sad) state of management studies, outline a range of methodologies for generating more interesting ideas, research questions, research phenomena, and theories, as well as strategies for writing research in more imaginative and powerful ways. In the second day, based on the insights from day one, we will discuss the participants own research with a focus on stimulating imagination and making the authors think differently about possible ways of conducting and writing their research. The focus will be on assumptions and ideas about the ‘interestingness’ of their research. Questions raised during the discussions may include: what is taken as given, what is reproduced without signs of deeper consideration and what could be re-thought in your research? Is the paper potentially (really) interesting? Could it be made more counter-intuitive and interesting? Is there any potentially clear answer to a “So what” question about the value and relevance of the paper (project)?

## **Who should attend?**

The workshop is particularly suitable for doctoral students (mid-way through their PhD), ECRs and other faculty interested in trying new ways of thinking about and doing research.

## **Application process and deadline**

The workshop is an in-person event and participation is by application only. Participation is **free of charge** but limited to 30 people. Preferences are given to participants who are presenting their research at the workshop. In order to apply as a contributor, please submit an extended abstract of max 1,000 words, outlining the main idea of the research you would like to discuss at the workshop.

It is possible to attend the workshop without submitting an extended abstract. In this instance, please submit a 1-page CV by the submission deadline. Please note that registrations with extended abstract submissions take priority. Please submit your application [at this link](#) by **27 January 2023**. Applicants will be notified of acceptance by **3 February 2023**.

## **Preparation**

Participants are expected to have familiarized themselves with a set of research texts (which will be sent out together with acceptance notice) before attending the workshop, including the articles of M Davies (1971). This is interesting. *Philosophy of the Social Sciences*, 1, 1, and M Alvesson & J Sandberg (2011). Generating research questions through problematization. *Academy of Management Review*, 37, 2, 247-271, as well as 4-5 extended abstracts from other participants.

## **Time and Location**

The workshop will be held at The University of Queensland, St Lucia Campus. It will start on Thursday, **March 2nd at 9am**, and finish on Friday, **March 3rd at 3pm**. A workshop dinner will be held on Thursday night.

For any questions, please contact Ellen Derbyshire [e.derbyshire@business.uq.edu.au](mailto:e.derbyshire@business.uq.edu.au)

### **Conveners**

**Mats Alvesson** holds a chair in the Business Administration department at Lund University in Sweden and is also part-time professor at the University of Bath, UK and the University of Queensland (UQ) Business School. He has done extensive research and published widely in the areas of qualitative, reflexive, and creative methodology, functional stupidity and wilful ignorance in organizations, power, organizational cultures, leadership, managerial lives, critical theory, culture, identity and gender. He has addressed these topics in a range of books, such as *Reflexive Methodology*, Sage 2017 (w Kaj Sköldbberg); *Return to Meaning. For a social science with something to say*, Oxford UP 2017 (w Yiannis Gabriel and Roland Paulsen); *The Stupidity Paradox*, Profile 2016 (w André Spicer); *Re-imagining the Research Process*, Sage 2021 (w Jörgen Sandberg) and articles (e.g., *Academy of Management Review* 2007, 2011, *Organization Studies* 2013, 2014) and has recently published *Philosophical minds or Brotgelehrte? Organization Studies* (with Katja Einola and Stephan Schaefer), forthcoming (<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/0170840621989002>). He has published about 30 books and numerous articles, and often writes for leading newspapers in Sweden.

**Jörgen Sandberg** is Professor in the University of Queensland (UQ) Business School, Australia, Co-Lead of Practice and Process Studies, a multidisciplinary research group within the UQ Business School, and Honorary Professor at Warwick Business School, UK. He has researched and published extensively in the areas of competence and learning in organizations; practice, process, sensemaking theory; theory development; philosophy of science; and research methodology. His most recent books include *Re-imagining the research process: conventional and alternative metaphors* (with Alvesson, Sage, 2021) and *Skillful performance: Enacting capabilities, knowledge, competence and expertise in organizations* (with Rouleau, Langley and Tsoukas, Oxford University Press, 2017). He also serves on the editorial boards for *Academy of Management Review*, *Journal of Organizational Behavior* and *Organization Studies*.