

Call for Papers:

Mini-conference “Financial Infrastructures: From Colonial Trajectories to Global Digital Transformations”

SASE conference, 9-11 July 2022, University of Amsterdam

Organizers:

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Financial infrastructures are the lifeblood of political economies worldwide. Financial infrastructures are, therefore, considered by policy-makers worldwide as physical ‘things’ requiring protection in avoiding potentially catastrophic consequences of their failures.

Inspired by conceptual developments from the field of Science and Technology Studies financial infrastructures, however, have also widened to encapsulate sociotechnical processes. Not merely cables and computer servers, but the relations of financiers and other humans to these and other physical objects, financial infrastructures are the processes sustaining essential activities such as cashless payments, government transfers, and bond trading. Often taken-for-granted, assumed and backgrounded, these relations are rendered visible when they fail, cease to function, or undergo profound changes.

The global pandemic has reminded many of our dependence on increasingly digital infrastructures. The ongoing digitization of infrastructures, including those enabling the global circulation of currencies, credit, and debt, as well as the disbursement of government aid and loans, attracts both the geopolitical interest of leading policymakers, as well as the everyday notice of citizens and consumers. The development of central bank digital currencies and attempts to ‘disrupt’ established financial infrastructures by the likes of Facebook with its diem (formerly Libra) currency have drawn the attention of regulators and citizens alike to payment infrastructures that have up to now remained out of the spotlight.

The growing concern of social scientists and the general public regarding the impacts of the digitalization of financial infrastructures requires more nuanced analysis of patterns of continuity and change that can emanate from interdisciplinary analysis of financial infrastructures. The goal of this mini-conference is to explore the past, present and future of financial infrastructures. We seek contributions exploring themes broadly related to the following questions: How inclusive or exclusive are financial infrastructures? How do they relate to (historical) social inequalities, such as colonial power relations? How are financial infrastructures interlinked with global power structures?

How do financial infrastructures matter beyond the financial sphere? How do they gain importance for security or for the management of property? How are financial infrastructures interlinked with the process of financialization?

This mini-conference will take up these and related questions concerning the agential qualities of infrastructures, as well as regarding the historical and ongoing contemporary development of financial infrastructures in and beyond the dominant Anglo-American centres of finance. Crucially, we seek wider perspectives from beyond the West, including much needed post-colonial and (post-) socialist approaches and findings

- What are financial infrastructures? How are they distinguished from and how do they overlap with other institutions and organizations?
- How do financial infrastructures change? How does digitalization affect the essential functions of infrastructures, such as the exchange of money, in modern societies? Which actors and processes are able to effect change in financial infrastructures?

- How inclusive or exclusive are financial infrastructures? How do they relate to (historical) social inequalities, such as colonial power relations? How are financial infrastructures interlinked with global power structures?
- How do financial infrastructures matter beyond the financial sphere? How do they gain importance for security or for the management of property? How are financial infrastructures interlinked with the process of financialization?

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We welcome two types of submissions:

- **For paper submissions:** please provide an abstract with maximum 500 words.
- **For panel submissions (3-5 papers):** please provide an abstract (max. 500 words) for each paper as well as an abstract for the whole panel (also max. 500 words).

The deadline for submissions is **25 January 2022**.

Acceptance notifications will go out at the end of February.

Information about the conference: <https://sase.org/event/2022-amsterdam/>

Submission information: <https://sase.org/events/conference-submission-and-award-guidelines/>

Instructions for how to submit:

- Go to <https://sase.org/event/2022-amsterdam/> and click "Submissions"
- Either create an account or sign in if you already have an account
- After signing in, scroll down to "TH06: Financial Infrastructures: From Colonial Trajectories to Global Digital Transformations". Please choose either a paper or panel submission.

Should you have any questions please contact us at the email addresses listed above.

Best regards,

Barbara, Carola and Malcolm