

## Call for contributions to *Voluntas* Special Issue: The Organizations of Civil Society

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Organizations are central actors in civil society, yet the popular view of civil society often focuses on individual behavior (e.g., civic or political engagement, volunteering, giving) or on macro-sociological phenomena (e.g., different nonprofit regimes, cross-sectoral cooperation). Nevertheless, organizations play a crucial role as actors in civil society. Organizations also serve as platforms and "transmission units" between individual actors and society. Thus civil society organizations (CSOs) are critically important to safe-guard, shape and develop an active and healthy civil society – but also to understand civil society's role in society.

With this special issue of *Voluntas*, we wish to encourage further theoretical and empirical research on CSOs and their many roles or functions in society. Further, although management questions are addressed quite regularly, there is still little research analyzing structural and cultural characteristics of CSOs, and this research is weakly linked to organizational theory. Compared to the business and public sector, the variety of organizational forms and goals seems to be much broader in civil society, and we hope to be able to publish a diverse set of papers that adequately reflects this empirical reality.

We invite contributions primarily from two major perspectives. (1) From Organizational Theory / Organization Studies, we welcome contributions focused on the particularities of CSOs compared to other types of organizations. (2) From the perspective of civil society scholarship, we welcome contributions focused on the specific strengths / weaknesses of organizations as collective actors, compared to individuals, groups and movements, and / or how CSOs influence the wider civil society and its position in society.

We aim to publish empirical (qualitative and/or quantitative) papers from a broad variety of theoretical perspectives. Thus, submissions to this special issue should relate to distinct theoretical approaches and specific phenomena in civil society. The submitted research may be inspired by social movement theory, new institutionalism, resource dependence theory, organizational field theory, systems theory, complexity theory, convention theory, or various symbolic, cultural, and strategic approaches to organizations.

We hope to publish articles which when read will challenge existing knowledge so as to generate a new set of research questions with the aim to push contemporary theoretical borders in civil society research.

Submissions should further concentrate upon specific phenomena of organizing – e.g., the interplay between CSOs and their specific environments, the particularities of governance and management in these organizations, the borderland between CSOs and social movements, support groups, public administrations, or for-profit corporations, or the contributions of CSOs to individual civic engagement and political decision making. In any case, we hope that the particularities of CSOs should be focused and theoretically reflected in the contributions. Each submission should be explicit about its theoretical basis and its explanatory power for specific organizational phenomena in civil society.

Please submit an abstract of no more than 700 words (excluding references) providing the editors with a clear indication of the research question(s) to be addressed, the theoretical basis, the methods used and the contribution to the literature **by November 30, 2016**. Abstracts should be sent to **npo@wu.ac.at** and will be reviewed and selected until January 31, 2017. Full papers will be expected until end of May 2017.