

Call for papers – Special issue***Contributions of academic continuing education to higher education development***

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To the main topic

Universities have to make ongoing contributions with societal impact on a wide variety of levels. This applies first and foremost to the production of knowledge through research, but also to the (further) qualification for knowledge-intensive and scientific tasks. With increasing autonomy, also in terms of the universities' own financial contributions, and with simultaneous differentiation of institution types in the higher education sector, strategic positioning has also become a professional task (Fumasoli et al. 2020). In this context, it can no longer be assumed that higher education reforms will take place at longer intervals (Dill 2014), but rather that change management is an ongoing task (Kühl 2007; Müller 2015).

All of this is framed by dynamic social transformations and, at the same time, diverse societal demands (Pausits 2015) that higher education institutions not only observe or accompany this change but also actively help to shape it through academic continuing education. In addition, a wide range of higher education and education policy expectations and initiatives are being brought to bear on higher education institutions. This causes continuous changes and disputes for defence and/or adaptations of higher education institutions. These include above all the third mission of higher education institutions (Pinheiro et al. 2015), the importance and role of higher education institutions in promoting lifelong learning (Kil & Keser Aschenberger 2017), and the demand for professional development through continuing academic education for older people (Keser Aschenberger, Kil & Löffler 2020). Accordingly, legislative reforms, as is currently the case in Austria, repeatedly lead to pressure for change to expand the structures and processes of academic continuing education. At the same time, the growing importance of the independence between formal, non-formal and informal learning and the demand for increased permeability (European Commission 2020) in gradually flexible and individualised (further) education and training opportunities are fostering institutional integration. Considering new concepts such as micro-credentials (European Council 2021) or stackable credentials or degrees as well as individual credits through far-reaching validation methods and procedures (Schlögl 2022), a structural alignment of academic continuing education with other (higher) educational activities is taking place.

The management, academic and administrative staff are thus busy keeping the rudder in their hands in these dynamic times by means of strategic planning, quality assurance, and personnel development (Kosmützky & Borggräfe 2012). However, one can get the impression that possibly the most agile element of higher education practice, namely continuing academic education, with its peculiar, early-recognising needs orientation and the freedom, service and performance

orientation that exists compared to the regular studies, is not yet systematically noted, acknowledged and used as a resource for the overall development of higher education.

The - with a few exceptions - noticeable marginalisation (external perception, institutional management, academic staff) of continuing education has always offered scope for organisational developments and the gathering of experience through the testing of innovative practices, under quasi-experimental conditions. New development approaches such as the "Continuing Education Audit" initiated by the German Donors' Association as a service for the strategic development of academic continuing education at higher education institutions or the introduction of new degrees at Bachelor- and Master-level, which have now been implemented in Austria such as "Continuing Education/CE" or Bachelor/Master Professional (BPr, MPr), are examples of these dynamics. How individual projects are implemented at the macro, meso and micro levels and what effect they have on the overall organisation "higher education institution" will be analysed and discussed in many ways in this issue.

This issue of ZfHE would therefore like to invite contributions to present, explore and reflect on potential and demonstrable effects of academic continuing education on the development of the sector, institution and service provision. This can be done at different levels:

- systemic, e.g. through political reform initiatives and their forms of implementation
- for regional anchoring and increased societal orientation
- for organisational and quality development e.g. through the evaluation of educational innovations
- Curriculum strategy and higher education didactics
- personnel development
- for further development of the identity as a higher education institution

In addition to research-based, theoretical and conceptual submissions, case studies and reflections of higher education practice, from German-speaking countries, may also be submitted. International classifications and/or comparisons are also welcome.

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Guidelines regarding the journal

The ZFHE is a peer-reviewed online journal that publishes scientific contributions of practical relevance concerning current higher education development issues. The focus is on didactical, structural, and cultural developments in teaching and learning. Topics that are innovative and still regarded as open in respect of their design options are preferred.

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Submission information

German or English contributions may be submitted in two possible formats:

Research contributions should meet the following criteria. The paper:

- addresses a systemic question in transdisciplinary, interdisciplinary or subject-specific contexts;
- has a research gap as its starting point;
- is extensively embedded in current scholarly discourse;
- has a robust methodological approach;
- includes reflection on the author's own work;
- explains the research methodology;
- employs a method that is suitable for answering the research question;
- presents the scientific discourse in a reflective manner;
- makes a clearly recognizable contribution to answering the research question or to the research discussion;
- consistently follows relevant citation rules (APA style, current edition);
- comprises between 20,000 and 33,000 characters (with spaces, including cover page, bibliography and author information).

Research-driven development contributions should meet the following criteria. The paper:

- features a higher education development perspective with a sound research base;
- discusses and differentiates a systemic problem in teaching development;
- is an academically grounded "institutional research" contribution;
- is supported by a literature review;
- meaningfully addresses the interaction between science and praxis and/or the link between the two poles of "research and development"
- consistently follows pertinent citation rules (APA style, current edition);
- comprises between 20,000 and 33,000 characters (with spaces, including cover page, bibliography and author information).

Development contributions should meet the following criteria. The paper:

- deals with a concrete problem in higher education development in the (author's) higher education institution;
- addresses a practical need;
- is embedded in the scientific discussion and literature (without claiming to provide an overview of the literature);
- offers suggestions for teaching and university development, with recommendations for action (if applicable);
- offers a systematic and transparent discussion (e.g. no incomprehensible references to specifics or details in a field of practice);
- elaborates on generalisable aspects relevant to theoretical development;
- addresses considerations related to the transfer to practice;
- mentions possibilities for further research;
- consistently follows relevant citation rules (APA style, current edition);
- comprises between 20,000 and 33,000 characters (with spaces, including cover page, bibliography and author information).

Submission and review schedule

January 12, 2024 – Submission deadline for complete articles: Please upload your contribution(s) to the ZFHE journal system (<https://www.zfhe.at>) in the corresponding section (research contributions, research-driven development contributions, development contributions) of ZFHE 19/2 issue in anonymous format. To do so, you must first register as an author in the system.

March 31 2024 – Feedback/Reviews: Scientific contributions and workshop reports are evaluated in a double-blind process (see below).

May 1, 2024 – Revision deadline: Where necessary, contributions may be revised according to feedback and recommendations from the reviews.

June 2024 – Online publication: In March 2024, the finalized contributions are published under <https://www.zfhe.at> and also made available in print.

Review Process

All submitted contributions will be examined in a double-blind peer review process to guarantee scientific quality. The editors of the current issue propose the reviewers for the respective theme and allocate individual contributions to the reviewers; they also determine which contributions will be accepted. The selection of reviewers and the review process for each thematic issue are always supervised by a member of the editorial board.

Formatting and submission

In order to save valuable time with the formatting of the contributions, we kindly ask that all authors work with the template from the beginning. The template can be downloaded from the ZFHE website under the following links:

https://www.zfhe.at/userupload/ZFHE_19-2_TEMPLATE_de.docx

https://www.zfhe.at/userupload/ZFHE_19-2_TEMPLATE_en.docx

Since we must be able to edit the texts, they must be submitted unlocked/unprotected in in Microsoft Word (.doc), Office Open XML (.docx), Open Document Text (.odt) or Plain Text (.txt) format. Please do not submit any PDF files! Submissions in the “Scientific Contribution” and “Workshop Report” categories must first be made in anonymous format in order to guarantee the double-blind review process. Please remove all references to the author(s) of the document (including in the document properties!). Upon a positive review result, this information will be re-inserted.

Questions?

If you have any questions regarding the content of the issue, please contact Peter Schlögl (Peter.Schloegl@aaau.at), Attila Pausits (Attila.Pausits@donau-uni.ac.at) or Monika Kil (monika.kil@donau-uni.ac.at).

For technical and organizational questions, please contact Elisabeth Stadler (office@zfhe.at).

We look forward to your submissions!

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