

Call for Papers

Early Career Researcher Workshop

Taking the next step: new frontiers in the interdisciplinary study of finance

Warwick Critical Finance Group

University of Warwick, 25th-26th of September 2017

Agenda

It is a strange moment for early career researchers to research finance. The furore of the Great Financial Crisis and the Eurozone Crisis has faded, yet the risks and uncertainties of finance remain the same. Rampant speculation and asset bubbles continue to thrive. Public debt and private debt is back to pre-crisis levels, and the financialization of virtually all aspects of economic and social spheres is deepening further. Meanwhile, research efforts in recent years have unveiled finance as a richly heterogenous field reaching far beyond what is commonly assumed to be financial. A large amount of work across disciplines has uncovered new ways in which finance is changing both itself as well as economies, societies and politics more broadly.

The purpose of the Early Career Researcher's Workshop is to reflect on the current juncture of finance research, to understand the complexities of finance and to discuss the changes and continuities in a research agenda gradually moving on from the overriding concern with the crisis. Therefore, the workshop seeks to address several new research areas within finance which we believe can benefit from interdisciplinary engagement and it aims to cultivate an academic sensitivity to the plurality of approaches that sustain the current lines of finance research.

The workshop is designed for early career scholars, PhD students as well as Post-docs to exchange ideas and lay the basis for a sustained conversation about the changing horizons of finance research. It addresses scholars from a variety of fields, such as political science, sociology, political economy, economics, business studies, anthropology, geography, organization studies, history, gender studies, and more, that share an interest in finance and a curiosity for the many viewpoints built for its understanding.



We are calling for papers that recognize the need to mobilize new heritages and perspectives, in order to create a common vantage point for academic debate. We are seeking contributions that broadly address one (or several) of the following research streams:

- Finance and Monetary Governance
- Financial Infrastructure
- Everyday Financialisation
- Financialisation in the Global South
- Gender and Finance
- Digital Finance
- Studying Finance: Reflections on Methods

The individual streams are explained in detail on the following pages.

The format of the workshop consists of two parts. During the first part, papers of early career researchers will be presented and discussed. Each paper will be introduced by a discussant who presents the paper to the group, providing comment and feedback, followed by a reply from the paper's author. During the second part, the individual research streams will meet to kick-start a collaboration aimed at producing publishable output.

Paper proposals should be about 250 words long and be submitted by June 1st 2017 to: wcf@warwick.ac.uk. Proposals should clearly indicate the research question and address one of the research streams as outlined below.

Funds are available to support travel expenses for a number of unfunded participants. If you would like to apply for financial assistance, please indicate this when submitting your abstract.

Timeline:

Application deadline: 1 June 2017

Notification of acceptance: 30 June 2017

Papers due: 31 August 2017

Workshop: 25-26 September 2017

For further information, please visit the event page:

<http://warwick.ac.uk/warwickcriticalfinance/workshop2017>

Proposals should address one of the following research streams:

Digital Finance

Recent years have seen an intensified popular and critical engagement with the potentials of digital technology in a world where people have become used to perpetual connectedness. With finance gradually endorsing digitalization, technologies once seen as exotic, or wishful thinking have experienced a rapid rise: Retail banking services from payments through current accounts to private investment are anticipated to migrate at least partially to the mobile phone. Bankers may soon be supported by robo-advisors and traders replaced by algorithms. Insurance companies and regulators prepare for Big Data and Hackers hope to subvert finance with code – think crowdfunding, blockchain. What do we make of these allied developments in the financial and the digital sector? Why is it happening now and who is benefitting? What challenges are created by the drive towards digital finance, what are its unintended consequences?

Finance and Monetary Governance

Finance and the monetary infrastructure are central to economic governance. Monetary policy - through ultra low interest rates and quantitative easing - has been the dominant government response to recent and ongoing economic crisis. The crucial place of some government debt securities as safe haven assets in the shadow banking sector is being increasingly recognised. How can the politics of financialised economic governance be understood? What is the relationship between the notional independence of central banks and their crucial political role in reviving flagging economies? What opportunities and what pressures does financialisation present the task of economic governance more broadly?

Financial infrastructure

Where do markets come from? While a lot of research on financial markets has been preoccupied with the role of investors, increasingly the importance of market infrastructures – the “plumbing” of financial markets – has been highlighted. This stream seeks to analyse the role of financial infrastructure in financial markets, how it contributed to the governance and functioning of markets and how it has changed over time. What is the role of exchanges, clearing houses or market data providers in finance? How is market infrastructure linked to technology, performativity, geography or power? How are market infrastructures shaped by post-crisis regulations? What is the relationship between infrastructure, investors and products? How are these institutions linked to processes of financialisation?

Everyday Financialisation

Studies of everyday financialisation seek to understand how broad, abstract processes of financial capitalism are grounded, performed and resisted by individuals and societies. This stream looks at the spaces of finance that can easily be considered unimportant, and contributions which challenge the notion that global finance is a neutral or asocial phenomenon are encouraged. We hope to reveal the everyday workings of modern financial capitalism, and its interaction with a range of other social relations. How are discourses or cultures of finance relevant to everyday practices? In what ways does financialisation shape the everyday of individuals, relationships or societies? What are the spaces of everyday financialisation? Are they ones of resistance or obedience? How does financialisation have uneven impacts on different social groups?

Financialisation in the Global South

Over the last 20 years, a large research programme has emerged around the transformation of finance. However, most studies of financialisation have largely focused on the core countries of global financial capitalism, whereas other countries so far received only little scholarly attention. Therefore, this research stream addresses questions around financialisation processes in the Global South. How have financial systems and markets in the Global South changed? Who are the key actors and institutions promoting these processes and what are their political and social implications? Are there commonalities and differences between processes of financial transformation in the Global South? Are these systematically different from financialisation in higher-income countries?

Finance and Gender

In the aftermath of the financial crisis, the gender of financial actors was marked in novel ways. Much media and research attention focused on the excessive risk taking of hyper-masculine men, and the promises of 'prudent women' for post-crisis recovery. In the Global South, the drive for Microfinance lending is justified through a gendered notion of women as governors of the domestic realm. Yet switch to the macroeconomic realm and suddenly the bourgeois masculine, 'rock star' central banker becomes supposedly crucial to macro prudential regulation. How do gendered discourses continue to underpin financial practices, and what kinds of feminist discourses get entangled in them? How and why do gendered notions of financial behaviour coincide with the post-crisis rise of behavioural economics? How do the crisis and its governance change the relations between the masculinised spheres of finance and production, and the feminized spheres of consumption and social reproduction?

Studying finance: Reflections on methods

Finance studies cuts across feminist theory, anthropology, economic sociology, heterodox economics, political economy, economic geography and social studies of finance literature. The plurality has been a strength of the field and allowed for innovative, transdisciplinary research. One consequence has been little reflection or sustained discussion over method and how to conduct research into finance studies. What light can historicist approaches shed on contemporary financial relations? How can technical examinations of banking practices inform debates in political economy? What are the benefits and limitations of qualitative, quantitative or mixed method studies of finance? What insights do spatial or network analyses provide for the study of finance? How can ethnographic or psychological approaches further our understanding of finance?