

Wednesday 12 May 2021, 9.00am-9.40am

## Supranational spaces and the remaking of Higher Education

*Chair: Xin Xu. Speakers: Maia Chankseliani, Tristan McCowan, Rachel Brooks, David Mills, Lee Rensimer, Natia Sopromadze, Natasha Robinson*

This project panel introduces a new CGHE research stream exploring the role of supranational higher education collaborations and networks in remaking global higher education. A set of four empirical sub-projects are investigating these supranational spaces and assemblages, and the flows of finances, people, knowledge and policies they enable. Three of these have a regional focus – Europe, Africa, and Central and Western Asia – and the fourth focuses on global Higher Education aid and resource flows. The regional projects involve mapping relevant actors, both from within and outside the sector, and developing case studies. For example, the European sub-project is focusing on the new European University Initiative, the Africa project is exploring China-Africa university alliances, whilst the project on Central and Western Asia maps how multilateral, philanthropic and bilateral actors support the formation of a regional higher education space. The analysis of aid flows complements this by seeking to quantify and understand the changing nature of aid to HE, as well as the largest and most influential actors and their modalities of support. The four teams are working closely together, using empirical findings to help develop new conceptual understandings and insights. A key question for all the projects is the relative influence of 'external' policy and funding actors – such as regional blocs like the EU, multilateral organisations such as the World Bank, bilateral donors, or major philanthropies – as opposed to 'internal' university-led regional networks and collaborations. In bringing the four sub-projects together, this research stream will explore the limitations of conventional scalar theorisations of policy spaces (e.g. local, national, global) for understanding supranational dynamics. Can supranational networks result from local initiatives and agendas? Is there a shift from state and inter-state actors to non-state and private ones? Are supranational policy spaces, institutional collaborations and resource flows intertwined, and if so in what ways? After short speeches from the four research leaders the panel will propose questions for discussion.