



CGHE Annual Conference 22-23 May 2023

Session Details

PARALLEL SESSION 2 - Mapping International Flows of Funding to Education and Research in the Global South

22 May 2023, 3:15pm - 4:15pm (UK)

Chair: *Xin Xu*

CGHE Project 9: Mapping the Global Tertiary Education Space: Tristan McCowan, Maia Chankseliani, Lee Rensimer, David Mills (discussant)

Higher education (HE) is increasingly seen as key to meeting the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and tackling global challenges. However, the scope and scale of international donor support to HE in low- and middle-income countries, including grants, loans, scholarships and other forms of cooperation or 'aid', is poorly documented. The prevailing source of data, the OECD Creditor Reporting System (CRS), captures only a narrow subset of these flows, primarily those reported by donors as official development assistance (ODA) commitments.

The first paper of the panel begins with a conceptual and empirical analysis of critical gaps in our knowledge of the existing HE aid landscape. Exploring what is documented in the CRS dataset and what is not, it moves beyond a narrow framing of HE aid. It broadens the conceptualisation of HE aid to include flows which are not necessarily reported as support to HE but have externalised effects on HE teaching and research capacities. Examples, referred to here as "aid through HE", raise critical questions around how donors count their commitments and which forms of HE aid actually impact HE systems in the Global South.

The second paper offers an alternative approach to documenting and tracking global flows of research funding: the use of funding acknowledgements. Analysis of Scopus funding data on publications (co-) authored by individuals based in the Caucasus or Central Asia confirms that most research activity in the region is enabled by international funding. Whilst the two countries most frequently mentioned in funding acknowledgements are the United States and the Russian Federation, funding originates from 98 countries across North America, Europe, Asia, Latin America, the Middle East, and Australia. Funders include bilateral agencies (68% of all funding acknowledgements), philanthropies (7%), and multilateral organisations (5%). The talk will end by discussing the limitations of this approach and analysis.