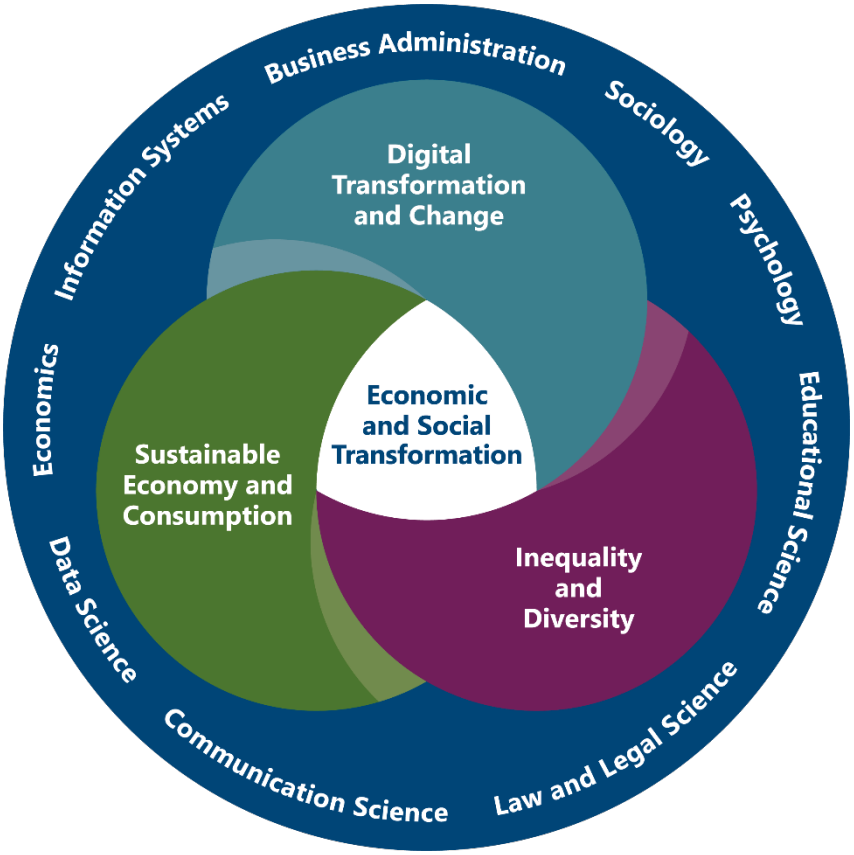
UNIVERSITY OF HOHENHEIM

Faculty of Business, Economics and Social Sciences



BESST – Business, Economics, and Social Sciences retreaT

No. 6, June 30th, 2025

Focus Areas of the Faculty & more

Program of the research workshop

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UNIVERSITY OF HOHENHEIM

Program of the 6th research workshop of the Faculty of Business, Economics and Social Sciences

June 30th, 2025
Blauer Saal, Schloss Hohenheim

All researchers of the faculty are cordially invited.
Please submit your contributions until June 9th 2025
via e-mail to wiso_forschung@uni-hohenheim.de
Please register by June 25th via **https://t1p.de/teypc**.

Time	Item	Speakers
10:00	Arrival & Welcome	Henner Gimpel
10:15	**Seeding Strategies for the Diffusion in Signed Networks**	Matthias Müller
10:55	Break (10 minutes)	
11:05	**Overcoming Societal Tensions in Europe: Can Age-Diverse Friendships Be the Solution?**	Tabea Wolf & Johanna Grad
11:45	Lunch	
12:45	**Discussion on Open Science**	Ulrike Fasbender Adrian Lüders Jörg Schiller Serina Latzko (KIM) Franziska Stanzel (KIM) Henner Gimpel
13:50	Closing remarks	Henner Gimpel

- Approx. 15 minutes presentation and approx. 20 minutes discussion per contribution.
- The discussion on Open Science with selected participants will be moderated by Henner Gimpel. All participants are cordially invited to contribute questions and share their experiences.
- Coffee and other drinks will be available during the research workshop. Lunch will be paid by the participants themselves.

Presentation subjects and descriptions	Speakers
Seeding Strategies for the Diffusion in Signed Networks *The targeted selection of initial actors in transformation and change processes, commonly referred to as the seeding problem, plays a pivotal role in shaping how new ideas, behaviors, or innovations spread across networks. This contribution investigates how diffusion unfolds in signed networks, which contain both positive (supportive) and negative (adversarial) ties, and how different seeding strategies can influence the dynamics and outcomes of such processes.* *Drawing on an agent-based simulation model, the study systematically analyzes a range of heuristic approaches to the seeding problem. The goal is to uncover how the positioning of initial change agents affects the spread and sustainability of transformation processes in networks with complex relational structures. Results indicate that in environments characterized by local influence dynamics and social reinforcement mechanisms, highly connected nodes can counterintuitively inhibit diffusion in networks with a high density of negative ties. This phenomenon, termed the over-stimulation effect, arises when overlapping signals from central actors prematurely signal saturation, leading peripheral nodes to opt out of engagement. In contrast, strategically seeding less central actors tends to produce more robust and widespread diffusion trajectories.* *This study offers both theoretical and methodological contributions to the study of net-work-driven change. It underscores the need for context-sensitive seeding strategies, especially in systems where trust, opposition, and ambivalence coexist. By focusing on signed networks, the research advances our understanding of how structural and relational complexities shape the success of large-scale change initiatives, whether in organizational, societal, or digital contexts.*	Matthias Müller
Overcoming Societal Tensions in Europe: Can Age-Diverse Friendships be the Solution? *Many of Europe's pressing issues—such as migration, pensions, and social security—are linked to intergroup tensions, including those between age groups. Friendship is a powerful form of contact that can influence behaviour to bridge social divides. When members of different social groups develop a friendship, they learn about the other group, generate affective ties, and change their behavior toward them (Pettigrew, 1998). Positive contact with one befriended age-diverse person can spill-over (1) to different contexts and other outgroup members (primary transfer), (2) to other outgroups (e.g., migrants, secondary transfer), and (3) can enable cognitive liberalization (tertiary transfer; Meleady et al., 2019). Age-diverse workplace friendships can thus benefit people outside of work and not only befriended individuals but all members of the other age group, other social groups, and beyond. Using a mix of qualitative methods and experimental designs, the consortium investigates how age-diverse workplace friendships can function as social glue. In a first study, we examine the link between age-diverse workplace friendships and prosocial behaviour at the workplace. Specifically, we look at friendship investment's relation to active bystander intervention intention via trust. For older individuals, we expect stronger relations with identification-based trust and for younger individuals we expect stronger relations via calculus-based trust. With this model we hope to capture age differences in trust depending on age. Thus far, we have 237 complete age-diverse*	Tabea Wolf Johanna Margarethe Grad

coworker dyads (colleagues with ≥10 years age difference) in our dataset. Preliminary data analyses reveal positive associations between friendship investment and both trust variables for younger and older individuals. Only calculus-based trust in older individuals is associated with bystander intervention intention. To conclude, we want to highlight overlaps between the project and our faculty to open the discussion for possible synergies.	
Discussion on Open Science: **Exchange of experiences within the faculty with the attendance of KIM**	Jörg Schiller Ulrike Fasbender Adrian Lüders Serina Latzko (KIM) Franziska Stanzel (KIM) Henner Gimpel