

Call for Participation

for Theme Week "The (De)tabooing of Science and Research"

Title of the Symposium: Unheard, Unseen, and Unspoken: Setting a Research Agenda for Sexual Harassment and Violence in Higher education

Organizers: Dr. Heike Pantelmann, Dr. Sarah Bellows-Blakely, Dr. Sabina García Peter (Freie Universität Berlin) & Prof. Dr. Ebere Adimora (University of Nigeria, Nsukka)

This symposium is funded by the Volkswagen Foundation and will be held on **September 17–19, 2025** at the Xplanatorium Herrenhausen Palace, Hanover, Germany. The symposium will include cross-over events with three other Volkswagen Foundation-supported events on taboos related to gender and race in science and research.

Travel costs and accommodation will be covered. Meals will be provided during the symposium.

We invite doctoral, post-doctoral, and senior researchers from all over the world to apply!

About the symposium:

The topic of sexual harassment and violence (SHV) within higher education is subject to multiple taboos. First, SHV is often swept under the rug, with those raising the issue treated as troublemakers or driven out of higher education. Second, universities are reluctant to critically investigate themselves and the unequal power relations that allow sexual harassment and violence to flourish. Compounding the problem are social taboos, which partially stem from myths about research institutions and individuals within them. When it does exist, research tends to focus on individual countries and rarely makes connections across national borders. The purpose of this symposium is to bring together an international group of scholars to share research, experiences, and best practices about SHV in higher education. Our goals are to de-taboo the ability to name SHV within higher education, share knowledge, and craft collaborative agendas for research and policy making moving forward.

The symposium will include a combination of interactive workshops and panel discussions, insight sharing, and networking. It will conclude with a collaborative workshop dedicated to developing a shared research agenda on SHV in HE. Together, we will identify key research priorities necessary for advancing the visibility of SHV research and breaking multiple taboos surrounding this critical issue.

Participants are encouraged to submit contributions based on their symposium participation to the research section "[Gender-Specific and Sexual Harassment, Discrimination, and Violence in Higher Education Contexts](#)". This section is coordinated in collaboration with the open-access, peer-reviewed journals *Open Gender Journal* (Germany/Austria) and *Debate Feminista* (Mexico).

Submission:

Please **submit your application by May 15** to the following address and include the following materials:

bewerbungen@mvbz.fu-berlin.de

- An abstract outlining your research (no more than 1 page)
- CV
- Indicate in your email if you would like to deliver a **verbal presentation**, create a **poster** for display, or **participate only as an attended** (which will include multiple opportunities for group discussion)

Selection process:

- Applications will be evaluated considering factors such as expertise in the topic, representation from different countries and backgrounds, a balance of experience in academic research and university policy making, etc.
- We encourage non-binary and male researchers to apply, as we believe this topic needs to be addressed from different perspectives in academia.
- Decisions about acceptance will be communicated in June 2025.

More Information: bewerbungen@mvbz.fu-berlin.de