

SCOS 2024

9-12 July 2024, Newcastle University Business School, Newcastle upon Tyne, UK

Electricity

What is a soul? It's like electricity - we don't really know what it is, but it's a force that can light a room. (Ray Charles)

We invite abstract submissions for SCOS 2024 on the theme of 'Electricity'.

A history of power and innovation, including the invention of the incandescent lightbulb and the harnessing of hydroelectricity, inspires and provides the symbolic focus on **electricity** for our conference in the beautiful host city of Newcastle upon Tyne.

Electricity plays a crucial role in human existence as the driving force behind various physiological and cognitive processes, including electrical impulses and signals to transmit information through synapses and between neurons, affecting our thoughts, emotions, and behaviours. Early philosophers such as Aristotle and Plato explored the concept of electricity as a form of energy, while later thinkers such as Descartes and Leibniz argued that electricity was a form of matter. Hegel and Marx considered the implications of electricity for the development of industrialisation and the emergence of modernity. 20th century philosophers such as Deleuze explored the implications of electricity for the development of technology and its impact on human life, while Lefebvre has argued energy is part of the core triad of space-time-energy that shape social and material relations. In addition, there are many examples of electricity as the inspiration for, as well as the form and substance of artistic works: Korean visual artist Nam June Paik, known as 'the father of video art', famously said that '*Without electricity, there can be no art*' (c1976). Electricity has revolutionised the way we live, work, play and interact. It has enabled us to develop new technologies, to explore new ways of working and to create new forms of communication. From communication devices to transportation, electricity is the foundation of all these inventions.

We invite explorations of the implications of electricity for the way we understand and organise management, work, organisations, society and our interaction with our natural and anthropogenic world. This could include examining and critiquing the idea of electricity as a form of power, as a form of control, as a form of communication, and as a form of transformation. Energy can be conceptualised both as generative, a stimulus, and destructive, an annihilator. Such explorations and provocations seem ever more relevant at this moment in our existence with the recent explosion of AI which is more sophisticated and capable of performing a wide range of tasks that were once considered exclusive to human intelligence.

We welcome contributions from a range of theoretical and methodological perspectives, including but not limited to:

- Electricity shaping management and leadership of organisations
- The electric and its positive (and masculine) organisational resonances: “energising” leadership, “stimulating” strategies, “powerful” management
- Electricity, work and organizations over time and space
- Impact of electricity on the structure and functioning of organisations
- Electricity and the way we understand organisations and their dynamics
- Electricity and its impact on the way we work and the nature of work itself
- Electrical metaphors in work and/or organizations, education, learning and/or development
- Electricity and relational, sensory and/or embodied knowing
- Electricity as enlivening, electricity as destructive, electricrity
- Any other papers relating broadly to the themes of organization and electricity, and related concepts such as energy, power, currents, charge, shocks, magnetisms, light, etc.

We welcome papers that explore these and related questions, as well as those that consider the implications of electricity for other aspects of organisational life such as energy, power, technology, culture, identity and inequality.

You are welcome to propose paper presentations, developmental work, workshops or any other format of participation.

Abstracts/proposals should be 500 words in length.

The deadline for submissions is **extended to March 4th 2024**, please send to SCOS2024@newcastle.ac.uk along with any other questions/comments about the conference.