

## Call for Proposals: “Invisibility and Institutions in East Asia”

Notions of invisibility are increasingly relevant both in social science research and in public discourse in East Asia. Categories of invisibility as well as *visibility* have been regarded as important in the context of modern struggles for recognition. Discussions range from how powerful agenda setters decide which interests come to the fore and which fail to gain attention and remain invisible to how people are rendered invisible in society by institutions that govern our lives. Institutions are essential elements of society as they organize social activity and determine what is legitimate and what is not, thus relegating some aspects of social life invisible. Invisibility also has an enabling potential, permitting social groups greater freedom from public attention and societal expectations. These debates are intensifying against the backdrop of rapid social change, the formation of new institutional settings, and increasing socio-political contestation in East Asia and beyond.

The conference will explore interdisciplinary perspectives regarding invisibility and consider its relevance across numerous fields of research. How do the different academic disciplines address the theme of invisibility? What is the value-added of integrating invisibility into theoretical and methodological considerations? What new areas of research can benefit from tackling the concept of invisibility? How do institutions (rules, norms, practices) generate and intensify social invisibility of certain social groups? And what about its counter-category, *visibility*?

The graduate students of the Graduate School of East Asian Studies (GEAS) at Freie Universität Berlin invite young scholars to present their research at the 2018 Graduate Conference “Invisibility and institutions in East Asia”, to take place **2 November 2018**. The conference aims to provide an interdisciplinary forum to investigate the topic of invisibility in relation to institutions and social, political, and economic changes in East Asia.

Topics may include, but are not limited to:

- Institutional approaches to invisibility
- Innovative theoretical perspectives on invisibility
- Invisibility as an enabling factor
- Marginalized and vulnerable people’s socio-political struggle for recognition
- Invisibility in media discourses
- Gendered and racialized patterns of invisibility
- Silencing of certain historical discourses for instrumental purposes
- Agenda setting and other invisible practices in the policy process
- Postcolonial notions of invisibility

### **Application requirements:**

The conference is open to doctoral candidates and recent PhDs in area studies or social science disciplines related to East Asia. We welcome all disciplines, including but not limited to sociology, economics, political science, anthropology, gender studies, media studies, cultural studies, law, and history. Each participant is asked to prepare a paper and presentation of 15-20 minutes in English, which will be followed by a discussion with invited scholars and specialists.

Applicants should submit abstracts (max. 250 words), including the author’s name, institutional affiliation, discipline(s), and a short biography (max. 200 words) by **27 July**

**2018.** The conference committee will confirm the receipt of abstracts via e-mail and will notify the selected participants. Once selected, the presenters will be requested to submit an extended version of their abstracts (2-5 pages).

Please submit all abstracts and questions to [grad-conference@geas.fu-berlin.de](mailto:grad-conference@geas.fu-berlin.de).