

Abstract ANSE Summer University 2025 “An Ocean of Possibility” – Keynote

Titel: The Rise of the Adaptive Society

In modern times, the prevailing belief was that history could be shaped, and progress would almost inevitably lead to a better future. However, the challenges of global warming, economic stagnation, and individual overload have deeply shaken this optimism. Today, the focus has shifted to disaster mitigation. Even if this is achieved, we will still need to navigate in a world characterized by sudden change and adaptive pressure. As a consequence, concerns about self-preservation are beginning to eclipse those of individual and collective self-realization. We are witnessing the rise of the adaptive society.

About the author

I am Professor of Sociology of Work, Economy and technological change at Humboldt University of Berlin and co-director at Einstein Center Digital Future. In my research, I combine topics of work, social structure analysis, sociology of technology, and political economy with a contemporary analytical intent. Currently, I am particularly concerned with questions of the political shaping of digital capitalism, the relationship between digitization and sustainability, and the role of critical infrastructures for the future viability of modern societies.

Contact:

<https://philippstaab.de/>