HPI Colloquium
10.01.2019, 4 p.m.

Hasso-Plattner-Institut, Hauptgebäude, Hörsaal 1
Campus Griebnitzsee, 14482 Potsdam

"Why and How Does Design Thinking Work? A Review after 10 Years of Research"

Dr. Julia von Thienen

Hasso-Plattner-Institut, Potsdam
Design Thinking Research Program Stanford / Potsdam

Abstract

Design thinking is an innovation culture that promotes creative developments to better address fundamental human needs. While the practical successes of design thinking have always been obvious, initially relatively little theoretical explanation was available as to why and how design thinking works in scientific terms. To balance the renowned best practices of design thinking with equally sophisticated theoretical explanations has therefore been a major aim of the Stanford-Potsdam Hasso Plattner Design Thinking Research Program ever since it began to operate in 2008. This talk shares insights gleaned over ten years of respective research. It specifically elucidates why and how creative developments at low levels of novelty (incremental innovation; in-paradigm creativity) differ drastically from developments at high levels of novelty (radical innovation; out-of-paradigm creativity). Design thinking is discussed as an approach that offers a particularly rich cornucopia of resources for developments at high levels of novelty, though the approach can benefit innovation projects as well when only little novelty is sought. Moreover, this talk explores in detail how the so-called "three pillars" or "3P" of design thinking (namely Processes, People and Places) help to describe, explain, predict and facilitate creative developments in all areas of life. This is illustrated with examples from various application domains, including Digital Engineering.

Short CV

Julia von Thienen studied psychology at the Free University of Berlin, receiving her PhD in the field of research methodology. She has taught philosophy of science and research methodology at the Free University of Berlin, the University of Chicago and the University of Potsdam. Since 2008, Julia has worked in the Stanford-Potsdam Design Thinking Research Program at the German Hasso Plattner Institute, where she has studied why and how design thinking works in various projects. Next to empirical, historical and theoretical studies into design thinking, she co-develops the medical documentation system Tele-Board MED and teaches the course "Design Thinking for Digital Engineering" at Potsdam University.

Host: Prof. Dr. Christoph Meinel