

8th Annual Conference *GRUR Junge Wissenschaft*
Colloquium on Intellectual Property, Copyright and Media Law
23 and 24 June 2023 at the University of Potsdam

CALL FOR ABSTRACTS

PLATFORMS

– exploring the elements and foundations of a new legal framework –

Digital platforms increasingly shape our lives - our legal and economic systems, as well as our leisure activities, information behavior and professional networking engagements. As a result, platforms also lay the architecture of our digital public sphere. The 8th *GRUR Junge Wissenschaft* conference is dedicated to the diverse and pressing legal issues associated with these platforms.

How, for instance, can we effectively protect copyright, when digital content can be copied with just a couple of mouse clicks and instantly reproduced via platforms? What responsibility does the platform operator bear as an enabler of such breaches of law? Here, long-standing debates on platform privileges and upload filters show that new enforcement mechanisms and accountability structures may be needed.

At the same time, the intricate mixture of private interactions, social leisure activities and large-scale public debates that take place on social media platforms blur and tangle legal perspectives on the core functions and nature of such social networks. Here too, legitimate commentary on or other fair use of protected content becomes ever more difficult to distinguish from breaches of intellectual property. While algorithms are increasingly expected to enforce intellectual property, the resulting conflicts with fundamental rights are pre-programmed and have not yet been resolved.

Similar conflicts arise when we turn to speech rights, pluralism and equal communicative opportunity in the digital sphere. The business model of many digital platforms creates a distinct class of private actors who not only participate in public discourse and other social interactions, much like traditional 'big players' (e.g., media houses). Instead, these actors set and define the very rules and conditions of these interactions (i.e., Twitter or Facebook's code of conduct). The resulting power imbalances concern media law (the adequate regulation of new media actors), but also the fundamental principles of contract law (A more stringent control of general terms and conditions? Due process-rights by virtue of general terms and conditions? Anti-discrimination law) and constitutional law (Fundamental rights against private actors? Free speech-rights of platforms?).

Several of these platforms are global players. They dominate the digital sphere, where their impact and de facto *normative power* already dwarfs that of many states. The economic strength and across-market power calls competition and antitrust law into play. But they also question many of its tools and mechanisms, as recent calls for new competition law tools or the regulation of Big Tech (Alphabet, Amazon, Apple, Meta, and Microsoft) show. Beyond competition policy and the recently enacted Digital Markets Act, *Platform Law* is quickly emerging as a dense new field of law, comprising of several new acts and legislative proposals – the Digital Services Act, Data Act, AI Act and the P2B Regulation to name just a few.

Often fundamental questions relating to these legislative and regulatory activities, lay dormant for too long or remain entirely unanswered. Such questions may address the general responsibility of digital platforms for interactions enabled by them, the suitability of pre-digital legal tools and methodology, or the question, if certain biases in algorithmic law enforcement can be adequately compensated by manual review procedures. We thus keenly welcome papers dedicated to such and other fundamental questions as well.

We look forward to contributions from the fields of **media, competition, information and data (protection), intellectual property, and constitutional law**. The perspectives of all legal disciplines pertaining to platforms as well as interdisciplinary contributions are equally welcome.

We look forward to receiving abstracts or paper proposals!

Please outline your topic and research question in English or German, in max. 2000 characters by

19 February 2023

via email to jungegrur2023@uni-potsdam.de

Presentations will be **20 minutes** in length. Conference papers will be published as an anthology by the **Nomos** Publishing House.

Prof. Dr. Johannes Buchheim, LL.M. (Yale)
Philipps-University Marburg

Dr. Viktoria Kraetzig
Goethe-University, Frankfurt am Main

Jun.-Prof. Dr. Juliane Mendelsohn
Technical University Ilmenau

Jun.-Prof. Dr. Björn Steinrötter
University of Potsdam

The conference is sponsored by

The evening reception is
sponsored by



Nomos

