

Call for Applications

Summer school on “Causation and Responsibility” with Sara Bernstein and Alex Kaiserman

July 26-30, 2021
University of Bern

Organizers:

Vera Hoffmann-Kolss (University of Bern)

Matthias Rolffs (University of Bern)

Causation and responsibility seem to be closely related. *Prima facie*, agents can be held responsible only for outcomes they caused. What is more, the degree to which agents can be held responsible for the outcomes of their actions seems to depend on *how much* they causally contributed to them. For instance, if two companies, A and B, jointly cause some environmental damage, their causal contributions may differ: it is possible that company A dumps more toxic waste or emits more greenhouse gases than company B. But then, it seems plausible to conclude that company A is more responsible for the damage resulting from these actions than company B.

It is vividly debated, however, how exactly this relationship is to be understood. Is causation really a necessary condition for responsibility? Is responsibility generally proportional to causal contribution? And what are the implications of this relationship for metaphysical theories of causation? The aim of this event is to discuss these issues with international experts in the field.

The event consists of three parts:

The first two days (July 26-27) will be devoted to a discussion of background texts introducing the topic.

The next 1.5 days (July 28-29) will feature sessions taught by two leading experts in the field: Sara Bernstein (Notre Dame) and Alex Kaiserman (Oxford). There will also be room for student presentations.

The final event (on July 29-30) will be a 1.5 day workshop with further invited speakers.

We invite applications by BA-, MA-, and doctoral students in philosophy and related subjects.

Please provide us with the following application material:

- A letter of motivation (max. 1 page), indicating why you are interested in attending the summer school and how you expect to benefit from it
- A short CV (max. two pages)

Please send your application as a single pdf to matthias.rolffs@philo.unibe.ch by April 16, 2021.

If you get accepted, you will be invited to participate in an online introductory session on May 21, 2021, 10am – 12pm.

We also plan to provide a limited number of travel bursaries.

For further information, see: www.philosophie.unibe.ch/car2021.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Matthias Rolffs (matthias.rolffs@philo.unibe.ch).

We currently plan to host an in-person event at the University of Bern. However, we are prepared to switch to an online solution, depending on the further development of the COVID-19 pandemic. Updates will follow.