

Donnerstag, 20.11.2025

16:15 -17:45 Uhr, **S06 S00 B41**

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***Beyond adulthood: child-centred research in Early
Childhood Education for Sustainability***

Since the declaration of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) in 1989, and particularly since the ‘paradigm shift’ in childhood studies spearheaded by James and Prout in 1997, phrases like “children’s participation” and “listening to children” are common within and outside of academia. More than 30 years later, however, research on childhood and children’s perspectives can still seem like an isolated branch within the social sciences, while in the domain of policy children can often be involved in a tokenistic, rather than meaningful way, which creates several contradictions. In the context of Early Childhood Education for Sustainability (ECEfS), for example, children can be perceived as vulnerable and in need of protection from the realities of climate change and social inequities, while at the same time educators are also tasked with ‘empowering children’ to tackle the present and future crises brought on by the Anthropocene. Focused on Vaghi’s doctoral research on food in kindergartens, and current work on economic sustainability in early childhood education and care (ECEC), the lecture interrogates why researching children’s perspectives on ‘adult topics’ is important, and how we can do this meaningfully.