



DOCTORAL THESIS

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IT FACULTY

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The Emergence of Digital Institutions

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Pervasive digitalization reshapes identities and processes of public sector providers, ranging from healthcare to education and justice. Recently, significant research attention has been given to such transformations, but still, there is more to learn about the mechanisms that may lead to the establishment of “digital institutions”. Building on a nine-year study of the Swedish Transport Administration and its efforts to grapple with emerging digital technology, this thesis seeks to provide insights into the dialectic between stability and change that many contemporary institutions encounter.

First, it identifies and demonstrate exogenous and endogenous digital innovation as a key trigger of transitions between cycles of institutional stability and change. Second, it conceptualizes and illustrates a transformative trajectory in which organizational responses first revolved around entrepreneurial initiatives, then manifested through the creation of a platform solution, and finally focused on the formation of digital strategies. These insights provide a theoretically grounded conceptualization and practical implications of evolving digital institutions, with a particular emphasis on the nature of boundary and practice work. As such, this thesis tells an important story about what the emergence of digital institutions might entail.



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