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Abstract

Many science systems are witnessing the rise of intermediary organizations with a coordinating mission, but to date a systematic understanding of their function and effects is lacking. The aim of this paper is to contribute to the understanding of the coordinating efforts of intermediary organizations. Starting from the definition of coordination as the establishment or strengthening of a relationship among the activities in a system, with the aim to enhance their common effectiveness, I develop a heuristic framework that facilitates the systematic analysis of coordination in science. I illustrate and substantiate my framework with the empirical case study of a Dutch coordination task force in the area of chemical technologies. Thanks to the framework I could disentangle a number of functions that this task force fulfils concerning research programming, funding allocation and supporting interactions and collaborations. This approach enabled me to systematically analyse a very heterogeneous set of processes that each deserve to be called coordination. The analysis yields a clear overview of eight coordination processes that are each described in terms of activities, intervention,

relationships, mechanisms and performance. I conclude my paper with suggestions for further research on coordination in the science system. (HRK / Abstract übernommen)