

## CFP for Special Issue

**Issue Theme:** Theorizing Media in Place/Nation Branding

**Journal:** *European Journal of Cultural Studies*

**Date of Publication:** TBD

**Guest Editors:** Göran Bolin & Galina Miazhevich

Since the late 1990s, nation branding has attracted growing interest from academics, professional consultants, and government actors. The ideas and practices of nation branding are frequently presented by branding advocates as necessary and even inevitable in light of changing dynamics of political power and influence in a globalized and media-saturated world. In this context, some have argued that nation branding is a way to reduce international conflict and supplant ethno-nationalism with a new form of market-based, national reputation management. However, a growing body of critical studies have documented that branding campaigns tend to produce ahistorical and exclusionary representations of the nation and advance a form of “commercial nationalism” that is no less problematic.

Importantly, the critical scholarship on nation branding has relied primarily on sociological and anthropological theories of nationhood, identities, and markets. By contrast, the particular role of the media – as institutions, industries, systems, networks, digital platforms, societal storytellers, cultural environments, and so on – has been under-theorized in relation to nation branding. The majority of the existing literature tends to treat the media as “neutral” vehicles for the delivery of branding messages to various audiences. This special issue seeks to problematize this overly simplistic view of the media and aims to draw connections between nation branding and existing, as well as new, theoretical conceptualizations of the media.

The issue invites contributions that connect the material and immaterial dimensions of nation branding to specific theorizations of media, conceived in a broad sense. Some theoretical approaches and concepts that are of interest include (but are not limited to):

- Media as systems and institutions
- Political economy of the media
- Cultural Studies / Reception Studies
- Normative theories of media and the public sphere
- Semiotics / Signs / Performativities
- Gendered and gendering media
- Media as discourses / texts
- Media as storytellers
- Media as materialities
- Media as technologies
- Networked media / data / protocols
- Media as environments and environments as media
- Mediatization of culture and society

The issue welcomes a variety of methodological perspectives and invites empirical studies as well as theoretical essays. However, all contributions – regardless of their approach – must articulate and theorize the various ways in which “media” are an integral part of nation branding. The essays may explore both the enabling and the inhibiting potentialities of media as they perpetuate nation branding ideas, images, ideologies, discourses, and practices.

Please send a 500-word abstract and a one-paragraph bio for each author to the guest editors Göran Bolin ([goran.bolin@sh.se](mailto:goran.bolin@sh.se)) & Galina Miazhevich ([gm223@leicester.ac.uk](mailto:gm223@leicester.ac.uk)) by 31 October 2015.

#### Tentative Completion Timeline

- Abstracts due: 31 October 2015
- First paper drafts due: Summer 2016
- In person workshop of selected papers: Fall 2016
- Revisions and submission for anonymous review
- Final papers due some time in 2017