Philipp Felsch  

*Petermann’s Paperwork. Conquering the North Pole at home*

The talk will consider the case of August Petermann, Prussian cartographer in English service, who altered the course of arctic exploration in the second half of the 19th century. Combing the rich archive of Northern travel literature with cartographic methods adopted from his mentor Alexander von Humboldt, Petermann conjectured the existence of a warm polar sea -- with far-ranging consequences. His example highlights the impact of paperwork on the turn-of-the-century race to North Pole.