



Inside ISTR

INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR THIRD-SECTOR RESEARCH

Tenth Asia Pacific Regional Conference ISTR

Call for Contributions

“GLOBAL CHALLENGES AND SUSTAINABILITY IN THE ASIA PACIFIC: THE ROLE OF THE THIRD SECTOR”

Jakarta, 4-5 December 2017

Pullman Hotel Central Park

Hosted by CECT Trisakti University

EXTENDED Proposal Submission Deadline:

31 August 2017

The third sector is a well-established, diverse and growing component of most Asian and Pacific societies. Specifically, third sector organisations in some countries are forced to change their funding sources from purely donation-reliant to become more independent by undertaking social enterprise activities that generate income. Third Sector organisations are also required to act more professionally. This enables them to collaborate with the private sector so that this becomes an alternate source of funding, for example, through Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) funding.

Research in the fields of third sector, social enterprise and CSR is ever expanding, particularly in countries that have undergone substantial transformations in their economies and governance. However, there are constant, often overwhelming, global challenges that confront the operation and success of the third sector in the contemporary world.

This conference is an opportunity to showcase exciting new practice developments and research that seek to establish sustainable roles and cope with global challenges for third sector organizations in the many diverse countries that make up the region. We are very keen to see a wide range of papers that encompass applied research, practice research and theoretical advances and explorations in all aspects of this dynamic field.



ISTR Asia Pacific Conference Streams

Researchers are invited to submit papers under the following streams:

- Sustainable Well-Being: Welfare, Education and Health and the Third Sector
- Civil Society and Democratization
- Social Enterprise
- Philanthropy
- Corporate Social Responsibility
- Partnerships and Collaborations
- Global Challenges to Third Sector Sustainability
- Developing Southern Theory for Third Sector Studies
- Sustainable Development Goals
- Emerging Areas of Theory and Practice

PhD Seminar (2-3 December 2017)

Continuing a tradition now well established for the ISTR International Conferences, we are, for the first time, going to hold a PhD seminar for research students from the Asia Pacific Region. This is an excellent opportunity for research students to gain advice and broaden their research horizons with experienced academics from a diverse range of countries in the region and to build important networks with fellow research students.

The PhD Seminar will be held in Jakarta on 2-3 December 2017, at MM-CSR Trisakti University Campus, hosted by CECT Trisakti University.

The template for the PhD seminar can be downloaded at by clicking **HERE**. The deadline for submissions is 31 August 2017.

Submission and Selection of Abstract

Proposals of Abstracts are welcomed for Conference and Panels (pre-arranged) of 3-4 papers are welcomed.

Format of Abstract:

All Abstract should:

- indicate the problems or issues the research addresses and relating it to the literature
- briefly outline the methodology used in the research
- provide indication of main findings to date
- include bibliographies
- Abstracts should be between 500 to 800 words in length (excluding bibliography)
- All abstracts should be prepared and written in English using the ABSTRACT Conference Paper or Panel Template SUBMISSION FORM (see below to download the forms)
- Conference and Panels will be organised in parallel sessions

Special Note on Panel Submissions:

A panel submission is a proposal for a coordinated set of papers (usually 3 or 4 in number) on a particular topic or issue. Please note that panel proposals require an abstract identifying and justifying the theme of the panel as well as a full abstract for each panel paper. Panel proposals that do not include full abstracts and author information for each paper will

not be considered. The person submitting the panel proposal must be willing to act as the panel coordinator and ensure that all proposed paper presenters commit to attending the conference. Please note that papers which are part of a submitted panel cannot be submitted separately as an individual submission. If the submission is submitted twice by the same author it will be rejected.

- Submissions by practitioners, young scholars, and doctoral students engaged in research are very welcome
- All authors and presenters must formally register for the conference
- You must download the conference Paper or Panel ABSTRACT TEMPLATE SUBMISSION FORM. For the PAPER submission form, click **HERE**. For the PANEL submission form, click **HERE**.
- Submit abstracts to: ISTR_Secretariat@jhu.edu
- All submissions meeting the requirements (paper, panel, or poster) will be subject to a blind review
- Only proposals of sufficient research quality and that are relevant to the aforementioned conference themes will be accepted

IMPORTANT DATES

Extended Deadline for PhD Seminar Abstract submission: **31 August 2017**

Notification of acceptance/rejection to PhD students and authors: **25 September 2017**

Deadline for conference registration: **1 November 2017**

Deadline for final submission of papers: **15 November 2017**

Conference starts: **4 December 2017**

PhD SEMINAR 2018

Amsterdam, Netherlands
 July 8 - 10, 2018
 VU University Amsterdam

Call for Applications

ISTR is pleased to announce the fourth ISTR PhD Seminar preceding the 13th International Conference in Amsterdam, The Netherlands in July 2018.

The ISTR PhD Seminar is a recurring event that takes place bi-annually in conjunction with the international conference. The ISTR PhD Seminar is open to all doctoral students in the field of third sector and civil society research, across the different regions in the world, and at all stages of their doctoral research. The aim of the workshop is to provide doctoral students with the opportunity to receive extensive intellectual and methodological advice on their doctoral research, to introduce them to main theories and developments in the field, to reflect upon publication and career strategies, and to provide a unique opportunity to network with junior and senior scholars within the international ISTR research community.

More specifically, the seminar will consist of both plenary sessions with presentations by leading scholars in the field, and parallel group sessions in which the participants have the opportunity to present and discuss their doctoral research with peers, junior and senior faculty. Participants will be grouped thematically, but the group composition will be heterogeneous in terms of concrete research topics, disciplinary background, research stage, method, and regional affiliation.

The seminar is limited to a group of (up to) 50 doctoral students. Applicants must be members of ISTR and register and attend the conference. Students are encouraged to submit abstracts to the conference (see the call [Here](#)). The ISTR PhD Seminar will start with an afternoon session followed by an informal dinner on Sunday afternoon, July 8, 2018. Plenary and group sessions will take place on Monday, July 9 and Tuesday, July 10 (in the morning). Participants are expected to arrive on Sunday July 8.

ISTR will cover two nights of accommodation (Sunday July 8 and Monday July 9) as well as coffee breaks and meals during the Seminar.

ISTR will not cover or refund travel costs. Efforts are under way to secure travel subsidies for a limited number of participants. ISTR will offer conference registration subsidies and discounted registration conference fees (applications will be accepted for these in February 2018). Please check back for updates.



Eligibility and selection criteria

To be eligible for participation, applicants should be:

- Enrolled as a doctoral student [all stages of the doctoral research are allowed]
- Working in the field of third sector and civil society research [all academic disciplines are invited]
- A member of ISTR for 2018/19 and register and attend the 2018 conference (immediately following the PhD seminar)
- Able to participate in the entire PhD Seminar from Sunday afternoon to Tuesday around noon as well as the conference from Tuesday to Friday
- Be prepared to present and discuss their doctoral work with peers and faculty, and to participate in an active and constructive way in group discussions
- (ISTR 2017 membership is not required for application submission)

Application process

Submissions will be accepted online at https://istr.site-ym.com/page/PhD_Online_Sub by **September 29, 2017**.

All applications must include the following information:

- Full name and gender
- Contact details (including e-mail and phone number)
- Disciplinary background
- Institutional affiliation and name(s) of the supervisor(s)
- Working title of PhD project and formal start/end dates
- Indication of the stage of your research
- Abstract of PhD research (min. 500 – max. 800)



words)

- The abstract must include research questions, theoretical framework, methods, and results if already applicable
- Letter from the faculty advisor providing information about the quality of the candidate as well as specific information about how participation in the PhD seminar would benefit their doctoral studies
- A brief description (100-150 words) of your motivation to participate in the ISTR PhD Seminar
- Questions you would like to be discussed at the seminar

- Keywords

ISTR will consider all applications that meet the eligibility criteria. In line with ISTR's mission to build a global community of scholars and subscribe to the values of diversity and pluralism, participants in the ISTR PhD Seminar will be representative in terms of gender and region, as well as disciplines and stages in the PhD process.

For further inquiries, please contact the ISTR Secretariat (istr@jhu.edu).

Selected applicants will be notified by November 3, 2017.

ISTR Africa Network Meets in Accra, Ghana

The ISTR Africa Network meeting took place at the University of Ghana Business School in Accra, Ghana (21-23 June 2017) with 21 papers presented on the theme of “Civil Society and Philanthropy in Africa: Contexts, Contradictions, Possibilities.” Parallel sessions included African Traditional Giving and Philanthropy, Religious and Nonprofit Giving, Ethics and Philanthropy, and Service Delivery and Philanthropy. Sessions included Lightning Talks on Promoting an African Philanthropic Culture from a Foundation and Technology Perspective as well as panel on Mobilizing African Giving to Achieve the Sustainable Development Goals in Africa. The conference program is [Here](#).

The Keynote address, “Giving in Africa,” was given by Professor Adam Habib, Vice Chancellor, University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa. Professor Habib focused on the need to improve the role of civil society and philanthropy in Africa and encouraged researchers to challenge the current African narratives. The full speech can be found [Here](#).

A full day PhD workshop prioritized young African researchers by providing knowledge and tools to develop their research capacity. The workshop provided the opportunity for PhD students to engage with other researchers and receive mentorship from a broad spectrum of experienced researchers and



scholars. One session focused on career, networking and alliance building with presentations on how to get into a PhD programme, surviving a PhD programme and what to anticipate during and after a PhD programme. Additional sessions focused on how to connect with scholars and professionals in their respective fields of study, as well as tips for writing and publishing in academia. There were also small groups working on PhD research questions as well

as larger groups organized by PhD year to address their questions and concerns.

The highlight of the conference was the space provided in an African University for researchers to meet and exchange ideas and knowledge about civil society and philanthropy.

ISTRAN Conference: My Personal Reflections

Jonathan Makuwira, Professor of Development Studies, Nelson Mandela University, South Africa

I have always been fascinated with anything “civil society” not just because my doctoral study was to do with NGOs but also because the discourse around the concept of ‘civil society’ itself is, indeed, loaded with lots of contradictions. When I first read the 4th ISTR Africa Regional Network conference flyer, and to learn about the conference key-

note speaker, I felt encouraged to attend the conference.

Prior to attending the conference, I had already engaged with West Africa Civil Society Institute (WACSI) website which, I must admit, impressed me not only because of their active facilitation for the WACSI-ISTRAN conference but also because of the manner in which the Institute articulates some of the issues around the role of civil society in development in general.

Coming to Accra, Ghana, for the third time was a huge motivation. When I first came to Ghana in 2011, the driver who picked me from the airport said “welcome to

a free country." Therefore, I came; very eager to listen to how issues of civil society and philanthropy were to be discussed. Having worked for a National NGO Coordinating body in Malawi was, in itself, a motivation as I prepared myself for the conference. It gave me an opportunity to compare and contrast what is happening in West Africa to some parts of Southern Africa region.

Looking at the program, I could sense that it was going to be a unique space for what I want to call a 'special conversation' because of the diversity of topics, presenters and, indeed, the obvious linkage between civic debate and the new push for African philanthropy. Very often the success of a conference is dependent on the tone set by the keynote speech. Professor Adam Habib's presentation just did that. Personally the theme on "Civil Society and Philanthropy in Africa: Context, Contradiction and Possibilities," would be a remiss if it did not make a strong statement as one by Prof Habib:

Reflections of civil society in Africa, and a research agenda in this regard, needs to grapple with this specific development challenge and dilemma. It needs to focus on how civic institutions can enhance the accountability of elites, both political and economic, to the citizenry, so that not only are financial flows contained, but resources are disbursed in a manner that enables inclusive economic development. In this regard, there is much to learn from the global academic literature on civil society, but there is also much to enrich it with from the civic experiences within Africa (Habib, 2017, p. 2).

As is usually the case with many conferences, 'concurrent sessions' are always a headache. One has to decide to stick with one theme or move around like a molecule (if I can borrow from my little Physics), in an attempt to capture as much interesting stuff as possible. When such a thing happens, there is often one conclusion; the topics are interesting and catchy. This was the case with me. I found many of the topics in the various themes very exciting and

enriching. What was even more comforting was the relevance of some of the papers which I found to be responsive to the many issues in contemporary Africa.

Like Adam Habib's quote above, there is just too much academic literature (Theory) out there yet there is very little reflection on the 'stories from the field' (Practice). For me, as an academic and a development practitioner (Pracademic), there were two major highlights from this conference – the discussion on the Community of Practice, which allowed participants to reflect on the theory;

and the PhD workshop. The time allocated to these themes provided a good platform for a deeper conversation to unmask the tension between theory and practice. Likewise, the study on civil society needs a strong impetus. This is why I commend ISTRAN and the entire conference organisers to have decided to have special session for postgraduate students. This is a 'pool' from where we can develop and nurture future theorists – people who can advance and tease the tensions, contradictions and possibilities through

research. As someone heading a Department of Development Studies, it is very difficult to find people who can either supervise any topics gravitating around civil society discourse or examine a thesis in this area of scholarship.

Lastly, I reflect on a few conversations I really wanted to accomplish – that of establishing networks. Often, this goes beyond just an exchange of business cards. This conference was perhaps one where I had meaningful networking not just because I was able to meet the Dean of the Business School but also the Pro-Vice Chancellor, Research, Innovation and Development at University of Ghana – incredible for a short notice. All in all, this was perhaps one of my best conference for a while. Keep it up folks and well done ISTR and WACSI.

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Jonathan Makuwira

Member Insight

Titilope F Ajayi

“If it takes a community to raise a child, it takes an academic network to make a scholar.”

Participant at 2017 ISTR Africa Regional Network meeting

I had worked in civil society for some eight years before it occurred to me that I could study it as a thematic field. This journey began during my tenure as head of research at the West Africa Civil Society Institute where I first met Ebenezer Obadare, professor of sociology at Kansas State University and longtime ISTR member. When he invited me to contribute a reflective chapter on civil society in West Africa to his edited volume, *The Handbook of Civil Society in Africa*, two things happened. I learned, in drawing on my civil society experiences, both how much I knew and how much I still had to learn about civil society. Second, and more importantly for the purpose of this insight, there birthed in me a hunger to pursue my civil society impulses that would lead me to the ISTR and remains with me to this day.

I do not remember clearly how I first encountered ISTR, but I will not quickly forget my delight at the wealth of resources that I found when I first visited www.istr.org—it was just what I needed at that point in my trajectory as a civil society scholar. My first ISTR event was the Africa regional meeting in Accra in 2016 where I served as discussant for a paper on civil society and democracy in Nigeria, a thoroughly gratifying experience. Thereafter, I presented my work on religious philanthropy in Ghana at the 2017



Titilope F. Ajayi

Africa regional meeting, also in Accra, where I met lots of fellow civil society enthusiasts at different career stages and took part in a PhD seminar that was very enriching. At both events, the seeds were sown for networks and partnerships that are yielding fruit today and will do so for years to come.

In light of my opening quote, I have observed from interacting with other ISTR members how pivotal to their careers their relationships with other members have been. In my case, this is no different. My interactions with colleagues have helped to broaden my understanding of civil society in ways that certainly contributed to me being selected as a doctoral fellow for the 2017/8 Social Science Research Council's **Next Generation Social Sciences in Africa** program. The SSRC program addresses the inadequate number of faculty with PhDs in universities in six African countries by supporting new thinking in peace, security, and development research from the African continent. Because ISTR has been so helpful to me, I have recommended membership in the association to many others and will continue to do so. For their interest in and support for my work, I am very thankful to Ebenezer Obadare and ISTR executive director, Margery Daniels.

Titilope is an independent writer-copyeditor and PhD student of international affairs at the University of Ghana. A 2017/8 SSRC doctoral fellow, she has been an ISTR member since 2013. Email: tfaajayi001@st.u.edu.gh

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