Call For Papers
75th Annual ICA Conference

Theme
ICA@75: Disrupting and Consolidating Communication Research

Addressing ICA’s 75th anniversary, the 2025 conference theme is an invitation to critically reflect on communication studies as a discipline and ICA as an agent and site of disciplinary development. Theme sessions will take stock of our past, critically review present developments, and chart out future avenues for communication research. We particularly welcome contributions speaking to three important aspects of the theme: communication scholarship as a transformative and stabilizing force in society, as a research practice that can be both revolutionary and consolidating, and communication studies as a disrupted and resilient discipline. In all these contexts, elements of disruption and consolidation are not necessarily antithetical but may productively be framed as a dialectical relationship.

ICA has made significant strides in amplifying the visibility of communication scholarship beyond academia. From democratic backsliding to climate change and conflict transformation, our discipline is poised to provide relevant answers to many burning questions of our time. Through public scholarship, communication scholars can make themselves useful by addressing the problems of the world’s current polycrisis. They may act as a transformative voice in society (by advocating social change) and as a stabilizing force (by maintaining democracy or social justice). A key issue in this context is the sometimes troubled relationship between scholarship and advocacy.

Submission Link
www.icahdq.org

Denver, Colorado, USA | 12-16 June 2025
The public impact of scholarship is typically connected to a discipline’s ability to generate original knowledge. During the past 75 years, communication research has exponentially grown in terms of quantity. However, across a variety of disciplines and academic fields, such expansion is mostly attributed to the growth in studies that consolidate existing knowledge, pushing aside disruptive and revolutionary scholarship that forges new directions and breaks existing paradigms. The progressive fragmentation of the discipline may have contributed to this trend, along with persisting social and global inequalities in academia as well as a publication and review culture that tends to disadvantage certain types of research and scholarly communities, including those from the Global South.

Communication research is facing these issues while itself being disrupted on multiple fronts and, perhaps, with unprecedented consequences. AI-based technologies have started revolutionizing scholarly practice with vast implications for the way we conduct and evaluate scholarship. In addition to high levels of insecurity and precarity, researchers face growing demands to publish in prestigious venues, obtain large grants, and participate in reviewing and evaluations, all putting heavy mental strain on scholars. Through this call, we encourage the discipline to think about possible ways to consolidate our research environment by growing resilience and developing effective coping strategies.

In this spirit, we invite submissions for papers and panel proposals that address the conference theme along the lines of the outlined three areas. Submissions may address, but are not limited to, the following issues and topics:

- Strategies to increase the visibility and impact of communication scholarship addressing the problems of our time
- The relationship between scholarship and advocacy as well as obstacles to public scholarship and ways to overcome them
- Research-based disruptions of dominant theories guiding communication inquiry
- Historical trajectories of communication scholarship that have disrupted other fields of research and where communication studies has been disrupted by other disciplines
- The cross-fertilization of communication research through disruptions originating from within
- Research-based disruptions of dominant modes of communication inquiry from the Global South
- The impact of AI on the conduct and evaluation of communication scholarship
- The political economy of scholarship for the discipline’s ability to generate original knowledge
- Assessments of growing academic demands and the resulting mental toll
- Strategies to grow resilience and cultivate solidarity networks among various academic communities