Call for Papers

ICA PRECONFERENCE

Public Relations Division

Bridging inequality gaps

in public relations and strategic communication:

Power, ethics and inclusion

June 3rd, 2026

Hosted by

Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT)

Programme, June 3rd 2026

TIME	SESSION	TITLE
08:30–09:00	*Registration*	
09:00–09:15	Opening session	
09:15–10:45	Session 1	**Preparing Communicators for Unequal Futures**
	Session 2	**Visibility and Voice in Public Arenas**
10:45–11:00	*Coffee break*	
11:00–12:30	Session 3	**Lived Experience as Communication Knowledge**
	Session 4	**When Professional Practice Reproduces Exclusion**
12:30–13:30	*Lunch*	
13:30–15:00	Session 5	**Governing Communicative Inequality in Platformed Environments**
	Session 6	**Territories of Voice and Resistance**
15:00–15:15	*Coffee break*	
15:15–16:30	Collective session	**From Inequality Gaps to a Research Agenda**

ADDRESS: CPUT Cape Town Hotel School and Restaurant

48 Beach Road, Mouille Point, Granger Bay, Cape Town

https://maps.app.goo.gl/tgyQLpgdWUyf4kvV9

09:15-10:45

Session 1
Preparing Communicators for Unequal Futures

Session chair: *Franzisca Weder*

- **Operationalising Purposeful PR Education through collaboration: A Social TV case study**
  Dalien Rene Benecke, University of Johannesburg, South Africa
- **Radical Pedagogy and Transformative Agency in Sustainability Transitions. Learnings from and for Professional Communication Education**
  Franzisca Weder, Vienna University of Economics and Business, Austria; Florentina Höhs, Vienna University of Economics and Business, Austria
- **AI Integration in South African Strategic Communication: Disparities in Graduate Preparedness, Industry Expectations, and Academic Responses**
  Mwenge Ibrahim Lukombe, University of Johannesburg, South Africa; Caroline Muyaluka Azionya, University of Johannesburg, South Africa
- **Co-Creation at Scale: Uneven Grounds, Shared Futures in Global Communication Research**
  Ana Adi, Quadriga University of Applied Sciences, Germany
- **Communicative Inequality and Narrative Intervention: Student Strategic Communication in Local Economic Contexts**
  Eloisa Klein, Universidade Federal do Pampa, Brazil

Session 2
Visibility and Voice in Public Arenas

Session chair: *Anna Oksiutycz*

- **Elite voices, silent citizens: Opinion media and discursive lobbying in Chile's Constituent Convention**
  Claudia Labarca, Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile, Chile; Consuelo Vásquez, UQAM, Canada; Cecilia Claro, Universidad de los Andes Chile, Chile
- **Public Engagement with Monetary Policy Decisions: A Case of the South African Reserve Bank's Use of Platform X**
  Mahlatse Mahlase, University of Johannesburg, South Africa; Vhangani Mabada, University of Johannesburg, South Africa; **Anna Oksiutycz**, University of Johannesburg, South Africa
- **Visual Disobedience as Power: Analysing the news images of the Fovse protest coverage**
  Inker-Anni Sara, Sami University of Applied Sciences, Norway; Eli Skogerbo, University of Oslo, Norway; **Katerina Tsetsura**, University of Oklahoma, USA
- **Communicative Regeneration as Power Redistribution: Rethinking Publics, Territory and Agency**
  Belén Barroso, Universidad de Málaga, Spain; **Alejandro Álvarez-Nobell**, Universidad de Málaga, Spain; Isabel Ruiz-Mora, Universidad de Málaga, Spain

11:00-12:30

Session 3

Lived Experience as Communication Knowledge *Session chair: Roela Hattingh*

- **Resilience in Marginalized Communities during Crises: A Literature Review of Communication Scholarship**
  Hui Zhao, Aarhus University, Denmark; **Jesper Falkheimer**, Lund University, Sweden
- **Telling our own stories of inequality: The lived experiences of honours graduates in South Africa**
  Lucinda Sutton, North-West University, South Africa
- **Questioning "Youth" Perspective(s) in South Africa: a Q study**
  Nyiko Sibusiso Sithole, University of Johannesburg, South Africa; **Roela Hattingh**, University of Johannesburg, South Africa; Dominique Dix-Peek, Independent Consultant and Researcher, South Africa
- **Her Land, Her Voice: Co-Creating Inclusive Climate Policies and Capacity Pathways with Indigenous Women in East Sumba, Indonesia**
  Anne Gregory, University of Huddersfield, UK; Dominggus E. Li, Institute of Resource Governance and Social Change, Indonesia; **Gregoria A. Yudarwati**, Universitas Atma Jaya Yogyakarta, Indonesia; Jialin (Snow) Wu, University of Huddersfield, UK; Pupung Arifin, Universitas Atma Jaya Yogyakarta, Indonesia
- **Communicative power in multicultural workplaces in southern Sweden**
  Leysan Storie, Lund University, Sweden; Mozhgan Zachrison, Kristianstad University, Sweden

Session 4

When Professional Practice Reproduces Exclusion *Session chair: Teela Clayton*

- **Reproducing Inequality Without Consensus: Power and Professional Cultural Logics in Indian Political Public Relations Practice**
  Mark Rasquinha, Auckland University of Technology, New Zealand; Helen Sissons, Auckland University of Technology, New Zealand
- **Identity-based ethical dilemmas and subsequent unethical behaviors in public relations: A process model of moral disengagement**
  Ahmed Gaara, Erasmus University, Netherlands
- **The Architecture of Exclusion: How Ritualised Communication Reinforces Hegemonic Repertoires**
  Teela Clayton, Leeds Beckett University, UK
- **Invisibility of Inequality: Beneficiary narratives in CSR communication**
  Sajan PK, Indian Institute of Management, India; Richard Rego, St. Joseph's University, India

13:30-15:00

Session 5

Governing Communicative Inequality in Platformed Environments

Session chair: *Mathew Gillings*

- **AI platforms as public communication infrastructures: Public relations and communicative inequality**
  Anca Anton, University of Bucharest, Romania
- **Ethical Inequalities in AI Influencer Endorsements: Power, Transparency, and Consumer Well-Being in Strategic Communication**
  Juan Mundel, Michigan State University, USA; Anna McAlister, Michigan State University, USA; **Patricia Huddleston**, Michigan State University, USA
- **Negotiating Authenticity in AI-Assisted Crisis Responses through a Care Lens**
  Jessica Shaw, Temple University, USA; **Lucinda Austin**, University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill, USA
- **Silences and Voices in AI Implementation: Strategic Communication and Equity Governance in South African Higher Education/Universities**
  Abyshey Nhedzi, University of Johannesburg, South Africa; Francisca Ayuk Ndipakpat Agho, Boston Media House, South Africa
- **"Building a more informed, innovative, and impactful communication ecosystem": Exploring the state of the art of professional communication in Ghana**
  Mathew Gillings, Vienna University of Economics and Business, Austria; Daniel Edem Adzovie, University of Cape Coast, Ghana; **Jens Seiffert-Brockmann**, Vienna University of Economics and Business, Austria

Session 6

Territories of Voice and Resistance

Session chair: *Steven Smith*

- **Defending Water in Wirikuta: Narrative Inequality and Strategic Communication along a Sacred Route**
  Javier Palacios Fenech, EAE Business School Barcelona, Spain; **Katerina Tsetsura**, University of Oklahoma, USA
- **Appropriating Activism**
  Mhairi Rundell, University of Salzburg, Austria
- **Circular for Whom? Strategic Communication and Inequality in Circular Economy Transitions**
  Tatiana Tolusso, IULM University, Italy
- **Strategic-Communication Leadership as a Socially Co-Constructed Practice: Explaining Communicative Inequality in Saudi Arabia**
  Steven Smith, University of Johannesburg, South Africa; **Dalien Rene Benecke**, University of Johannesburg, South Africa; **Anne Gregory**, University of Huddersfield, UK
- **From Scene Collaboration to Value Co-Creation: Governing Equitable Access in Public-Facing Science Learning**
  Zhou Shihan, University of Science and Technology of China, China

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15:15-16:30

Collective session
From Inequality Gaps to a Research Agenda

- Publication options
- Main conceptual threads emerging from the preconference – reflection, discussion and research agenda development

Looking forward to welcoming you in Cape Town!

Rene Benecke, University of Johannesburg, South Africa

Anca Anton, University of Bucharest, Romania

Jesper Falkheimer, Lund University, Sweden

Alice Cheng, North Carolina State University, USA

Cindy Ngai, Hong Kong Polytechnic University, Hong Kong

Caroline Azionya, University of Johannesburg, South Africa

Nirvana Bechan, Cape Peninsula University of Technology, South Africa

Deidre Porthen, Cape Peninsula University of Technology, South Africa

Useful information

Venue: CPUT Cape Town Hotel School and Restaurant,
https://www.cput.ac.za/cths

Venue address: 48 Beach Road, Mouille Point, Granger Bay, Cape Town

Google Maps link to the preconference venue:
https://maps.app.goo.gl/tgyQLpgdWUyf4kvV9

Google Maps link to the preconference venue (from the main conference):
https://maps.app.goo.gl/Kphc8qrN5auKasYt7

Preconference e-mail address:
bridginggapsconf@gmail.com