CALL FOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Fourteenth International Conference of the
International Society for Third Sector Research (ISTR)

12 July – 15 July 2021

Global Civil Society in Uncertain Times: Strengthening Diversity and Sustainability

ISTR is accepting submissions for the new sub-theme:

Collective Action and Responsiveness in the
Global Context

DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS: 30 NOVEMBER 2020

Civil society plays a crucial part in how the world responds to crises and in the last year we have seen just how important those responses have been. Every aspect of the third sector has been challenged and affected by recent transnational demands, including the challenges of the coronavirus and other pandemics, climate change and forced migrations. These challenges threaten democratic ideals and can result in the closure of civil spaces. Such complex emergencies are in urgent need of collective action through advocacy, philanthropy, volunteering, social enterprise and partnerships with states. Responses must occur in timely and sustainable ways to address these challenges. This conference is an opportunity to present important research and strategies that are central to the present and future of the third sector.

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This notice serves to invite interested parties to submit abstracts for contributions to the 14th International Conference to be held online from 12 - 15 July 2021. **This call for submissions is only for the new theme 'Collective Action and Responsiveness in the Global Context.'**

ISTR and the Conference

Founded in 1992, ISTR is a global community of scholars, policymakers, and third sector leaders dedicated to the creation, discussion, and advancement of knowledge pertaining to the Third Sector and its impact on civil society, public policy and local communities.

Civil society plays a crucial part in promoting cosmopolitan ideals of collective responsibility, global citizenship, tolerance, inclusivity, and sustainability. These ideals are increasingly

important in a divided, less tolerant, and uncertain world in which States erect physical and legal barriers in order to exclude outsiders, in which governments erode citizenship rights and welfare entitlements, in which leading politicians openly challenge independent institutions such as universities and the free press, and in which disinterested expertise and authority are assailed by populist forces.

These are issues of global and ubiquitous importance but they provoke civil society initiatives which take various forms and which operate at all geographical scales, from social movements and alliances of NGOs that cross borders and continents, to small-scale initiatives to relieve destitution and promote solidarity.

The conference call invites proposals that respond to these broad themes. If we consider various dimensions of intolerance we can see crucial roles for civil society in relation to:

1. Sustainability: intolerance and self-interest extends to scepticism about climate change and the associated environmental degradation. Voluntary action has often been referred to as an "essential renewable resource" for social development; civil society groups play essential roles in raising awareness of environmental issues and developing innovative responses to them.

2. Diversity: in a globalised world, diverse social groups are brought into proximity on a previously unknown scale, provoking social tensions and challenging the solidarity, which underpins the welfare state. There is a crucial role for the third sector and civil society here, in promoting global citizenship and creating social innovations through which diverse groups are brought together and the needs of strangers are met. This includes diversity in all its forms and it includes initiatives that promote a range of social solidarities across boundaries of class, disability, ethnicity, gender, age, religion, and sexual orientation.

3. Expertise and authority: intolerance encompasses a radical scepticism about independent expertise and civil society plays a central role in challenging this. It does so by providing authoritative expertise and advocacy, particularly on behalf of minority causes and groups, and offering a bulwark against fake news.

4. Social innovation and welfare: in this unpromising and intolerant context, civil society organisations play crucial roles as sources of welfare and social innovation, often being on the front line of responding to immediate needs (e.g. destitution), and in providing novel solutions in circumstances in which the state has withdrawn from previously-accepted responsibilities.

Paper, poster, and panel proposals from around the world are invited in response to the overall conference focus as they relate to the many, diverse and interconnected theme areas that are characteristic of third sector research. For the purposes of the ISTR International Conference, the third sector is broadly defined, including: NGOs, non-profit organizations, voluntary associations, social economy organizations, community organizations, self-help and mutual

organizations, civil society organizations, foundations, philanthropy, and other manifestations of civil society globally and locally, for example networks and social forums, unions, religious organizations, co-operatives, and volunteering.

The focus of the 2021 conference

We welcome papers which consider the roles of NGOs, third sector and civil society organizations, broadly defined, in relation to the following themes, but proposals related to other topics are also encouraged:

- Civil Society, State and Markets in Democratic Contexts
- Challenges and Opportunities of Advocacy and Campaigning in an Era of "Fake News"
- **Collective Action and Responsiveness in the Global Context**
- Governance, Management, Adaptation and Sustainability of Organizations
- Hybridity, Legitimacy and the Third Sector
- Models of Philanthropy and Voluntarism
- Social Movements and Political Participation in Authoritarian and Austere Times
- Development and Sustainability: The Role of Civil Society
- Diversity, Inequalities and Civil Society
- Social Economy, Social Innovation and the Third Sector
- Emerging Areas of Theory, Pedagogy and Practice

General Information

Forms of Participation: Papers, Panels, Roundtable, and Posters

Contributions may take the form of a **paper, a panel, a roundtable, or a poster**. Please indicate your choice of presentation when you submit your abstract.

Abstract Submissions

To be considered for review, **an abstract of not more than 500 words** must include:
- A statement of the empirical or theoretical concern.
- A short summary locating the concern within a wider literature.
- A concise account of the empirical or theoretical methodological approach.
- The main arguments of the paper and an indication of the supporting evidence.
- A statement of the main conclusions and their relevance to an international audience.

References are not included in the 500-word count and can be listed in the 'Additional Information' section of the online submission portal.

Abstracts not meeting these requirements will be declined by the ISTR Conference Committee. Sample abstracts are available for review on our conference web page.

Please note: Abstracts will be accepted in both English and French and Spanish. The primary language of the conference is English, however, to welcome local participation, there will be some panels conducted in French and Spanish.

Submissions for Panels, Papers and Posters

All panel, papers and poster proposals for the Conference must be submitted using ISTR's online submission service. You will be required to choose one of the conference themes which best fits your abstract.

To submit your paper or poster abstract using this service, go to the ISTR website – www.istr.org/Virtual2021 - and follow the link for 'Submit a Proposal.'

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.

Special Note on Posters and Poster Submissions

A poster proposal is an alternative to presenting a full research paper. New researchers in particular are invited to share work-in-progress by means of a poster if they wish. This is an opportunity to display a poster about completed and/or ongoing research. Posters will be displayed online throughout the conference and a designated session will be scheduled in which participants can meet with authors to discuss their work. Full instructions on poster formats will be provided to those accepted for presentation.

Special Note on Roundtable Submissions

Roundtables encourage discussion and interaction among delegates. The roundtable format offers short (max. 10 minute) presentations around a common theme, with ample time for discussion. Proposals should include details on the theme or topic of discussion and its relevance, along with the names of the organizers/participants. Roundtables typically include no more than five (5) presenters. Please describe what each presenter is expected to contribute.

Innovative roundtable formats are invited. To propose content using a new session format,

please provide a description of the format and how the session will function. Then provide a description of the proposed content, including the topic(s), its relevance to the Third Sector, and the names of the organizers/presenters. Please describe how each presenter is expected to contribute.

Review of Submissions

All submissions will be subject to a blind review by at least two independent reviewers.

Authors will be advised by the end of January 2021 whether their abstract has been accepted.

ALL AUTHORS INCLUDING <u>ALL</u> PANELISTS MUST REGISTER FOR THE CONFERENCE BY MARCH 15, 2021, TO HAVE THEIR PRESENTATION SCHEDULED IN THE CONFERENCE PROGRAM.

The completed paper must be submitted to the session moderator by June 1, 2021, to provide adequate time for moderators to read the paper and to allow for a more fulsome discussion. In addition, authors are requested to send their paper to Secretariat@istr.org by June 1, 2021, or upload via the conference website.

Post-Conference Publication and Working Paper Opportunities

Following the conference, authors are invited to revise their papers in the light of conference feedback with an eye to an appropriate submission to *Voluntas*, the peer-reviewed official journal of ISTR, or any other journals in the field. Publication decisions are the sole discretion of such journals and ISTR does not participate in the editorial decisions on such submissions.

Authors can also submit their papers to be reviewed for selection for publication in the *ISTR Conference Working Papers Series* to be published after the conference on the ISTR website.

Questions?

Any questions on abstract submissions for papers, panels, and posters, and any other aspect of the ISTR 14th International Conference should be directed to ISTR at **Secretariat@istr.org**

PLEASE REMEMBER: THE DEADLINE IS NOVEMBER 30, 2020

Detailed information on travel arrangements, accommodations, and the conference schedule will be available on the conference website: **www.istr.org/Virtual2021**

John Mohan, University of Birmingham, United Kingdom
Patricia Mendonça, University of São Paulo, Brazil
Conference Co-Chairs