CALL FOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Fifteenth International Conference of the
International Society for Third Sector Research (ISTR)
Celebrating 30 years of the Society (1992-2022)

MONTRÉAL, CANADA

July 12-15, 2022

Navigating In Turbulent Times:
Perspectives and Contributions from the Third Sector

DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS: 15 NOVEMBER 2021

This notice serves to invite interested parties to submit abstracts for contributions to the 15th International Conference to be held in Montréal, Canada, from 12-15 July 2022.

Note: ISTR is adjusting to the evolving pandemic and will continue to adapt our programming as needed. The in-person conference will be the primary focus, but a virtual option to present research will be available. More information will be forthcoming.

On ISTR

The International Society for Third Sector Research (ISTR) was founded in 1992 as a global community of scholars, policymakers, and third-sector leaders dedicated to creating, discussing, and advancing knowledge about the Third Sector and its impact on civil society, public policy, and local communities.

The ISTR 2022 Conference

Celebrating 30 years of the ISTR community, we anticipate that the ISTR 2022 Conference will be the first in-person, large-scale conference for the researchers and practitioners in the third sector worldwide to reunite and learn from each other since 2018. The eventual return to pre-pandemic normality will offer rare opportunities to reform institutions, reshape discourses and rebuild trust and identities. The third sector once again plays a critical role in these processes and public discussions.

Since its first conference in 1994 (Pécs, Hungary), different themes have been on the ISTR research agenda over the years, some of which can be expected not to disappear quickly.
Some examples are, at the macro-level, issues of legitimacy, inequality, democracy, and at the micro-level, organizational aspects, volunteering, or philanthropic behavior. However, these traditional research topics are complemented and affected by emerging global and local phenomena generating substantial turbulence all over the world.

This context explains the focus ofISTR’s fifteenth Conference (Montréal, 2022) on the role of the Third Sector in turbulent times. In addition to reflections on the pandemic experience, these times are marked by increasing inequalities and challenges to democracy and participatory governance. In addition, and of equal concern to the pandemic, are those regarding global sustainability and meeting the UN’s Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Civil society organisations have been highly affected by the Covid-19 pandemic with disruptions to philanthropy, non-profit organisations and social movements. Extreme adversity has driven changes in resourcing and practice; the Third Sector has also taken advantage of new technological opportunities and increasingly used virtual spaces. However, this period has also witnessed increasing nationalism, as physical restrictions and local fears reduce global collaborations.

Citizen participation in governance at all levels is under threat in these turbulent times. A strong Third Sector is needed to respond in those environments facing the rise of more authoritarian regimes. In all civic spaces, civil society organisations have a role to protect and improve citizen participation in governance, especially through research and evaluation to advance critical debate and to mitigate misinformation. This requires standing up to subtle and not so subtle limitations on freedoms of expression, assembly and association, and fully embracing technological innovation in order to engage.

Yet, there is unequal access to technological resources for work and education, to health services and vaccines, and public policies of economic support between countries, as well as between women, black and indigenous people and ethnic minorities. The Third Sector has an important role to not only call these out, but to work towards greater equality for all.

In 2015 the UN launched the SDGs with the promise to ‘leave no-one behind’ in achieving sustainable development by 2030. This requires governments and corporates to actively engage civil society. Almost halfway through this period, it is evident that the Covid-19 pandemic has at least ‘slightly derailed’ SDG efforts. These turbulent times demand reinventing or reimagining civil society and state/market collaborations to better tackle
societal challenges. It also requires Third Sector organisations to establish climate friendly policies and strategically meet obstacles to sustainable development for all.

We welcome proposals connecting these contextual issues in the themes and subthemes without excluding work on other traditional or less traditional Third Sector-related themes. However, for the ISTR Conferences, the Third Sector is broadly defined, encompassing non-governmental organizations, non-profit organizations, voluntary associations, social economy organizations and enterprises, community organizations, self-help and mutual organizations, foundations, philanthropic and charitable organizations, and other local and global civil society forms such as networks, social forums, unions, religious organizations, co-operatives, and voluntary organizations.

Paper, poster, panel and roundtable proposals from around the world reflecting work that is theoretical as well as empirical, unidisciplinary as well as multidisciplinary, and pertaining to all continents, are welcomed.

They will be classified according to the following subthemes:
- The Third Sector and the (Post-)Pandemic
- The Third Sector, Sustainable Development and Climate Change
- Social Movements, Democracy and Political Participation
- Advocacy, Technology and Virtual Spaces in Post Truth Era
- Philanthropy and Voluntarism in Local and Cross Border Contexts
- Institutions and Third Sector Regulatory Environment
- Management and Governance of Third Sector Organizations
- Hybridity and the Third Sector
- Teaching on the Third Sector
- Diversity, Inequalities and Civil Society
- Social Economy, Social Innovation and the Third Sector
- Other Third Sector Related Topics

**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. The conference organizers are especially interested innovative formats and presentations.

**Abstract Submissions**
To be considered for review, an abstract must include:
- A working title.
- 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.

**The abstract must be less than 500 words in length.** 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 webpage.

Please note: Abstracts will be accepted in both English and French. The primary language of the conference is English, and there will be some presentations conducted in French.

**Submissions for Panels, Papers, Roundtables and Posters**
All panel, paper, roundtable 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 – istr.org/2022 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 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 can include no more than five (5) participants. Please describe what each participant is expected to contribute to the discussion.

**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 2022 whether their abstract has been accepted.

**AUTHORS MUST REGISTER FOR THE CONFERENCE BY MARCH 15, 2022, TO HAVE THEIR PRESENTATION SCHEDULED IN THE CONFERENCE PROGRAM.**

The completed paper must be submitted to the session moderator by June 6, 2022, to allow adequate time for moderators to read the paper. In addition, authors are requested to send their paper to Secretariat@istr.org by June 6, 2022 for access to all conference participants.
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 15th International Conference should be directed to ISTR at

E-mail:  [Secretariat@istr.org](mailto:Secretariat@istr.org)
Telephone:  1-410-735-4221
Fax:  1-410-735-4201

**PLEASE REMEMBER: THE DEADLINE IS NOVEMBER 15, 2021**

Detailed information on travel arrangements, accommodations, and the conference schedule will be available on the conference website [istr.org/2022](http://istr.org/2022)

Patricia Mendonça, University of São Paulo, Brazil
Marc Jegers, Vrije Universiteit Brussels, Belgium

*Conference Co-Chairs*