

# ISTR PhD Seminar Alumni Quarterly Newsletter



## *From the Co-Editors*

By Anna Reggiardo, Nur Azam Perai & Shiqi Peng

Greetings from Genoa, Stirling, and Hong Kong! For those joining us for the first time, we are Anna, Azam, and Shiqi, the co-editors of this newsletter.

In this edition we look forward to the 17th ISTR International Conference in Lisbon, Portugal (July 14–17, 2026) and the Ninth International PhD Seminar. Wenye offers useful tips for traveling to Portugal – helping us dream about its sun-drenched coastline, tiled façades, and that quiet melancholy locals call *saudade* – while Shiqi shares a practical guide to preparing for the conference – including the “hidden curriculum”: coffee breaks, hallways, and dinners!

We also publish a new analysis from our survey “PhD Students and Early Career Scholars in Third Sector Studies”. Maurice explores the challenges delaying timely completion of doctoral studies and identifies the resources students see as critical to overcoming them.

Continuing our focus on ISTR webinars, Shiqi shares a review of the recent “Social Innovation and Impact Research Panel”, highlighting key points from a conversation about power, access, and the uneasy bridge between academic knowledge and practitioner wisdom.

As always, you’ll find the “Job Board” by Shiqi and “Opportunities for Collaboration & Calls for Papers/Applications” by Anna to help you navigate new openings in the sector.

Enjoy the read and see you soon in Lisbon for those who will be there!

Anna, Azam, and Shiqi

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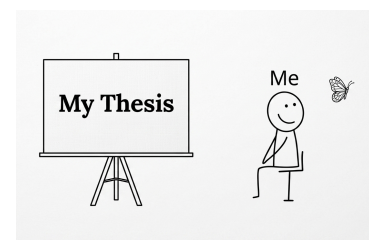
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## Contribute to the Newsletter!

We are seeking expressions of interest from the ISTR PhD seminar alumni network and current members of ISTR to join our team or contribute to the newsletter.

Please email the **co-editors** if you are an ISTR PhD seminar alumnus (from whichever year) and would like to serve as a contributing editor for a column in our newsletter.

Please email the **contributing editors** if you are an ISTR PhD seminar alumnus and have a story to share. You can also nominate a current ISTR member or an ISTR PhD seminar alumnus to be featured in the newsletter.



# Tips for Traveling to Portugal

By Wenye Mao

*Portugal, with its sun-drenched coastline, tiled façades, and a quiet sort of melancholy that locals call saudade, has a way of slowing visitors down. In this special column, I'd like to share a guide for PhD students traveling to Portugal, along with a short note on the country's third sector, in preparation for the 17th ISTR International Conference in Lisbon (July 14–17, 2026).*

## Travel Tips for Portugal: A Guide for PhD Students

### 1. Exploring Major Cities

- **Lisbon:** The host city of the conference, and a place that rewards wandering on foot. Start with the Alfama district, an old Moorish quarter where fado has deep roots, and climb up to São Jorge Castle for the view. The Belém neighborhood has the Jerónimos Monastery, the Belém Tower, and the famous pastéis de nata at Pastéis de Belém. For something more contemporary, the MAAT museum on the waterfront and the LX Factory creative hub are both worth an afternoon.
- **Sintra:** A 40-minute train ride from Lisbon and an easy day trip. The painted Pena Palace and the mysterious Quinta da Regaleira, with its initiatic well, look like something out of a fantasy novel. Go early — the buses up the hill fill quickly.
- **Porto:** The second city, in the north, smaller and grittier than Lisbon and beloved by many travelers for exactly that reason. Walk across the Dom Luís I bridge at sunset, visit a port wine cellar in Vila Nova de Gaia, and lose an hour in Livraria Lello, a neo-Gothic bookshop famous for its dramatic staircase and literary atmosphere.
- **Coimbra and Évora:** If you have an extra day or two, Coimbra is home to one of Europe's oldest universities, with a stunning Baroque library. Évora, in the Alentejo region, is a UNESCO-listed town with Roman ruins and a famous (and somewhat unsettling) Chapel of Bones.

### 2. Cultural Etiquette and Language

Portuguese is the official language of Portugal. In Lisbon, Porto, and other major tourist areas, English is widely spoken, especially among younger people and in hotels, restaurants, universities, and museums. However, learning a few basic Portuguese phrases can be very helpful and appreciated. Simple words such as “obrigado” or “obrigada” for thank you, “bom dia” for good morning, and “por favor” for please can make daily interactions smoother.

Portuguese people are generally polite and reserved in first encounters. A handshake is common in formal settings, while friends or colleagues may greet each other with kisses on both cheeks. In academic and professional contexts, punctuality is appreciated, although social life may feel more relaxed than in some Northern European countries.

When visiting churches, monasteries, or religious sites, modest dress is advisable. Portugal has a strong Catholic heritage, and many historical sites remain active places of worship. Respectful behavior in these spaces is expected.

### 3. Getting Around

- **Public Transportation:** Portugal has a useful public transportation system, especially in Lisbon and Porto. Lisbon has metro, buses, trams, trains, and ferries. The metro is often the easiest way to travel within the city, including to and from many conference-related areas. Porto also has a metro system, buses, and trains.
- **Trains:** Trains are a convenient way to travel between major cities. Lisbon and Porto are connected by frequent rail services, and trains also serve Coimbra, Braga, Aveiro, Faro, and other destinations. Booking intercity trains in advance can help reduce travel costs.
- **Walking:** Lisbon is beautiful but hilly. Comfortable shoes are essential, especially if you plan to explore Alfama, Bairro Alto, Graça, or other older neighborhoods. Some streets are steep and paved with traditional cobblestones, which can become slippery when wet.

- **Taxis and Ride-hailing:** Taxis and ride-hailing services are commonly available in Lisbon and Porto. They can be useful late at night, when carrying luggage, or when traveling to areas not easily reached by metro.
- **Driving:** Renting a car is not necessary for staying in Lisbon. Parking can be difficult and expensive in the city center. However, a car may be useful if you plan to explore rural areas, smaller towns, or parts of the Alentejo and Algarve regions.

#### 4. Food and Drink

Portugal is a wonderful country for food lovers. Don't miss these culinary delights:

Portuguese pastries, especially pastel de nata, a custard tart often enjoyed with coffee. In Lisbon, visitors often try them in Belém or in local bakeries throughout the city.

Seafood is central to Portuguese cuisine. Dishes with codfish, known as bacalhau, are especially common, and Portuguese people often say there are hundreds of ways to prepare it. Grilled sardines, octopus, clams, and seafood rice (arroz de marisco) are also popular.

For simple and affordable meals, look for local restaurants serving prato do dia, or dish of the day. These can be good options for PhD students traveling on a budget.

Portugal is also known for wine, including vinho verde, Douro wines, Alentejo wines, and port wine from Porto. In Lisbon, many cafés and restaurants also serve ginjinha, a cherry liqueur associated with the city.

Coffee culture is important in daily life. A small espresso, often called "bica" in Lisbon, is common after meals or during short breaks.

#### 5. Useful Tips

- **Currency:** Euro (€). Credit and debit cards are widely accepted in cities, but carrying some cash is useful for small cafés, local markets, or older establishments.
- **Weather:** July in Lisbon is usually warm and sunny. Light clothing, sunscreen, sunglasses, and a reusable water bottle are recommended. Evenings can be cooler near the river or coast, so bringing a light jacket may be useful.
- **Time zone:** Mainland Portugal follows Western European Time (WET, UTC+0) and Western European Summer Time (WEST, UTC+1) in July — one hour behind most of continental Europe, which catches people off guard.
- **Safety:** Portugal is generally considered a safe destination for travelers. Still, be careful with pickpocketing in crowded tourist areas, on trams, and in busy transport stations. Emergency number is 112.
- **Electricity:** 230V, Type C and F plugs.
- **Tipping:** Not obligatory; rounding up the bill or leaving 5–10% for good service is appreciated.

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# How to Prepare for the ISTR Conference: A Practical Guide for Every Attendee

By Dr. Shiqi Peng

Whether you are a first-time PhD student, an early-career faculty member, or a practitioner stepping into the world of third-sector research, preparing for the ISTR International Conference can feel both exciting and overwhelming. With over 900 attendees, parallel sessions, networking events, and a packed agenda, a little advance planning goes a long way. As we look forward to the **17th ISTR International Conference in Lisbon, Portugal (July 14–17, 2026)**, here is how to make the most of your experience: from registration to the final plenary.

## 1. Register Early and Read the Conference Agenda

The first and most practical step is official: become (or renew as) an ISTR member, then register for the conference. If you haven't, please kindly check the link below:

<https://www.istr.org/events/EventDetails.aspx?id=1971106&group=>

More importantly, read the conference theme carefully: *“Imagining the Next Generation: Strengthening the Foundations of the Third Sector.”* Ask yourself how your work, whether a polished paper, a work-in-progress, or even a conceptual idea, speaks to this theme. The audiences will notice when presenters genuinely engage with the core question.

## 2. Plan Your Sessions Before You Arrive

Do not wait until you land in Lisbon. As the preliminary program is released, block out your personal schedule. <https://www.istr.org/page/ConferenceProgram#Program>

A good strategy is:

- **Must-see sessions** (directly relevant to your research)
- **Interesting but different** (theories or methods you want to learn)
- **One session on a topic you know nothing about**

The third category is where ISTR truly shines. The third sector is interdisciplinary by nature; stepping outside your comfort zone often sparks the best ideas.

## 3. If You Are Presenting... Prepare for Dialogue, Not Performance

ISTR conferences are known for constructive, kind, and smart feedback. Your job as a presenter is not to defend a perfect paper, but to start a meaningful conversation.

- **Prepare 2–3 concrete questions** to ask the audience at the end of your talk
- **Bring your namecard or other supplementary materials** (e.g., handouts or a QR code) to your working paper or contact info
- **Time yourself strictly:** nothing loses an audience like a 12-minute talk stretched to 20

If you are a PhD student, consider attending the **PhD Seminar** (held immediately before the conference) in future years. It is a dedicated, low-ratio space for deep dissertation feedback. You will definitely receive constructive feedback from peers and faculty members!

## 4. The Hidden Curriculum: Coffee Breaks, Hallways, and Dinners

Some of the most valuable exchanges at ISTR do not happen in session rooms. They happen over coffee, during lunch, or while walking between buildings. Do not hide in your phone and be brave to start a new conversation!

A simple and effective habit:

*“Hi, I’m [name], from [your institution]. What brought you to ISTR?”*

Follow up with:

- “Which session are you planning to attend?”
- “Is this your first ISTR conference?”
- “What’s the most interesting thing you’ve heard so far?”

These questions alone open doors and give you practical intelligence about the conference.

### **5. Manage Your Energy (Seriously)**

A four-day conference is a marathon, not a sprint. Lisbon in July is warm, the pace is high, and the social program is inviting. Plan for rest intentionally:

- Keep some free time a day. Use that hour to process your notes, find a quiet corner, or simply walk outside. You will retain more from the sessions you do attend.
- Do not attend every social event. Choose quality over quantity. One meaningful 30-minute conversation at a smaller event beats six exhausted hellos at four different receptions.
- Enjoy the city strategically. Lisbon is spectacular. Allow yourself one deliberate outing (a sunset at Miradouro de Santa Catarina, a walk through Alfama, or simply a pastel de nata by the water).

### **6. After the Conference: Close the Loop**

The real value of a conference is what happens after you return home. Within two weeks of ISTR 2026:

- Send brief follow-up emails to two or three people you connected with
- Write down three concrete ideas you want to apply to your own work
- If you promised to share a paper or a reference, do it

One thoughtful follow-up often leads to collaboration, mentoring, or simply a warm hello at the next ISTR conference.

*Whether you are presenting a paper, attending for the first time, or returning as a senior scholar, ISTR conferences work best when everyone arrives prepared, curious, and generous.*

See you in Lisbon, and look forward to enjoying the conference together!

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# Results sharing: PhD Student and Early Career Scholars in Third Sector Studies

## Analysis of section 4: Challenges and support needs of doctoral students in Third sector studies

*By Maurice Omondi Omollow*

In previous editions of our newsletter, we explored the result of our survey “PhD Student and Early Career Scholars in Third Sector Studies” and we looked at motivation and interdisciplinarity. Today, Maurice dives into the fourth section of our global survey: Coursework and Completion.

Maurice explores the challenges delaying timely completion of doctoral studies and identifies the resources and support mechanisms students perceive as critical to overcoming these challenges.

### What are the main challenges causing delays in PhD completion?

As noted by Mbogo et al. (2020), doctoral studies are often slowed by a mix of structural and personal hurdles, including supervisory gaps, heavy workloads, and financial pressures. Our survey of 20 researchers across Europe (30%), Asia (25%), and Africa (20%) provides a closer look at these factors.

Participants were asked to select the top three challenges that have affected (or are currently affecting) their journey (summarized in Table 1 below).

**Table 1. Challenges Delaying Doctoral Completion (N = 21)**

Challenge Category	Percentage (%)	Definition
Insufficient guidance from supervisors	47.6%	This includes limited feedback and discussion with academic supervisors
Difficulty managing workload	47.6%	Challenges in balancing research with academic, personal and employment obligations
Personal challenges	38.1%	Financial pressures, family obligations, and health-related hurdles
Lack of clarity on research direction	28.6%	This includes difficulty in focusing the topic and navigating the progression of the study
Inadequate training in research/academic writing	23.8%	A lack of knowledge and experience in essential research skills
Difficulty with specific research tasks	14.3%	Challenges with specific research tasks
Other (procrastination, institutional bottlenecks)	9.5%	Some participants mentioned other challenges which include procrastination and other bottlenecks that might delay completion

### Which resources and support are needed by doctoral students?

Participants were able to identify the key resources they will need to mitigate these challenges (summarized in Table 2 below).

**Table 2. Resources or Support Needed (N = 17 responses)**

Resource / Support Type	Percentage (%)	Description / Examples
Mentorship / supervisory support	47.1%	The need for tailor-made guidance and timely feedback from faculty and staff
Peer support / networking	35.3%	Including virtual study groups and cross-topic networks to provide mutual support
Academic / research skill development	35.3%	Workshops on methodology and training in academic writing
Institutional / structural support	29.4%	Access to resources, mobility support, and better alignment of supervisors with research interests
Financial support / career stability	23.5%	Access to grants, scholarships, or stable employment options
Supportive lab environment	5.9%	This includes the need for professional or workplace support environment
Support from home/family	5.9%	This includes external or personal support e.g. from family or home

The findings have been used to generate a conceptual model linking the challenges and the resources needed to promote timely completion of the doctoral program. This is presented in the figure below (fig. 2).



**Figure 2.** Conceptual model linking challenges, resources and doctoral progress/completion

### What can be done?

From the findings it emerges that strong supervisory or mentorship engagement between advisors and students improves student motivation and can also reduce uncertainty and at the end of it help promote progress towards completion. This aligns with the study carried out by Omoya et al. (2025).

It is also clear that balancing employment or income generation initiatives, personal obligations and research is a significant barrier especially in low-income countries where doctoral students must constantly juggle professional and academic demands—a challenge also highlighted in the study by Khodabocus (2016).

Moreover, social and academic support including peer networks which are necessary for skill development can enhance resilience and research efficacy.

## Three ideas to better support PhD students

To tackle the challenges of inadequate supervision and heavy workloads, we propose three key recommendations:

1. **Promote mentorship and engagement:** Foster stronger interaction between supervisors and students by integrating mentorship into formal structured programs. At the same time, strengthen supervisor skills through regular tooling and re-tooling.
2. **Offer targeted skills development:** provide workshops for students, either virtual or in person, to capture topics such as methodology, academic writing and general writing preparation.
3. **Provide financial and structural support:** this includes offering study grants, scholarships, access to data resources, while promoting alignments between supervisor and students.

**NOTE:** *This is a shortened version for our newsletter. To dive deeper into the research and see the full list of references, we will publish the complete paper on our [ISTR blog](#).*

**AI disclosure statement.** The authors acknowledge the use of AI in certain aspects of this study, particularly in the creation of the conceptual model diagram, which was produced with the aid of artificial intelligence tools, namely the OpenAI GPT micro language model and the Dale picture production system. The author developed the prompts, and checked all of the outputs to make sure they were correct, clear, and in line with academic standards. The AI tools were used solely as a supportive tool to enhance visualization. All intellectual decisions, data interpretation and conclusions remain the responsibility of the author. No artificial intelligence was used to fabricate data, generate findings or replace human analysis.

## References

- Khodabocus, F. (2016). *Challenges to doctoral education in Africa*. *International Higher Education*, (85), 25. <https://doi.org/10.6017/ihe.2016.85.9246>
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# Short Review: Social Innovation and Impact Research Panel

From Data Accessibility to Participatory Power – Key Insights from the May 7, 2026 Webinar

By Dr. Shiqi Peng

On May 7, 2026, the ISTR Social Innovation and Impact Affinity Group convened an online panel featuring four scholars whose recent *Voluntas* publications span three continents. What unfolded was not simply a series of research presentations, but a broader conversation about accessibility, participation, and the uneasy bridge between academic knowledge and practitioner wisdom. Below are the core takeaways.

## 1. Angela Holzer (WikiCharities): The Global Data Gap

Holzer presented preliminary findings from a massive cross-national study covering 182 countries, asking: *How accessible is nonprofit sector data?*

Key finding: Only 52% of countries have an online NGO registry. Europe and Asia lead; Africa and Oceania lag far behind (their preliminary mapping identified only six African countries with searchable online registries). Even where registries exist, search functionality drops sharply: 92% allow search by name, but only 45% allow search by cause/topic, and just 65% by location, the very features that small NGOs, volunteers, and service-seekers need most.

Why it matters: Without accessible, searchable data, collaboration across nonprofits remains ad hoc. Her team is now building an open, globally integrated platform at [wikiCharities.org](https://wikiCharities.org), with regional advisory groups to ensure local context is not lost.

**Agustina Gradin (Argentina)** shared an ongoing university network project: “*We are collaboratively developing an open database and interactive map of the non-profit sector.*” <https://xn-territoriosenaccin-61b.org/>

This is a living example of the kind of cross-national, participatory data infrastructure that Angela Holzer’s research calls for.

## 2. Tyler Hauger (WINGS): Participatory Grantmaking as Power-Shifting

Hauger, a practitioner-researcher, presented two studies on participatory grantmaking (PGM), where those most affected by an issue make decisions about funding. Drawing on 19 interviews with grantmakers across Sub-Saharan Africa, he offered three striking findings:

- Visible power (formal rules, who decides) shifts most clearly in PGM models, but hidden and invisible power (agenda-setting, internalized norms) often remain with back-donors.
- PGM is not a quick fix; it takes more time and does not solve resource scarcity. Yet it is a concrete strategy for transforming philanthropy.
- In Africa, practitioners rarely use the term “participatory grantmaking”: they speak of solidarity-driven funding, trust-based grantmaking, and community-owned processes, rooted in longer traditions of collective giving and community solidarity within African philanthropy.

Future research gap: Hauger noted that we know little about how *those excluded* from PGM processes experience them, or whether different PGM models shift power in systematically different ways.

*Resource shared:* Hauger pointed to the Philanthropy Transformation Initiative at WINGS, a global network. <https://transformphilanthropy.wingsweb.org> (10 principles and 3 mindset shifts for transforming the sector).

## 3. Bruna de Moraes Holanda (Getulio Vargas Foundation): Bridging Academic and Practitioner Knowledge

Holanda mapped ten years of collective impact literature (2011–2021), comparing academic papers with practitioner outlets like *Stanford Social Innovation Review*.

Her central argument: The two communities are not disconnected, but they speak past each other. Practitioners have been *more* vocal than academics in critiquing the original collective impact model, pushing for equity, race justice, grassroots ownership, and community voice. Academics, meanwhile, contribute conceptual refinement, methodological rigor, and attention to leadership and advocacy.

The gap: Most evidence comes from the US, Canada, and Australia. We know almost nothing about how collective impact travels to other contexts, or whether it should.

Her closing plea: “*We need to build a bridge. Practitioners alone, or academics alone, are not sufficient.*”

#### 4. Keratilo Mogotsi (Moderator & Panelist): The “Nothing About Us Without Us” Imperative

As both moderator and a researcher on Sub-Saharan African participatory grantmaking (co-authored with Hauger), Mogotsi anchored the panel in a simple but politically significant principle: Nothing About Us Without Us. She noted that in South Africa, communities will protest if decisions are made without their involvement, a reminder that participation is not a methodological nicety but a political demand.

### Emerging Themes Across the Panel

Despite addressing different topics, data infrastructure, participatory philanthropy, and collective impact, the panel converged around several shared concerns. First, all speakers challenged technocratic understandings of social innovation. Whether discussing nonprofit databases or grantmaking systems, the discussion repeatedly returned to questions of who defines problems, who controls resources, and whose knowledge becomes visible. Second, participation emerged not merely as a managerial tool, but as a political issue. Across the discussions, communities were framed not as passive beneficiaries, but as co-creators, decision-makers, and knowledge holders. Third, the panel highlighted a growing tension between global models and local realities. Speakers repeatedly warned against assuming that frameworks developed in North America or Europe can be transferred universally without adaptation.

### Access the Recording & Get Involved

Watch the full panel here (available until at least May 2027):

[https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/play/nTsauZ8drLb5oUuP4LVg\\_Iha7K3xisS1K8gh3ep1-QRwjYUAmZFa60Akub2uTAeP9NNxo5CCMM42XIpr.fYxn1JVr114eBf58](https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/play/nTsauZ8drLb5oUuP4LVg_Iha7K3xisS1K8gh3ep1-QRwjYUAmZFa60Akub2uTAeP9NNxo5CCMM42XIpr.fYxn1JVr114eBf58)

(You may need the meeting passcode if prompted – check your ISTR invitation email.)

Join the conversation:

- Contribute to WikiCharities’ regional advisory groups (contact Angela Holzer)
- Explore WINGS’ Philanthropy Transformation Initiative
- Submit to *Voluntas* (no article processing fees currently!)

The Social Innovation and Impact Affinity Group will also meet in person at the ISTR conference in Lisbon (July 2026) – watch for details.

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# Job Board

*By Dr. Shiqi Peng*

## 1. Tenure-Track Faculty, Academia Sinica, Taiwan Research Center for Humanities and Social Sciences

The Center for Survey Research at the Research Center for Humanities and Social Sciences (RCHSS), Academia Sinica—Taiwan’s premier research institution—invites applications for a tenure-track position at the Assistant, Associate, or Full Research Fellow level (equivalent to Assistant, Associate, or Full Professors at universities). We seek scholars conducting innovative empirical research on human behavior and social systems using advanced data and computational approaches. We are particularly interested in candidates whose work integrates artificial intelligence, machine learning, computational methods, or large-scale digital data with social science theory and empirical analysis.

Application materials should be sent by email to [wangwh@gate.sinica.edu.tw](mailto:wangwh@gate.sinica.edu.tw) by **June 30, 2026**.

For more information, please check: <https://professorpositions.com/tenure-track-faculty-in-humanities-and-social-sciences,i45378.html>

## 2. Associate/Assistant Professor of Public Administration, University of Macau

The Department of Government and Public Administration of the Faculty of Social Sciences is inviting applications for an academic position at the rank of Associate/Assistant Professor in the discipline of public administration and public policy. The required area of specialization is public administration, broadly defined to include sub-areas of China Public Administration, New/Collaborative Governance, Smart City Management, E-Government, Government/Society Interactions, Big Data and New Technological Innovation, Governance in Greater China Region, and other subjects related to policy-making and governance of public affairs.

The selected candidate is expected to assume duty **in August 2026**.

For more information, please check: [https://career.admo.um.edu.mo/fss\\_dgpa\\_aap\\_09\\_2025/](https://career.admo.um.edu.mo/fss_dgpa_aap_09_2025/)

## 3. Lecturers, Hong Kong Baptist University, Hong Kong

The Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences and the Academy of Wellness and Human Development of Hong Kong Baptist University invite applications for Lecturer I and Lecturer II positions in Social Work. The role focuses on teaching courses, supervising students’ projects, and coordinating fieldwork/program administration at the undergraduate level or above.

Application Deadline: **Open until fulfilled**

For more information, please check: <https://fa-ewqq-saasfaprod1.fa.ocs.oraclecloud.com/hcmUI/CandidateExperience/en/sites/hkbu/job/25260140>

## 4. Executive Director, Center for Philanthropy, Grand Valley State University

The Dorothy A. Johnson Center for Philanthropy at Grand Valley State University invites applicants for the Executive Director. This role is the Center’s primary external face, cultivating relationships with foundations, philanthropic organizations, policymakers, practitioners, and academic partners to meaningfully advance effective philanthropy. Applicants must be legally authorized to work in the United States and must not require sponsorship now or in the future.

Application Deadline: **Application review begins May 1, 2026, and this posting may be closed at any time at the discretion of the University.**

For more information, please check: [https://gvsu.wd1.myworkdayjobs.com/careers/job/Grand-Rapids-MI-Pew-Campus/Executive-Director-Center-for-Philanthropy\\_R104260](https://gvsu.wd1.myworkdayjobs.com/careers/job/Grand-Rapids-MI-Pew-Campus/Executive-Director-Center-for-Philanthropy_R104260)

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# Opportunities for Collaboration & Calls for Papers/Applications

*By Anna Reggiardo*

This column usually lists opportunities for ISTR PhD Seminar alumni to collaborate on journal articles, reports, grant applications, or events.

## **Call For Papers: 8th International Conference “Between The Worlds: Solidarity And Civic Action In Times Of Uncertainty”**

*Deadline for abstract submission: June 30, 2026*

The Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Studies with Ethnographic Museum (Bulgarian Academy of Sciences), in partnership with the “Heroes” research project on volunteerism, invites researchers, practitioners, and civil society actors to examine how civic engagement—volunteering, grassroots activism, solidarity, and charity—responds to overlapping global crises. The hybrid conference will take place in Sofia on October 28–29, 2026, welcoming interdisciplinary perspectives from anthropology, sociology, political science, and related fields.

For further information and to submit your abstract, please visit: [conferenceworlds.wordpress.com](https://conferenceworlds.wordpress.com) or email [bewconference@gmail.com](mailto:bewconference@gmail.com)

## **Call for Papers: IRPSI 10th Anniversary Special Issue, “Beyond Charity: African Philanthropy, Social Investment, and the Architecture of Resource-Based Monetary Sovereignty”**

*Deadline for submissions: July 31, 2026*

CAPSI at Wits Business School invites research articles, policy analyses, case studies, and conceptual papers exploring how Africa can strengthen economic sovereignty through philanthropy, social investment, and resource mobilisation. Key themes include strategic social investment, resource-based monetary sovereignty, digital infrastructure, and generational philanthropy.

For more information and to submit, visit: <https://www.capsi.wits.ac.za/irpsi-10th-anniversary-special-issue-call-for-papers/>

## **Call for Papers: International Conference of the SolidCareLab**

### **Philanthropy, Solidarity, and Care: Mobilising for the Common Good in Southeast Europe**

*Deadline for abstract submission: September 30, 2026*

The Institute for Philosophy and Social Theory (University of Belgrade) invites scholars and activists to explore how citizens in Southeast Europe mobilize for the common good amidst rising illiberalism and underfunded welfare systems. Rather than applying external Western frameworks, this conference seeks to develop original theory from the region’s unique experiences with mutual aid, the defense of the “commons,” and emergent forms of philanthropy. The event will take place in Belgrade on March 17–18, 2027, featuring keynote speakers Čarna Brković and Heath Cabot.

For further information and to submit your abstract via the official form, please visit: [SolidCareLab Conference Page](#)

## **Call for Paper: Ethics in Government & Nonprofit Organizations**

*Deadline for Applications – NVSQ: 1 August 2026*

*Deadline for Applications – PAR: 1 October 2026*

Following the “Elevating Public and Nonprofit Ethics Conference,” two of the field’s leading journals — Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly (NVSQ) and Public Administration Review (PAR) — are seeking submissions that place ethics at the heart of public and nonprofit scholarship. This is a coordinated effort to bring ethical inquiry to greater prominence. While NVSQ is aiming for a special issue or symposium, PAR will feature successful papers across several issues, culminating in a dedicated virtual issue.

More information at: <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/pb-assets/assets/15406210/Alliance-Call-for-Papers-1774379388523.pdf>

### **Call for guest editors and proposal for Virtual Issues of *Voluntas***

*Deadline: open call*

*Voluntas* is looking for motivated guest editors to curate Virtual Issues, a unique format designed to revisit and showcase influential research previously published in the journal. As a guest editor, you will propose a specific theme and curate a selection of five to ten articles that highlight the journal’s continuing relevance to contemporary debates. This is a prestigious opportunity for early-career researchers to shape scholarly conversation, identify research gaps, and propose future directions for the field.

In addition to the curated selection, guest editors are required to write a substantive introductory editorial. This piece, which undergoes review by the Editors-in-Chief, synthesizes the chosen literature and sets the agenda for future research. Completed proposals and inquiries should be directed to the *Voluntas* editorial team.

Explore previous issues and find submission details here: [Voluntas Virtual Issues](#)

### **Call for Opinion Pieces: *Journal of Philanthropy***

*Deadline for Submissions: open call*

The *Journal of Philanthropy* is calling on you to submit your Opinion Pieces about the most pertinent issues impacting the third sector, non-profit organisations (NPOs) and other organisations involved in philanthropic practice. Let’s provoke and challenge novel and innovative approaches to philanthropy.

For further information: Dr Rita Kottasz, Editor-in-Chief, Dr Guillaume Plaisance, Associate Editor – Opinion Pieces, [guillaume.plaisance@u-bordeaux.fr](mailto:guillaume.plaisance@u-bordeaux.fr)

Submission: Manuscripts in this section are subject to peer review. Authors should refer to the [Author Guidelines prior to submission](#). New submissions should be made via the portal: <https://submission.wiley.com/journal/nvsm> indicating ‘Opinion’ when prompted.

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## News & Announcements

### Readings for the 17th ISTR International Conference

#### Preparing for Portugal: Exploring Third Sector History and Democracy

You can delve deeper into Portugal's Third Sector history via Joana Dias Pereira piece, [The History of the Third Sector in Portugal: Solidarity, Repression and Rebirth](#), which traces its resilient journey from medieval roots through dictatorship to democratic rebirth.

Additionally, Raquel Rego, Ana Simaens and Vanessa Oliveira piece [Fifty Years of Portuguese Democracy and the Third Sector: A Still Under-Recognized Field to Be Strengthened Through Academic Collaboration?](#) analyzes 50 years of Portuguese democracy, analyzing how the vibrant grassroots movements of the revolution were followed by a "normalization" into a society of mild manners, leaving the field with high economic weight but low formal volunteering.

#### PhD Student and Early Career Scholars in Third Sector Research: Joys, Challenges & Completion Rates (online)

This survey aims to gather insights from international PhD students and early career scholars on their experiences, including the joys and challenges they face, as well as their completion rates. This information will be invaluable in shaping our understanding and supporting our PhD community more effectively.

Please reply here: <https://forms.gle/jj1TtAwwnqJufNUM6>

Thank you for your time and participation!



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### **About ISTR**

Founded in 1992, the International Society for Third-Sector Research (ISTR) is a major international association promoting research and education in the fields of civil society, philanthropy, and the nonprofit sector. ISTR is an organization committed to building a global community of scholars and interested others dedicated to the creation, discussion, and advancement of knowledge pertaining to the third sector and its impact on human and planetary well-being and development internationally. As an organization, ISTR is recognized and respected for its global vision, its commitment to excellence, its collaborative approach, and the values of diversity and pluralism with which it pursues its mission.

### **About the ISTR PhD Seminars and Our Alumni Network**

ISTR aims to nurture early career third-sector researchers and practitioners through targeted mentorship and investment in their development. We also present the biennial Emerging Scholar Dissertation Award to dissertations contributing to the comparative study of civil society organizations, philanthropy, voluntarism, non-governmental organizations, and related issues. Through the PhD seminars and mentoring program, we support young scholars and practitioners who examine the role and functions of third sector organizations in their countries and communities. We know our efforts will bear fruit in the social, humanitarian, policy, scientific, and cultural spheres. It is our hope that our PhD seminar alumni will continue engaging with the ISTR network, become lifelong members of ISTR, and build the field of third sector studies.

### **ISTR Regional Networks and Affinity Groups**

**ISTR African Civil Society Regional Network** — Publishes a monthly newsletter, available online.

**ISTR Asia Pacific Regional Network** — Publishes a monthly newsletter, available online.

**ISTR Latin America and the Caribbean Regional Network** — Publishes a monthly newsletter, available online.

**Middle East and North Africa (MENA) Regional Network**

**ISTR Europe and Neighbors Regional Network**

**ISTR Affinity Groups** — Critical Perspectives; Decolonized Research; Gender; Law and Regulation; Research Centre Directors; Research for Practice; Research on Volunteering; Social Innovation and Impact; Sustainability; Teaching and Learning — each has a Google group.

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