

# **CALL FOR CONTRIBUTIONS**

## **Thirteenth International Conference of the International Society for Third Sector Research (ISTR)**

**Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam • Amsterdam, The Netherlands**

**10 July – 13 July 2018**

### **Democracy and Legitimacy: The Role of the Third Sector in a Globalizing World**

**DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS: 27 OCTOBER 2017**

This notice serves to invite interested parties to submit abstracts for contributions to the 13th International Conference to be held at Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, Amsterdam, The Netherlands, from 10 July to 13 July 2018.

#### **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.

Democracy and legitimacy are central issues in debates about the role of the third sector. Throughout the world, third sector organizations are directly involved in many contentious discussions on democracy and the authority and legitimacy of public and private organizations. Relevant debates include growing inequality, restrictions on academic freedom, the global refugee crisis, the rise of populist movements, the restructuring of the public services to include more citizen engagement and responsibility, the politics of climate change, fair-labor practices, and rebuilding distressed communities. Moreover, third sector organizations often find their own role in promoting legitimacy and democracy deeply contested: governments have sought to restrict their political roles and limit their ability to raise money; scholars are divided on the contribution of nonprofits and NGOs to political integration and polarization; and politicians on the left and the right often are reluctant to politically support nonprofits and their organizational autonomy. At the same time, third sector organizations are also facing calls for greater transparency and accountability from public and private funding agencies, creating opportunities and challenges for those interested in positive social change.

These discussions are taking place in different forms, and with different emphases, between nation states and between different parts of the globe. We wish to reflect this

diversity in the conference program. While supporting and welcoming contributions from all countries and disciplines, and from researchers as well as practitioners, we particularly wish to invite proposals from colleagues in the global South.

The conference provides a forum for scholarly exchange and discussion on cutting edge research on nonprofit organizations, NGOs, voluntarism, philanthropy and civil society organizations. The theme of the 2018 biennial meeting is, "Democracy and Legitimacy." Thus, we are especially interested in papers that address the following questions and sub-themes. Do third sector organizations contribute to political polarization or help foster more social cohesion and integration? How do third sector organizations contribute to the legitimacy of public and private institutions? How does the widespread interest in social innovation and social enterprise promote or hinder the legitimacy of existing societal institutions? What are best practices for third sector organizations engaged in advocacy and lobbying for citizen interests? In a world of increasingly hybrid organizations with mixed public, nonprofit and for-profit features, is the legitimacy of traditional nonprofit organizations at risk? How might we measure the impact of third sector organizations on democracy and legitimacy as well as concrete social problems such as poverty, inequality, and health? More broadly, how do third sector organizations contribute to the public good?

ISTR's Thirteenth International Conference in Amsterdam, The Netherlands, offers an excellent opportunity for further dialogue on these and other changes in an environment of rigor, reflexivity, dialogue, and creativity. The Netherlands has, for over 100 years, had a close working relationship between nonprofit organizations and the government. The representation of different groups and religious organizations by civil society organizations has also provided crucial legitimacy and stability to the Netherlands government and civil society. Indeed, third sector organizations have been crucial to advancing the public good.

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 2018 conference**

Conference organizers are keenly interested in a wide range of submissions, especially on topics related to democracy and legitimacy. In addition, ISTR is also interested in research which advances our understanding of theory, policy, and practice of third sector organizations. Overall, the 2018 Amsterdam conference offers a unique, and

particularly valuable, venue for engaging with its very diverse membership of scholars to deepen our knowledge of these important issues.

- Democracy and Civil Society Organizations
- Challenges and Opportunities of Advocacy by NGOs and Nonprofits
- Governance, Management, Adaptation and Sustainability of Third Sector Organizations
- Hybridity, Legitimacy and the Third Sector
- New Models of Philanthropy and Voluntarism
- Active Citizenship and Activism
- The Third Sector and Development
- Social Innovation and the Third Sector
- Research on Teaching Third Sector Studies
- Emerging Areas of Theory 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. The conference organizers are especially interested in innovative formats and presentations.

#### **Abstract Submissions**

To be considered for review, an abstract must include:

- A working title that clearly identifies the conference theme being addressed.
- 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 400 words in length.** Abstracts not meeting these requirements will be declined by the ISTR Conference Committee.

Please note: Abstracts must be submitted in English, as the language of the conference is English and all presentations are to be conducted in English.

## **Submissions for Panels, Papers and Posters**

All panel, papers and poster proposals for the Conference must be submitted using ISTR's online submission service.

**To submit your paper or poster abstract using this service, go to the ISTR website – [www.istr.org/Amsterdam](http://www.istr.org/Amsterdam) - 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 2018 whether their abstract has been accepted.

**ALL AUTHORS INCLUDING ALL PANELISTS MUST REGISTER FOR THE CONFERENCE BY MARCH 16, 2018, TO HAVE THEIR PRESENTATION SCHEDULED IN THE CONFERENCE PROGRAM.**

The completed paper must be submitted to the session moderator by June 10, 2018, to allow adequate time for moderators to read the paper. In addition, authors are requested to send their paper to [istr\\_secretariat@jhu.edu](mailto:istr_secretariat@jhu.edu) by June 10, 2018 for access to all conference participants abstracts.

## 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 13<sup>th</sup> International Conference should be directed to ISTR at

E-mail: [ISTR\\_Secretariat@jhu.edu](mailto:ISTR_Secretariat@jhu.edu)

Telephone: 1-410-735-4221

Fax: 1-410-735-4201

**PLEASE REMEMBER: THE DEADLINE IS OCTOBER 27, 2017**

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

**Ruth Phillips, University of Sydney**

**John Mohan, University of Birmingham**

**Conference Co-Chairs**