

GENERAL CALL FOR PAPERS

IAMCR Durban 2012



Annual Conference of the
International Association for Media and Communication Research
Durban, South Africa,
July 15-19, 2012

Theme: 'SOUTH-NORTH CONVERSATIONS'

The International Association for Media and Communication Research invites submissions of abstracts for papers and panel proposals for the 2012 IAMCR conference to be held from July 15-19, 2012 at the Howard College Campus of the University of KwaZulu Natal (UKZN) in Durban, South Africa.

The deadline for submissions is **February 14, 2012**.

The conference will be held under the general theme, '**South-North Conversations**'. The theme reflects the asymmetry of global communication flows, but without implying the negatives that usually accompany discussions of the 'digital divide'. The theme also calls for balanced and empowering narratives that do not regard those in 'the South' as victims primarily in need of handouts from the more affluent.

The term 'Global South' refers to countries, territories and communities that have been excluded from the mainstream of economic, social and communication development. In much of the discourse around global geo-politics, these countries and communities are still regarded as the recipients of economic and technical largesse from more developed sources. In this conference, we wish to interrogate this position, and to emphasise the *communicative empowerment* and the *positive potential of media and communication in and from the 'Global South'*.

Conversations among Peers

In choosing the theme 'South-North Conversations', then, the conference organisers acknowledge that the 'South' has something to say to the 'North', and vice versa, and further that the 'North' has something to gain from its relationships with the 'South'. The concept of 'conversations', indicates peer-to-peer equality and dialogue, and a more optimistic vision of global engagement.

While the term 'South' may conjure up images of under-development, it has long been recognized that within global geopolitics, all countries, all institutions and all communities experience varying stages of under-development, with some sectors or groups being marginalised on the basis of race, gender, sexual orientation, disability, economic status, age or health stigma. An important challenge to conference participants

is to identify the purported attributes of the ‘South’ in each particular location or field of study. What do the marginalised and the disempowered within your sphere of research have to say to the powerful or to their own peers?

The conference will seek to explore the varied modalities of communication, of media flows and of associated identities, images and perceptions of the participants. It will examine the diverse forms of technology transfers from differently-situated regions of the globe, and differently- situated communities *within* regions, countries or organisations.

Selected Issues

Some of the sub-themes that lend themselves to exploration across many of the IAMCR Sections and Working groups include:

- Uneven access to technological, political and social capital
- Issues of the so-called ‘digital divide’ post WSIS
- Asymmetrical news and information flows
- Trend lines and origins of innovations, apps and new media
- The spectre or reality of cultural imperialism
- Fighting back: empowerment of the local, the regional and sustainable integration into the global
- Local languages – a growth area in media in the north and south
- Media, development, democracy
- Social media, challenge and advocacy
- Users and service providers: north and south
- Communication as a tool of empowerment of the marginalised and the stigmatised
- Global media hegemony, regional hegemony and counter hegemony
- Whose story?: competing historical narratives of communication from the north and south
- Any other topic related to the general conference theme

Submission of Abstracts

Each Section and Working Group of the IAMCR will issue its own Call for Papers, based on the general thematic outline above. The list of Sections and Working Groups and, soon, their respective Calls may be found at the IAMCR institutional website, at <http://iamcr.org/iamcr2012cfp> or at the Durban 2012 Conference website <http://www.iamcr2012.ukzn.ac.za>.

All Abstracts, although to be identified for specific Sections or Working Groups, should be submitted only via the central Open Conference System (OCS) at <http://iamcr-ocs.org>

Deadlines

The deadline for submission of abstracts is February 14, 2012. Please note that this deadline will not be extended.

The OCS system at <http://iamcr-ocs.org> will open on December 1, 2011, and will close on February 14, 2012.

Decisions on acceptance of abstracts will be communicated to individual applicants by their Section or Working Group Head **no later than March 12, 2012.**

On the same day, **March 12, 2012, conference registration will open** for bookings by participants.

For those whose abstracts are accepted, **full conference papers** are to be submitted via the IAMCR OCS **by June 10, 2011.**

Guidelines for Abstracts

Abstracts should be between 300 and 500 words in length.

All abstract submissions must be made centrally via the OCS at <http://iamcr-ocs.org>. There are to be no email submissions of abstracts addressed to any Section or Working Group Head.

It is expected that for the most part, only one (1) abstract will be submitted per person for consideration by the Conference. However, under no circumstances should there be more than three abstracts bearing the name of the same applicant either individually or as part of any group of authors. Please note also that the same abstract or another version with minor variations in title or content must not be submitted to other Sections or Working Groups of the Association for consideration, after an initial submission. Such submissions will be deemed to be in breach of the conference guidelines and will be automatically rejected by the Open Conference System, by the relevant Head or by the Conference Programme Referee. **Such applicants risk being removed entirely from the conference programme.**

Upon submission of an abstract, you will be asked to confirm that your submission is original and that it has not been previously published in the form presented. You will also be given an opportunity to declare if your submission is currently before another conference for consideration.

For further information, please contact the Local Organizing Committee (LOC) or consult the Conference Organizers via the website at: <http://www.iamcr2012.ukzn.ac.za/> or by email at IAMCR2012@ukzn.ac.za