

Call for Papers

15th NCVO/ VSSN Researching the Voluntary Sector Conference

7- 8 September 2009, University of Warwick, UK

The NCVO/VSSN Researching the Voluntary Sector Conference is the primary UK conference for the voluntary sector research community. It brings together over 120 academics, practitioners and policymakers with a shared interest in the voluntary sector and voluntary action. Many of our delegates are from overseas, providing a real opportunity for shared learning with researchers from different countries and contexts.

Our aim is simple: to build the evidence base by sharing new, emerging research, and then to make the most of that evidence base by connecting researchers with the policymakers and practitioners who use research.

The conference is your 'open space' to share new or existing research, so this call for papers is an open invite to all researchers working on or with the sector. This includes new researchers (such as PhD students) wishing to present for the first time.

CONFERENCE TOPICS

Each year we are keen to develop a number of themed sessions covering areas that are of interest to academics, practitioners and policymakers. We are therefore looking either of individual papers or entire sessions (2-3 papers or a panel) to address the following areas:

The relationship and boundaries between voluntary organisations, the state and the market. With an upcoming election in the UK and widespread reappraisal of the limitations of markets, does evidence suggest a change in the relationship between the sectors? Will public service delivery – long a defining issue for the sector – be replaced by more fundamental questions about mutualism and social justice?

The impact of voluntary organisations and voluntary action on community cohesion and well-being. Can researchers provide more detailed evidence of such impacts? And can research provide the tools to measure them? Is community cohesion a useful concept for us to measure, or should the focus be on how we contribute to sustainable and inclusive communities?

Meeting the challenges of economic downturn. What empirical evidence exists to help us understand the impact of the downturn on the voluntary sector? Is there an impact on giving and philanthropy? Can research help voluntary sector managers and infrastructure providers to more effectively manage in the downturn?

Histories of voluntary action and 'the voluntary sector'. We are keen to encourage papers that can offer a historical perspective to the above themes. These could include theoretical perspectives on the development of the idea of a voluntary or third sector.

Other topics of relevance to current theory, policy and practice. The above list is indicative: the conference committee welcomes all submissions that are related to the wider voluntary or third sector and voluntary action.

SUBMISSIONS

You can submit a proposal for either a single paper presentation or for a whole session. In all submissions, please be sure to include your name, organisation and email address. The deadline for all submissions is 22nd May 2009.

1 SINGLE PAPERS: Parallel sessions will offer a balance of presentations and discussion time. Typically, sessions include three 15 minute presentations, followed by substantial discussion. All papers presented in the parallel sessions will also be available in the conference proceedings, so that, where appropriate, more detail can be provided.

Submission: You should send us a 400 to 600-word summary of your research. We welcome submissions discussing preliminary findings as well as those on completed projects. There is no need to include references at this stage.

2 THEMED PANEL SESSIONS: In panel sessions, researchers and practitioners will discuss a theme, with audience participation. Submissions for panel sessions should list panel members and give a clear overview of the topic to be discussed.

Submission: please submit a 400 to 600-word proposal for a whole session. This might be a workshop, debate, panel or structured discussion on a particular theme, or a suite of two or three papers on related topics.

If your submission is successful, we will ask you to send us a longer 2000 to 2500-word paper/s for inclusion in the conference proceedings. We will give details on the preferred format of the paper when we confirm acceptance of your submission.

3 NEW RESEARCHERS' SESSION: On the afternoon of the 7th September, there will be a special session for those who are relatively new or early career researchers, whether as post-graduates or researchers within the sector. Previous delegates have found this very useful for meeting other new researchers, discussing research and sharing ideas. This session is run in conjunction with the Institute for Volunteering Research (IVR). Delegates attending only the New Researcher session may do so free of charge.

Submission: To present in the New Researchers' Session, please send an abstract of 200 to 400 words. Presentations are typically of 10 minutes, with a further 10 minutes for discussion. You need not discuss a completed project – discussion of a work in progress or preliminary findings would be welcome. Papers on methodologies or issues faced carrying out research are also welcome.

AFTER SUBMISSION

If your proposal is accepted you will still need to book and pay for a place at the conference. Booking forms are available at www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/researchconference09.

IMPORTANT DATES

Abstract of 400-500 words to be submitted 22nd May 2009

Notification of accepted submissions 29 May 2009

Open for bookings 14 April 2009

Deadline for Early Bird rates 13 July 2009

Full paper of 2000-2500 words to be submitted 6 July 2009

The conference 7- 8th September 2009

SUBMISSION/CONTACT DETAILS

Please send new researcher submissions to Joanna Stuart, at joanna.stuart@volunteeringengland.org

Please send all other submissions to Olivia Hirst, at olivia.hirst@ncvo-vol.org.uk

Further details on previous conferences are available at <http://www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/events/archive/>