

## **International Sustainability Transitions Conference 2021**

**Oct. 5 - 8, 2021 in Karlsruhe, Germany**

### **Call for papers**

#### **"Mainstreaming sustainability transitions: From research towards impact"**

With the call for IST 2021 - "Mainstreaming sustainability transitions: From research towards impact" we invite reflection on how we, as a research community, can make sure that our work has real-world impact supporting transition processes towards a more sustainable future. In addition to submissions that engage with the STRN research agenda, we invite contributions on the conference theme. How we can go beyond our current ambition of supporting socio-technological change processes, and push *more* towards having real impact?

Transitions research has become an established field and the idea of 'sustainability transitions' is broadly accepted in policymaking; however, there is an urgent need to translate this expanding field into practical actions for policy and governance measures to accelerate transitions towards sustainability. We have a responsibility to our community to take advantage of this opportunity and to demonstrate that transitions research can support – and be part of – policymaking and governance for sustainability and meeting the Sustainable Development Goals.

Transitions involve all societal groups, require extensive behavioral change from many actors and affect current structures, systems and institutions. Processes of individual and collective learning and reflection are a precondition to such changes. Transitions thinking has been brought to the attention of high-level policy-makers in countries and international organizations such as the EU, OECD and IPCC. Non-governmental organisations, social movements and social innovations have been explicitly integrated into transition experiments. New methodologies are being developed or integrated from other fields, leading to new opportunities for achieving impact through research itself. It is now time to further mainstream transitions theory, research and practice into societal and political sustainability discourses, into policy practice across all policy domains as well as into other research fields.

Therefore, the focal theme of this call is:

**Mainstreaming sustainability transitions: From research towards impact**

For this focal theme we invite in particular submissions that consider issues of how research into sustainability transitions can support change processes. Empirical and theoretical contributions using approaches from different fields of research are encouraged. Submissions could address the following guiding questions, although these are not exclusive:

- How can we identify impactful sustainability interventions while recognising the inherent uncertainty of complex, non-linear system trajectories?
- How can we better reach out to other communities of research and practice to deepen our understanding of socio-technical transitions? How do we show that transitions ideas have something extra to offer and how can we incorporate the results from other fields into our research and conclusions?
- What are implications of striving for more impact for our research practice? Which tensions exist in moving to different types of research and how do we deal with them?
- What are methodological considerations for incorporating transitions research into transitions processes/governance/policymaking?
- What are current blanks and gaps in transitions research and its move towards impact, and how can we begin to fill them?

Beyond the focal theme of the conference, the call also welcomes submissions that engage with the core of the STRN research agenda:

- 1) Conference track - Mainstreaming transitions: from research towards impact
- 2) Understanding transitions - conceptual contributions to transition frameworks
- 3) Methodologies for transitions research
- 4) Governing transitions
- 5) Organizations and industries in transitions
- 6) Politics, power and policy in transitions
- 7) Movements, culture, and civil society in transitions
- 8) Transitions in practice and everyday life
- 9) Geography of transitions:
  - Spaces, scales, and urban transitions
  - Transitions in the Global South
- 10) Ethical aspects of transitions: Distribution and justice

The conference organizers are planning on organizing IST 2021 along a hybrid format to allow both in-person and online interactions between the community. The hybrid conference format means participation and interaction will be available from around the

world (the final conference format is subject to change according to the development of the global Covid-19 situation). During the abstract submission process, authors will be asked to indicate if they are planning on presenting their work in-person or online. The conference is hosted by Fraunhofer Institute for Systems and Innovation Research ISI.

For more information, please go to [ist2021-karlsruhe.de](http://ist2021-karlsruhe.de).

Please direct any queries to [ist2021-karlsruhe@isi.fraunhofer.de](mailto:ist2021-karlsruhe@isi.fraunhofer.de).

### **Key Dates**

**Jan. 15, 2021** - Abstract submission system opens

**March 15, 2021** - Abstract submission deadline - **EXTENDED until March 30, 2021**

**May 15, 2021** - Early bird registration opens

**July 1, 2021** - Presenter registration deadline

**Aug. 1, 2021** - Full paper submission deadline & Global South Scholarship application deadline

**Sept. 10, 2021** - Regular registration deadline

**Oct. 5 - 8, 2021** - IST 2021 conference

### **Newcomers & Early Career Session**

A Newcomers & Early Career Session will be held on the afternoon of October 5, 2021. This session traditionally provides an overview of international transition studies and their highlights. The aim is to introduce researchers who are not yet familiar with transitions literatures to this vibrant community, and to explore complementarities with related research fields, perspectives and approaches. The event is organized by STRN's Network of Early career researchers in Sustainability Transitions (NEST).

For an introduction to transitions research, follow NESTS' webinar series (<https://transitionsnetwork.org/nest-webinar-series>). Check out recent activities and opportunities on the NEST blog (<https://transitionsnest.wordpress.com>), and follow NEST on Twitter @transitionsnest.

### **Session Formats**

IST 2019 follows previous IST conferences by providing a range of formats to stimulate scholarly debate.

**Full paper sessions:** 90 minute sessions for presentation and discussion of original research papers (typically 3 per session). Authors are required to submit a draft of their full paper in advance of the conference. Full papers are also eligible for nomination for the best paper award.

**Speed talk sessions:** 60 minute sessions for 3 to 5 speed talks, which briefly introduce new research ideas, data and analytical insights, and early stage work to provide a basis for collective discussion. We encourage contributions from practitioners as well as PhD students. Submission of full papers is not required for speed talk sessions.

**Posters:** The online Conference Gallery will display posters both during and after the conference. Authors will have the opportunity to present their posters during dedicated poster sessions in the conference program. A prize will be offered for the best poster.

**Dialogue sessions:** 60 or 90 minute sessions, which aim to stimulate discussion and debate around a particular thematic focus. These sessions are proposed by an external session organizer / chair with pre-agreed speakers. Dialogue sessions should be conceived to maximize audience participation. The session organizer should propose the precise format of the session (e.g. a panel, sequence of speakers, debate, workshop). We specifically invite proposals that feature non-academic participants and innovative formats. Submission of full papers is not required for dialogue sessions.

**Conference Gallery:** The online Conference Gallery gives all authors the possibility to share additional digital content of their work. This may include the use of a poster, a presentation, a video, and other formats - we invite you to get creative here! The Conference Gallery will be online for the duration of and after the conference, giving participants more flexibility of access. A prize will be offered for the best submission to the conference gallery, voted for by the conference participants.

**Special sessions:** 90 minute sessions for presentation of full research papers under a pre-ordained topic. New to IST this year, this format is a hybrid of full paper and dialogue sessions. As in a dialogue session, a special session is proposed by an external session organizer with pre-agreed speakers. We suggest between three and five pre-agreed speakers, but this is flexible according to the convener. Like in a full paper session, authors are required to submit full research papers in advance of the conference.

## **Abstract Submission Requirements**

Extended abstracts (max 600 words excluding references) for all session formats (except special sessions) should be submitted by March 15, 2021 through the abstract submission system. All submissions need to clearly identify the most relevant conference track.

Abstracts for full papers, speed talks and posters should describe the key research questions, theory, method, and findings.

Abstracts for dialogue sessions should describe the thematic focus, the contributions of speakers, and explain how the session will be organized (e.g., how it will maximize audience participation). Please include brief biographies of authors and session organizers (max 4 lines).

Proposals for special sessions should include: i) a max 600 word abstract (excluding references) for the session overall; and ii) max 600 word abstracts (excluding references) for each speaker.

During the final paper submission process, authors will be asked to indicate whether they will more likely take part in the conference in Karlsruhe or online.

## **Paper format guidelines**

The full paper needs to be uploaded to the abstract management system by August 1, 2021. We encourage you to stick to 5,000 - 10,000 words including references, tables and figures. Manuscripts should be of very good quality, i.e. as if you would submit them to a peer-reviewed journal such as EIST.

Although no (printed) conference proceedings will be published, it is foreseen to make pdf manuscripts available to the conference participants for a limited time.

## **Review Process**

Submissions will be reviewed on the basis of the following criteria: novelty, quality, and engagement with the conference theme and STRN research agenda. Outcomes will be communicated by May 15, 2021. Please note that depending on the volume of submissions, and to ensure we have a viable and lively conference program, the organizers may allocate submissions to an alternative session format. Any such reallocation will be clearly communicated in the decision letter.

## **Awards**

### *Best poster*

The best poster award will be open to all poster presenters. The winner will be selected by our IST2021 poster award subcommittee.

### *Best conference gallery submission*

The IST2020 gallery award is open to all gallery submissions. The winner will be determined by a public vote among all IST2021 participants during the Conference

### *Best paper award for early career scholars*

The best paper award will target emerging and early career scholars. To be considered for the best paper award, we ask that scholars:

- (1) meet the eligibility requirements ([IST2020 paper award eligibility](#)),
- (2) send a blind/anonymized copy of their paper (Word or pdf format) to the conference organizers (ist2021-karlsruhe@isi.fraunhofer.de) with the subject line "IST 2021 Best paper award" by August 15, 2021.

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## **Global South Scholarship**

The IST 2021 organizing committee is inviting applications for a limited number of grants (free conference participation) for selected presenters and co-authors from the Global South. This call is open to presenters and co-authors with limited funding possibilities. Applicants need to (i) be affiliated with an academic institution / organization in the Global South or (ii) be a university student working on a master's or Ph.D. originating from a country in the Global South. Please note that the application needs to be granted by the organizing committee prior to conference registration, as conference fees that have already been paid cannot be refunded in this case. Registration of accepted Global South Scholarships will need to be done with a corresponding voucher code.

### *Application Procedure*

Please send the following information to ist2021-karlsruhe@isi.fraunhofer.de with the subject line "IST 2021 Global South Scholarship" by August 15, 2021. Please provide:

- Candidate's full name and country of origin

- Institutional affiliation
- Career stage (e.g., PhD student)
- The title, abstract, and ID-number of the accepted submission
- A brief justification for applying (250 words maximum) explaining why funds are being requested
- Short CV
- Copy/photo of identity-card or passport

#### *Eligibility*

- The candidate is presenting a submission at IST 2020 or is co-author of an accepted contribution.
- The candidate is affiliated with an academic institution / organization in the Global South or is a university student working on a master's or Ph.D. originating from the Global South
- The candidate has provided all of the information requested

#### *Evaluation Criteria*

- Abstract – assessed according to merit and quality
- Brief Justification – clear explanation regarding why funds are being requested
- Career stage – preference will be given to students