



UNIVERSITY OF
WINCHESTER
CENTRE OF RELIGION,
RECONCILIATION AND PEACE

Call for Papers

3rd International Conference on:

Religion and Culture in Conflict and Peace: Impact in Reconciliation and Peacebuilding

Tuesday 2nd - Wednesday 3rd June, 2020

At the University of Winchester (UK)

<https://www.winchesterpeaceconference.com>

Deadline for receipt of abstracts: **EXTENDED** – 29th February 2020

Conference Brief

It is increasingly apparent that governments, transnational institutions and practitioners have in principle accepted that religious and culturally contextual forms¹ of peacebuilding *can in some cases* be a powerful and positive force in peace and reconciliation processes. As a result, initiatives that claim to take seriously the religious and cultural dimensions of peacebuilding have increased exponentially.

The evident optimism and increased support for this area of peacebuilding practice prompts some important questions. Is the current optimism about these approaches justified by project results and outcomes? To what extent is project design based on existing and verifiable evidence? How do the practical ideas and application link to current theoretical ideas in the subject areas of religion, reconciliation and peacebuilding?

Given the increased emphasis in academia on best practice and ‘research impact’, one of the ways we might consider these questions is by taking the outcomes of practical peacebuilding initiatives as a starting point from which to retrospectively analyse the complex factors, ideas, processes and dynamics which led to that point. An emphasis on impact can enable contributors to critically consider:

- The direct and indirect links (if any) between theory, practice and impact in religion, reconciliation and peacebuilding;
- The range and type of variables which might contribute to determining the outcome and impacts of projects;
- The methods used to determine and measure impact and outcomes, and the ‘technocratisation’ of religious and cultural forms of peacebuilding and reconciliation;
- The existence and/or benefits of relations and cooperation between academics, practitioners and policy makers.
- The importance of learning from projects that **did not** go to plan and unintended negative consequences, as opposed to only focusing on favourable outcomes.

Proposals need not only focus on violent conflicts, but projects addressing structural violence, oppression and inequalities are equally welcome. Organisers will look favourably on projects which address contemporary challenges such as violence stemming from the Climate Crisis; resource scarcity; the global rise in populism and nationalism; contemporary conflicts such as Syrian and Iraq.

The conference organisers are also keen to proactively support and develop discussions between academics, practitioners and policy makers, and therefore particularly welcome joint presentations from contributors which span these three sectors.

¹ The conference organisers recognise that the concepts of religion and culture are complex, dynamic and contested, and encourage contributors to recognise and engage with existing debates in these subject areas.

Process for submitting abstracts/expressions of interest for collaboration

Participants are invited to submit abstracts of 250-300 words (in Word or Open Office format). Proposals should also include name, institutional affiliation (if relevant), a short biography (no more than 100 words) and an email address and phone number. Proposals for panel discussions (organised by the participants) will be considered. We hope to publish a selection of papers.

Presentations will be in English, and each speaker will be allocated 20 minutes with up to 10 minutes for discussion. During the conference there will also be sessions allocated specifically for open discussions and networking.

- ***Deadline for receipt of abstracts has been extended to 29th Feb, 2020.***
- Confirmation of paper acceptance will be at the latest 14th March, 2020.

Please submit papers to: Rebecca.Bellamy@winchester.ac.uk

Conference web page: <https://www.winchesterpeaceconference.com/>

The University of Winchester Centre of Religion, Reconciliation and Peace

The conference is being organised and hosted by the 'Centre of Religion, Reconciliation and Peace' (CRRP) at the University of Winchester. The CRRP was established in 2010 with the intent of encouraging research and knowledge exchange between communities affected by conflict and their leaders, practitioners of reconciliation and peace, and academics seeking greater understanding and dissemination of ways to sustainable peace. Our staff work with a range of religious, academic and humanitarian organisations nationally and internationally, with the aim of sharing knowledge, skills, and best practice in reconciliation and peacebuilding with people of all religions and none.

For more information please visit: www.winchester.ac.uk/wcrrp

Or contact Director, Dr Mark Owen – mark.owen@winchester.ac.uk