2025 IARSLCE Conference

August 13-15, 2025 | Durban, South Africa | Coastlands Umhlanga Hotel

Theme: Celebrating a Quarter Century of Impact: Reflecting on Our Mission and Charting Inclusive Future Directions

Request for Proposals:

The International Association for Research on Service-Learning and Community Engagement (IARSLCE) is excited to announce the call for proposals for our 25th Anniversary Conference. This milestone event invites participants to reflect on our collective impact over the past quarter century and to chart inclusive future directions for service-learning and community engagement (SLCE). We seek to highlight transformative scholarship, innovative practices, and collaborative partnerships that have advanced equity and community impact.

We invite proposals connected to the theme, *Celebrating a Quarter Century of Impact: Reflecting on Our Mission and Charting Inclusive Future Directions* that explore the following thematic areas:

1. **Faculty Scholarship**
    - Examining the contributions of faculty research in SLCE or collaborative research projects completed jointly between community partners and academic scholars
    - Showcasing studies that highlight the role of SLCE in promoting educational equity and social justice.
    - Reflecting on methodological innovations and interdisciplinary approaches in SLCE research.
    - Exploring the intersections between community and civic engagement
2. **Student Development**
    - Investigating the impact of SLCE on student learning, development, and career readiness.
    - Highlighting student-led research and initiatives within SLCE.
    - Exploring strategies to enhance student engagement and leadership in SLCE activities, such as Youth Participatory Action Research (YPAR).
3. **Community Voices**
    - Centering community partners' perspectives and experiences in SLCE collaborations.
    - Sharing stories of community impact and transformative partnerships.
    - Discussing challenges and opportunities in fostering equitable and reciprocal relationships with community partners.
4. **K-12**
    - Exploring SLCE initiatives within K-12 education settings.
    - Showcasing innovative programs that integrate SLCE into the K-12 curriculum.
    - Addressing the role of SLCE in fostering civic engagement and social responsibility among K-12 students.
    - Highlighting best practices in SLCE in K-12 educational settings.
5. **Pedagogical Innovations**
    - Highlighting innovative teaching practices and curricular designs in SLCE.
    - Examining the use of technology and digital tools in enhancing SLCE pedagogy.
    - Discussing approaches to inclusive and culturally responsive teaching in SLCE.
    - Examining the future of AI and SLCE.
6. **SLCE Program Spotlights**
    - Showcasing exemplary SLCE programs and initiatives from diverse institutional contexts.

- Reflecting on program design, implementation, and assessment strategies.
- Sharing lessons learned and best practices for sustaining impactful SLCE programs.

Presentation Categories
The 2025 IARSLCE conference will include two primary session formats: **Emerging Ideas and Deeper Dives**. *Emerging Ideas* sessions offer opportunities for presenting projects that have yielded (at least preliminary) data/findings or evaluation results. The common thread among the *Deeper Dive* sessions will be sharing robust, completed research that has the potential to expand the field of service-learning and community engagement research.

Emerging Ideas

➢ ***Lightning Talks*** **(maximum one presenter)**

Lightning Talks are incisive twenty-minute presentations focusing on a key element related to the conference theme.

Topics for the talks might include:
- details about an effective, innovative teaching practice;
- application of one theoretical concept or piece of research;
- discussion of a key moment for leadership and advocacy in our field; and/or
- description of a collaboration across disciplines, institutions, and/or groups that resulted in a generative moment.

Successful Lightning Talk Proposals will be tightly focused and plan for 15 minutes for presentation, with 5 minutes set aside for questions and answers. Lightning Talk Proposals should include:

- a brief (1-2 sentence) overview of the research problem or community issue sparking the featured activities;
- a clear statement of purpose;
- a brief theoretical foundation for the talk; and
- a rationale for the significance of the talk.

➢ ***Poster Presentations (maximum 3 presenters per submission)***

Poster presentations provide a forum for scholars to engage in active discussion with other conference participants about either a completed research project or a project in the developing stages. Individuals, institutions, and organizations may present posters that highlight current research or feature programs and community partnerships informed by research and/or yield research opportunities.

There will be one poster presentation session during the conference.

Poster presenters will display research on a large bulletin board (provided at the conference; poster measurement specifications are listed below). Presenters will attend the poster session to discuss the project with conference attendees; they may wish to bring a written detailed summary of their work to hand out to attendees.

Poster Presentation Proposals should contain as many of the following as are applicable, preferably in this order:
- a clear statement of the purpose or goals of the project and the primary research question(s) addressed;
- a brief summary of the theoretical or conceptual foundations for the work;
- a concise description of the research design and methods used or proposed;

- the project findings;
- the theoretical and/or practical significance or implications of the research; and
- 3- 4 keywords that best represent the research.

Deeper Dives

➢ ***Research Paper Presentations (maximum of four presenters per submission)***

This format involves the formal presentation of a research paper that advances service-learning and/or community engagement research. Research papers present well-developed arguments on philosophical, theoretical, policy, and/or practical issues in the study of service-learning and community engagement and adhere to the tenets of scholarly research. Papers (two per session) will be grouped thematically. IARSLCE may identify a discussant for research paper sessions, or in the cases where that is not possible, paper authors will coordinate to self-introduce, keep presentations on time, and facilitate discussion.

Program descriptions and/or program evaluation results will not be considered or accepted for research paper presentations. If your ideas fall in either of these directions, we encourage you to consider one of the Emerging Ideas session formats.

Research Paper Proposals should contain the following as are applicable, preferably in this order:

- a clear statement of the purpose or goals of the study and the primary research question(s) addressed;
- theoretical or conceptual frameworks/perspectives;
- methods, techniques, or modes of inquiry;
- data sources or empirical evidence;
- results, conclusions;
- significance of the study findings;
- 3 - 4 keywords that best represent the research; and
- indicate whether and how ethical concerns were addressed and/or vulnerable populations were safeguarded.

➢ ***Roundtables (maximum of two presenters per submission)***

Roundtable discussions provide an opportunity for conference attendees to discuss research in development with other conference attendees in an informal, conversational setting. A table host will take responsibility for facilitating the discussion, and holding open the space for sharing ideas, pushing boundaries of inquiry and/or practice, and potential for continued collaboration and community beyond the conference based on the interest of roundtable participants.

***Given the informal structure of the roundtable presentation, no audio-visual equipment will be provided*.**

Foci include the following:

- Input/Feedback – for scholars presenting preliminary findings from research and/or graduate students seeking input or feedback on theses or dissertations;
- Collaborative Research – for exploring potential collaborative research projects across institutions; and
- Topical Discussions – for discussions on important topics (e.g. diversity/equity, professionalization of the field, etc.) designed to generate research ideas and/or policy briefs/white paper essays, potentially co-authored by roundtable participants.

Roundtable Presentation Proposals should contain the following as applicable, preferably in this order:

- the format of the roundtable (catinput/feedback, collaborative research, or topical discussion);
- a clear statement of the purpose or goals of the project and the primary research question(s) addressed;

- the theoretical or conceptual foundation for the work;
- the scholarly significance of the research or topic, including the particular contribution to the field in terms of SLCE theory, method, policy and/or practice;
- plans for the allocation of time (re: presenting research and engaging attendees in discussion);
- 3 - 4 keywords that best represent the research; and
- indicate whether and how ethical concerns were addressed and/or vulnerable populations were safeguarded.

In addition to the elements listed above, proposals for roundtables presenting research (Input/Feedback) should include a description of the research design, methods and findings, including participants, setting, data sources, analysis and implications. Roundtable proposals for Collaborative Research or Topical Discussions should also indicate the purpose of the discussion and any pertinent research related to the topic.

In the roundtable session, roughly equal time should be allocated for the presenter to introduce the research or topic and for session attendees to contribute to the discussion. The type of roundtable (Feedback/Input, Collaborative Research, Topical Discussion) will be noted along with the titles in the conference program.

Proposal Review Process

The Conference Committee will distribute specific review criteria for each presentation type, based on the Call for Proposals. All proposals will be evaluated according to the extent to which they:

- connected to the conference theme and a clearly identified thematic track
- are clearly and compellingly written
- are research focused
- consider the ethical implications of the research
- address issues that are important to the field
- show potential for audience appeal

Each criterion will be reviewed using the following scale:

1. The proposal does not adequately address or meet the criterion
2. The proposal adequately addresses or meets the criterion but could be more developed
3. The proposal fully addresses or meets the criterion
4. N/A: Not applicable or relevant to this proposal

A note about conference sessions:

- To allow for the inclusion of as many different voices as possible, participants will be limited to being the primary author on two (2) presentations, only one (1) of which can be the lead presenter. There is no limit on the number of co-authored papers or projects as *a non-presenting author*.
- All conference sessions are 60 minutes in length.
- All lightning round sessions will be 60 minutes, with three presenters each having 20 minutes (15 minute presentation and 5 minutes for Q&A)
- All paper presentations will have two (2) papers per session. We suggest that the two presenters each present for 25 minutes with a shared 10 minute Q&A at the end.
- There will be one poster session. Posters should be **48” x 36”** with a horizontal orientation.

IARSLCE Conference Submission Process

Conference proposals must be submitted via the IARSLCE Conference Proposal Submission Site. To submit a proposal, you will first need to create a user profile on the website. The abstract submission process requires the following components:

- Selection of the appropriate proposal category; see below for detailed information about the requirements for each format
- Author and presenter information, including contact info, professional affiliation, and a brief biographical sketch for each author
- Proposal abstract: a short, 250-word description that will be used to describe your presentation in the conference program.
- Proposal narrative: a 1000-word description of your proposal that will be used in the peer review process.

Important Dates

- Request for Proposals Released: December 19, 2024
- RFP opens: January 8, 2025
- Proposals Due: February 3, 2025
- Proposal Review Period: February 10-21, 2025
- Proposal Notifications: March 7, 2025

To submit a proposal please visit: IARSLCE Conference Proposal Submission Site

Contacts for IARSLCE

- Conference Committee Chair, IARSLCE Board of Directors, and Conference Contact
    - Rochelle Smarr, University of California San Diego
    - rsmarr@ucsd.edu

- IARSLCE Staff
    - Tiana Nobile, Administrative Director
    - admin@iarslce.org

About IARSLCE

The International Association for Research on Service-Learning and Community Engagement (IARSLCE) has been a global leader in advancing the field of service-learning and community engagement (SLCE) research since its inception as an international conference in 2001. Incorporated in 2007, IARSLCE has evolved beyond an annual conference to include a volunteer board of 18 SLCE emerging and seasoned leaders, 10 sub-committees, a yearly community of practice for emerging practitioner-researchers, quarterly webinar series, and partnership with similar SLCE organizations. Over the past 25 years, IARSLCE has built a diverse and inclusive community of over 400 scholars, representing 20 countries, 61 institutions (two and four-year universities, including non-profit organizations), and consistently mentored numerous emerging graduate students scholars, who have contributed significantly to shaping the SLCE field worldwide.

The Association's primary objective is to advance service-learning and community engagement research across the educational spectrum (primary, secondary, post-secondary, and other forms of education). IARSLCE collaborates with international organizations and affiliates through dialogue and co-sponsored regional symposiums across the globe. These partnerships seek to increase research and scholarly output across the globe and ensure that service-learning and community engagement is underpinned by international engagement.