

EXTENDED SUBMISSION DEADLINE: MONDAY, JULY 31

The Leadership Dynamics of Systems Change

The 21st International Studying Leadership Conference
10th-12th December 2023
Copenhagen Business School, Denmark

Call for Conference Proposals

<https://www.conferencemanager.dk/islc2023>

The 21st International Studying Leadership Conference (ISLC) invites scholars, graduate students, and practitioners from a variety of fields to present their research and explore together the interrelated dynamics of leadership and systems change in the face of pressing and complex challenges facing organizations, communities, societies, and the planet as a whole.

Since its first meeting in 2002, the ISLC conference has provided a forum for rigorous analysis and reflection on the nature and purpose of leadership theory and research. ISLC conference participants have contributed significant alternatives to popularized theories of leadership addressed primarily toward boosting individual leader success inside commercial organizations. This work has helped expand the field of leadership studies to encompass relational and social perspectives on leadership in the context of other kinds of organizations, collective organizing efforts, and social movements. We intend for this year's conference theme to further contribute to these developments.

This year's theme highlights how the move toward systems thinking in leadership studies redefines collective organizing efforts as networks of interacting dynamics that produce emergent outcomes, and reconceives of leadership itself as a complex process of relational influence that enables interconnectivity and adaptability. A focus on systems change can help the field of leadership studies to cultivate renewed relevance in response to pressing, systemic challenges that currently face communities and organizations. Research conducted in this spirit has redrawn the boundaries of the field to address the interplay of power, collective leadership, and social change (Ospina & Foldy, 2022), the leadership dynamics of complex adaptive systems and contemporary grand challenges (Uhl-Bien, 2021), and the potential for post-colonial, feminist, and anti-racist theories to challenge imperialist and white, masculinist ideologies of leadership (Ashcraft, 2022; Liu, 2021).

With such research as inspiration, we invite papers, workshops, and all manner of creative presentations and formats that address the dynamics of leadership and systems change in the context of an array of pressing contemporary challenges, such as climate change and environmental degradation; economic inequality; technological complexity, digitalization, and surveillance systems; race- and gender-based discrimination and violence; and the rise of extremist, populist, nationalist, and militarist movements and political systems. We encourage proposals that explore how individuals, organizations, and communities can respond to such challenges with regenerative practices, collective organizing efforts, and creative business models that align with broader societal values and purposes (Kempster et al., 2019).

In the spirit of openness and epistemic respect for different views and approaches (Krlev & Spicer, 2022), our selection process will prioritize inclusivity, diversity, and plurality. Alongside submissions linked to the conference theme, we welcome theoretical and empirical proposals on other leadership themes and topics approached from a variety of different research paradigms, methodologies, and perspectives.

Because many complex leadership issues and challenges require deeper consideration than conventional conference presentations allow, **we invite proposals not just for individual papers, but also for workshops, symposia, streams of sessions, and alternative formats for engagement that can facilitate extended conversations among existing networks and research groups, or establish new connections into the future.** You are welcome to propose performances, debates, arts-based research, or brainstorming sessions, and you are welcome to take advantage of the conference to convene or expand existing networks of colleagues and fellow travellers.

The full conference will open with a reception on Sunday evening, December 10, and run through 17:30 CET on Tuesday December 12. We intend to host a pre-conference PhD workshop, as well as a pre-conference event for other conference participants, on the afternoon of December 10 (more information on pre-conference activities will be available May 1).

The conference will take place in the CBS facilities at Solbjerg Plads, Frederiksberg 2000, Copenhagen, Denmark.

To submit to ISLC 2023, please click [here](#).

Submissions:

Authors of individual paper presentations, workshop sessions, symposia, and other alternative formats are invited to submit a 750-word abstract, excluding references, **by Monday 31 July 2023.**

For those submitting workshop sessions, symposia, and other alternative formats, please include a list of participants or contributors, and an outline of the proposed format. Feel free to contact the conference organizers if you would like to suggest an idea at ISLC2023@cbs.dk

All submissions should be submitted in English, indicate word count, and be submitted as a Word or PDF file.

Submissions should be made via the conference website [here](#).

Proposed papers will be reviewed by the conference organizing committee. We will communicate decisions to authors by Monday 4 September 2023.

Conference Fees:

- Early bird registration (August 1 – October 6): 2,800 DKK
- Standard registration (October 7 – November 20): 3,400 DKK

- PhD Student registration fee: 2,200 DKK

Please note that conference fees do not include hotel accommodation.

There will be a conference dinner on December 11th. The cost of dinner is included in the conference fee.

Keynote Speakers:

Dr. Mary Uhl-Bien, the BNSF Endowed Professor of Leadership in the Department of Management and Leadership in the Neeley Business School at Texas Christian University and Honorary Doctor of Leadership in the Department of Management, Society and Communication at Copenhagen Business School.

Dr. Mollie Painter, Professor of Ethics and Organisation at Nottingham Business School, Nottingham Trent University, Head of the Nottingham Business School Responsible and Sustainable Business Lab, and Extraordinary Professor at the Gordon Institute of Business Science, University of Pretoria.

Key Dates:

- **Monday 31 July – New Submission deadline**
- Tuesday 1 August – Registration opens
- Monday 4 September – Notification of acceptance
- Friday 6 October – Early Bird registration ends
- Monday 20 November – Registration closes
- Sunday 10th December – Conference opening reception, plus potential preconference events
- Monday 11th December – Day 1 of the conference, 9:00-17:30, and the conference dinner from 19:00 to late
- Tuesday 12th December – Day 2 of conference, 9:30-17:30

Location and Venue:

Copenhagen is the capital of Denmark and one of the happiest cities in the world, celebrated for its canals, bikes, fine dining, and breweries. The primary airport is Copenhagen Kastrup International Airport (CPH). There is a metro at the airport that will take you directly to the conference venue/hotel (Frederiksberg Station).

The conference will be held at Solbjerg Plads, Frederiksberg. The venue/conference hotel can be easily reached by metro at stops Fasanvej and Frederiksberg.

We recommend Scandic Falkoner hotel for conference participants. The venue is a short 5-minute walk from the hotel.

Conference Hosts: [The Department of Management, Society, and Communication](#) and [the CBS Leadership Centre](#) at Copenhagen Business School

Conference Co-Chairs:

[Nicole Ferry](#), Department of Management, Society, and Communication

[Eric Guthey](#), Department of Management, Society, and Communication

[Sverre Spoelstra](#), Department of Business Humanities and Law

Conference Organizing Committee:

[Annemette Kjærgaard](#), Department of Management, Society, and Communication

[Dan Kärreman](#), Department of Management, Society, and Communication

[Frank Meier](#), Department of Organisation,

[Minna Paunova](#), Department of Management, Society, and Communication

[Camilla Sløk](#), Department of Organisation

[Christian Dyrlund Wåhlin-Jacobsen](#), Department of Organisation

Conference Manager: [Lise Søstrøm](#), Administrative Coordinator, Department of Management, Society and Communication

For any questions or comments regarding the conference, please write to ISLC2023@cbs.dk.
For more information on the conference, please click [here](#).

References

- Ashcraft, K. (2022). *Wronged and dangerous: Viral masculinity and the populist pandemic*. Bristol University Press.
- Kempster, S., Maak, T., & Parry, K. (2019). *Good dividends: Responsible leadership of business purpose* (1st ed.). Routledge.
- Krlev, G., & Spicer, A. (2022). Reining in reviewer two: How to uphold epistemic respect in academia. *Journal of Management Studies*. [Early view].
- Liu, H. (2021). *Redeeming leadership: An anti-racist feminist intervention*. Bristol University Press.
- Ospina, S., & Foldy, E. (2010). Building bridges from the margins: The work of leadership in social change organizations. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 21(2), 292-307.
- Uhl-Bien, M. (2021). Complexity and COVID-19: Leadership and followership in a complex world. *Journal of Management Studies*, 58(5), 1400-1404.