

## [Call for Proposals: 2021 Science, Technology and Human Rights Conference](#)

**Deadline: Friday, April 23, 2021 at 11:59 PM Eastern Time**

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The AAAS Science and Human Rights Coalition, a network of scientific and engineering membership organizations that recognize a role for science and scientists in human rights, invites proposals for its upcoming conference, October 21-22, 2021. Due to the continuing pandemic, the conference will be held online.

**All scholars, including students, as well as human rights practitioners and community organizers, are encouraged to submit a session proposal. Proposals from those whose human rights are being threatened and who urgently need a platform for their voices to be heard so that their human rights can be respected are especially welcomed.**

The theme of this year's conference is *Urgent Responses, Emerging Challenges: Collaborations to Advance Human Rights*. The conference will highlight successful collaborations to address urgent human rights issues around the world, as well as emerging challenges that could benefit from the contributions of scientists, engineers, and health professionals working in partnership with human rights NGOs and frontline communities.

The Coalition invites sessions that address this theme, including:

- Actions that could help reach full achievement of the human right to science for populations experiencing discrimination or increased vulnerability due to political, economic and social structures, for historically marginalized communities (such as persons with disabilities), and for the other human rights connected to the right to science;
- Successful approaches to building collaborative civic science projects for human rights;
- New developments and applications in science and technology that support human rights documentation, monitoring, strategic communications, campaigning, and advocacy;
- The use of scientific evidence and a transitional justice approach that advances diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) as vital to addressing human rights;
- Leveraging the human right to science to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals;
- The human rights Implications of climate change on impacted communities and examples of scientific-human rights partnerships to attain climate justice;
- The human rights dimensions of COVID-19 and the pandemic response, including COVID-19's disparate impacts on marginalized populations, global

crackdowns on scientific organizations and government censorship of facts and findings, and the inequities raised by proposed “immunity passports”;

- Human rights and antiracism in STEM education in formal academic and informal settings, including partnerships between human rights educators and STEM educators;
- Strategies for tackling human rights challenges associated with the conduct of science and applications of technology, including ethical guidelines and codes of conduct; and
- The human rights of students, scholars, academics and researchers in places where conflict, censorship, and/or structural forms of oppression or discrimination make it difficult for them to continue their work.

### **Three types of sessions are invited:**

- **Plenary Sessions:** These are 75-minute sessions with a moderator and two or three presenters. Session topics must address the conference theme. Session organizers can choose the format that best suits the topic, which could include a series of presentations, a roundtable discussion facilitated by the moderator, or other formats well-suited to remote participation.
- **Workshops:** Workshops are 60-minute interactive sessions that focus on (1) an urgent human rights issue or intractable conflict around which collaborations across human rights, science, engineering, health, and technology offer new or emerging opportunities; or (2) collaborations between the human rights community and the scientific community to address a shared human rights concern. Workshop proposals should name a facilitator and can identify up to three discussion leaders from relevant areas of expertise; however, workshops are not panels. These are interactive sessions that engage participants in actively contributing to solutions. Workshop organizers will have the option to include break out discussion groups in their proposed format.
- **Case studies:** These 15-minute pre-recorded presentations share lessons learned – be they positive or negative – from collaborations to advance human rights by a team that includes scientists, engineers, and/or health professionals (including students and early career individuals). These case studies can focus on a specific problem and the approach the team developed to address it, or on aspects of the collaboration itself (for example, building trust with each other and impacted communities, tools the team used for remote collaboration, etc.)

### **Proposals should be submitted in the following format:**

- **Topic:** In 1-2 pages, outline the topic of discussion, including any issue or problem the session intends to explore, proposals for action and explanations of how this topic meets the proposal criteria noted above. Please be sure to indicate the session type, as described above.
- **Abstract:** A one-paragraph summary of your session that can be included in the conference program.

- **Speakers:** Provide a separate list of brief bios for all proposed speakers, moderators, and participants. Session organizers will be asked to indicate whether the proposed speakers have confirmed their participation. The proposed session participants do not need to be confirmed at the time of submission, but they should be aware that they are included in the proposal.

## **Proposals will be evaluated using the following criteria:**

- **Action-oriented:** Will the session support steps toward real-world impact?
- **Collaborative:** Will the session help build new collaborations across science, human rights, and other related sectors? This could be done by sharing examples, offering skills development to support effective collaborations, or creating opportunities during the conference for participants to connect with each other in meaningful ways. The Conference Host Committee will favor sessions that include the perspectives of human rights defenders and impacted communities, and feature members of these communities as speakers.
- **Timely:** Will the session address an urgent human rights need or emerging issue at the intersection of science and human rights? Will it provide participants with an opportunity to engage in time-sensitive action?
- **Evidence-based:** Will the session share new evidence for successful advocacy and/or collaborations?
- **Diverse:** Proposals that include speakers from diverse cultures, sectors, practice areas, geographic regions, knowledge systems, and backgrounds will be favored. The Host Committee is especially interested in proposals that include presentations by students and/or early career individuals, human rights defenders, communities whose human rights are threatened, and/or historically marginalized populations.

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Proposal submissions must be submitted by **Friday, April 23, 2021**. Proposers will be notified of the committee's decisions in June 2021.

Questions? Please contact the Coalition Secretariat at [srhrl@aaas.org](mailto:srhrl@aaas.org).

**There will be a separate call for Student Posters.**

*The AAAS Science, Technology and Human Rights Conference Host Committee recognizes and celebrates the value that accessibility, diversity, equity and inclusion bring to scientific knowledge and the scientific enterprise. We welcome all who wish to engage in positive discussion and contribute their perspectives and expertise to help solve some of the world's most pressing human rights issues.*

*To learn more about the AAAS Science and Human Rights Coalition, please visit <https://aaas.org/coalition>.*