

## Call for Papers

### 18<sup>th</sup> NCVO/ VSSN Researching the Voluntary Sector Conference

10-11th September 2012, University of Birmingham, UK

The NCVO/VSSN Researching the Voluntary Sector Conference is the primary UK conference for the voluntary sector research community. It brings together academics, practitioners and policymakers with a shared interest in the voluntary sector and voluntary action. Many of our delegates are from overseas, providing a real opportunity for networking with researchers from different countries and contexts.

Our aim is simple: to provide the opportunity to share new, emerging research, and then to make the most of the evidence base by connecting researchers with the policymakers and practitioners who use research.

The conference is your 'open space' to share new and existing research, so this call for papers is an open invitation to all researchers working on or with the sector.

Following the NCVO / VSSN Research Conference the University of Birmingham will also host the International Social Innovation Research Conference 12-14 September, the call for papers and more information can be accessed here [<http://bit.ly/zL6PzZ>]. The organisers of the two conferences will be working closely together as the week may be the largest gathering of civil society researchers ever in Britain!

#### CONFERENCE THEMES

We are inviting proposals - either for individual papers or entire sessions (2-3 papers or a panel) – which address the three main aims of the conference:

##### 1. TO INFORM AND ASSIST THE WORK OF PRACTITIONERS

We would welcome proposals for papers that:

- address issues of internal organisation – such as leadership; accountability; governance; financial management; the management of paid staff and volunteers; financial management; and performance improvement; or
- explore and discuss the ways in which voluntary sector organisations interact with their environment – such as their relationships with government agencies; trusts and foundations; and the corporate sector; and co-operation and collaboration with other voluntary agencies.

##### 2. TO INFORM AND INFLUENCE POLICY

We would welcome proposals for papers that analyse and explore the implications for voluntary organisations and their users of:

- developments in 'horizontal' policies which impact on the voluntary sector as a whole (or affect large parts of it); or

- changes in 'vertical' policies which affect the work of organisations working in specific fields of activity (such as the welfare of older people, children or those with disabilities and people in need of advice and information) and their users.

### 3. TO SHARE THE FRUITS OF RECENT RESEARCH AND THEORY-BUILDING

We also welcome proposals for papers that:

- report on the findings from recent research on the voluntary sector and community sector, voluntary agencies and community groups; and volunteering; or
- make a contribution to the theoretical understanding of any aspect of voluntary action.

### SUBMISSIONS

You can submit a proposal for either a single paper presentation or for a whole session. In all submissions, please be sure to include your name, organisation and email address. The deadline for all submissions is **30<sup>th</sup> April 2012**. Please email your proposals to [conference@vssn.org.uk](mailto:conference@vssn.org.uk)

**1. SINGLE PAPERS:** Parallel sessions will offer a balance of presentations and discussion time. Typically, sessions include three 15 minute presentations, followed by substantial discussion. All papers presented in the parallel sessions will also be available in the conference proceedings, so that, where appropriate, more detail can be provided.

***Submission:** You should send us a 400 to 600-word summary of your research. We welcome submissions discussing preliminary findings as well as those on completed projects. There is no need to include references at this stage.*

**2. THEMED PANEL SESSIONS:** In panel sessions, researchers and practitioners will discuss a theme, with audience participation. Submissions for panel sessions should list panel members and give a clear overview of the topic to be discussed.

***Submission:** please submit a 400 to 600-word proposal for a whole session. This might be a workshop, debate, panel or structured discussion on a particular theme, or a suite of two or three papers on related topics.*

**If your submission is successful, we will ask you to send us a longer 2000 to 2500-word paper/s for inclusion in the conference proceedings. We will give details on the preferred format of the paper when we confirm acceptance of your submission.**

## **AFTER SUBMISSION**

If your proposal is accepted you will still need to book and pay for a place at the conference. Louise Rogers ([researchconference@ncvo-vol.org.uk](mailto:researchconference@ncvo-vol.org.uk)) will be in touch to arrange your payment.

## **IMPORTANT DATES**

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| Abstract of 400-500 words to be submitted  | 30th April 2012                                   |
| Notification of accepted submissions   | 25 <sup>th</sup> May 2012                         |
| Full paper of 2000-2500 words and 150 word abstract for the conference proceedings to be submitted | 16 <sup>th</sup> July 2012                        |
| Deadline for Early Bird rates  | 27 <sup>th</sup> July 2012                        |
| The conference   | 10 <sup>th</sup> –11 <sup>th</sup> September 2012 |

Longer papers may be submitted, subject to agreement with the NCVO/VSSN selection panel.