Social Innovation and Sustainability

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Much recent social innovation research situates social innovation as a force for sustainable development or even transformative sustainable development. Social innovations are said to be changing the role of money, work and sense of self. This raises a number of conceptual and empirical issues: What is the normative aspect of such social innovation research? What is the theory and evidence for or against such sustainability claims (does social innovation also reproduce unsustainability and inequality)? Are social innovations based on autonomy, relatedness and purpose a reaction to marketization and state failures and/or a (historical) manifestation of (growing) demand for self-actualisation, self-determination emancipation and “doing good”? Finally, what are inter- and transdisciplinary approaches that foster a culture of social innovation for sustainability?

This stream invites contributions on the following themes:

1. What is the contribution of social innovation to social and environmental sustainability? Case studies are welcome just as much as more theoretical contributions.

2. How can we draw from general approaches to sustainability and sustainable human development (such as the capabilities approach, de-growth, planetary boundaries, resilience approach, steady-state economics and strong sustainability, transition research etc.) to analyse the potential of social innovation as a transformative or incremental force for change, as well its potential for reproducing unsustainability?

3. What is the role of transdisciplinary sustainability research for social innovation? The presentation of transdisciplinary research projects is very welcome as are methodological contributions.

4. What is the link of social innovation with economic change, welfare state reform, and cultural change? On this topic, we particularly welcome research that bridges the gap between what local actors are doing and political economy (for instance, by drawing on cultural political economy and historical sociology).
Guidelines:

Paper abstracts must be maximum 300 words, excluding references. They should articulate: the research objectives or questions being addressed; the conceptual or theoretical perspectives informing the work; where appropriate, the methodology utilised; and the contribution of the paper to knowledge in light of the conference themes.

Optional full paper submission for consideration in best paper awards is due no later than 31st July 2019.

A maximum of two abstracts may be submitted per presenter (joint papers to be presented by coauthors will also be considered).

All paper abstracts must be submitted to isirc2019@gcu.ac.uk. On abstract submission please ensure you advise the conference stream.

Panel proposals must be maximum 400 words, excluding references. They should include: the panel purpose and its relationship to the nominated conference stream; details of (minimum) three and (maximum) four papers and paper presenters to be included in the panel; and the expected contribution to the panel.

All panel proposals must be submitted to isirc2019@gcu.ac.uk.

Abstract and panel proposals submission: Closes 28th February 2019
Decision on submissions: Notification by 31st March 2019
Full papers submitted for consideration in best paper awards due: 31st July 2019

Enquiries about conference administration and technical issues related to online submission should be directed to the conference administration team at isirc2019@gcu.ac.uk