



CALL FOR ABSTRACTS

10th International Sustainability Transitions Conference

Accelerating sustainability transitions *Building visions, unlocking pathways, navigating conflicts*

23-26 June 2019
Ottawa, Canada

The 10th International Sustainability Transitions Conference (IST) will be hosted by the School of Public Policy and Administration (SPPA) at Carleton University from June 23rd to the 26th, 2019. This 10th Anniversary event will mark the first time the IST conference has been held outside Europe. It will provide an occasion to highlight the achievements of international transition studies, to introduce researchers who are not yet familiar with transitions literatures to this vibrant community, and to explore complementarities with related research perspectives and approaches.

Main Conference theme: Accelerating sustainability transitions

The pace of change has emerged as a central concern for sustainability transitions research. Although the historical record suggests major system transformations are often spread over multiple decades, some researchers have argued that transitions toward more sustainable societal arrangements can (and must) move considerably faster. This sense of urgency has been reinforced by international studies (such as the recent IPCC 1.5 °C Report), which emphasise serious consequences should societies fail to make rapid progress away from existing environmentally-destructive patterns of production and consumption.

Today there is substantial evidence that transformative changes in societal systems such as electricity and food are gathering pace as new technologies, business models and social practices begin to reconfigure existing systems of social provisioning. Yet speeding up transitions to sustainability faces serious challenges. In a number of sectors there has been increased resistance from actors opposed to more radical and rapid adjustments. Moreover, in some respects the general political situation has become more difficult with the rise of 'populist' and authoritarian movements. More generally, the knowledge base about how to speed up purposive transitions remains seriously underdeveloped.

The theme of IST 2019 – Accelerating sustainability transitions – seeks to address this context by encouraging researchers and practitioners to examine obstacles to transitions processes and strategies to speed up the transformation of systems of production and consumption. It points to

the importance of *visions* – of improved mobility systems, agricultural and food systems, buildings, cities and rural communities – to coordinate efforts and mobilize change. It raises the challenge of mapping out concrete *pathways* that can link the present with desirable futures. And it emphasises navigation of the inevitable *conflicts* that accompany serious efforts at societal change.

A number of promising avenues have already been identified by transition scholarship, including: the role of politics and policy in opening pathways for change and managing the decline of established arrangements; the place of experimentation to network change agents and test alternatives; the potential for action-oriented transitions research to broaden and scale up innovation trajectories; the importance of addressing equity and justice concerns to build societal support; the significance of national, regional, and local contexts (distinct political-economic circumstances, for instance) in defining the pace and nature of unfolding transitions; and the development of research approaches (for example, the convergence of formal modelling and socio-technical pathway analysis) to track acceleration possibilities.

In addition to this central theme of *Accelerating sustainability transitions*, the Organizing Committee for IST 2019 would like to encourage the transitions research community to reflect on two issues that are particularly important in the Canadian context (but which have more general significance) and which have so far received relatively little attention from transition scholars:

- the challenges faced by sustainability transitions in countries (for example, Canada, Australia, and many developing countries) with substantial export-oriented resource extraction sectors such as mining and primary materials processing, forestry, oil and gas, etc.
- sustainability transitions and the experiences and self-governance of Indigenous Peoples.

The organizers welcome submissions that engage with these conference themes as well as the topics that form the core of the [STRN research agenda](#). Submissions should explicitly speak to one or more of the following conference tracks:

- 1) Conference Track: Accelerating Sustainability Transitions
- 2) Understanding Transitions
- 3) Power, Agency, and Politics in Transitions
- 4) Governing Transitions
- 5) Civil Society, Culture, and Social Movements in Transitions
- 6) Organizations and Industries in Sustainability Transitions
- 7) Transitions in Practice and Everyday Life
- 8) Geography of Transitions: Spaces, Scales, Places
- 9) Ethical Aspects of Transitions: Distribution, Justice, Poverty
- 10) Methodologies for Transitions Research

Session Formats

IST 2019 follows previous IST conferences by providing a range of formats to stimulate scholarly debate:

Full paper sessions: 90 minute sessions for presentation and discussion of original research papers (typically 3 per session). *Authors are required to submit a draft of their full paper in advance of the conference.* Full papers are also eligible for nomination for the best paper award (details to follow).

Speed talk sessions: 60 minute sessions for 3 to 5 speed talks, which briefly introduce new research ideas, data and analytical insights, and early stage work to provide a basis for collective discussion. We encourage contributions from practitioners as well as PhD students. Submission of full papers is not required for speed talk sessions.

Posters: Posters will be displayed for the duration of the conference in the central gathering space. Authors will also have an opportunity to present their posters during a dedicated poster session in the conference program. A prize will be offered for the best poster presentation.

Dialogue sessions: 60 or 90 minute sessions, which aim to stimulate discussion and debate around a particular thematic focus. These sessions are proposed by an external session organizer / chair with pre-agreed speakers. Dialogue sessions should be conceived to maximize audience participation. The session organizer should propose the precise format of the session, which could be a panel, a sequence of speakers, a debate or workshop. We specifically invite proposals that feature non-academic participants and innovative formats. Submission of full papers is not required for dialogue sessions.

Abstract Submission Requirements

Extended abstracts (max 600 words) for all session formats, with brief biographies of authors and session organizers for dialogue sessions (max 4 lines), should be submitted by 21 December through the abstract system (link below). Abstracts for full papers, speed talks and posters should clearly identify the most relevant conference track and should describe the key research questions, theory, method, and findings. Abstracts for dialogue sessions should describe the thematic focus, the contributions of speakers, and explain how the session will be organized (e.g., how it will maximize audience participation).

The abstract system can be accessed here: <https://www.conftool.org/IST2019/>

Review Process

Submissions will be reviewed on the basis of the following criteria: novelty, quality, and engagement with the conference theme and STRN research agenda. Outcomes will be communicated by 22 February. Please note that depending on the volume of submissions, and to ensure we have a viable and lively conference program, the organizers may allocate submissions to an alternative session format. Any such reallocation will be clearly communicated in the decision letter.

Key dates

5 November 2018	Abstract submission opens
21 December 2018	Abstract submission deadline
22 February 2019	Communication of decisions
22 March 2019	Early bird registration deadline
2 June 2019	Full papers submission deadline
5 June 2019	Regular registration deadline
23-26 June 2019	IST 2019 conference

Organizing Committee

Professor James Meadowcroft (Chair)

Daniel Rosenbloom (Vice-chair)

Professor Alexandra Mallett

Brie Morrison

Jessica Leis

For more information and to register, please visit <https://carleton.ca/istconference/>

Please direct any questions to ist2019@carleton.ca