

**International Sustainability Transitions Conference 2022  
November 21-25**

**Stellenbosch – Melbourne – Washington DC**

**Call for papers  
for the 13<sup>th</sup> International Sustainability Transitions (IST) conference**

**Conference theme: Sustainability Transitions in a Global Context**

With this call for papers, we invite contributions from the global research community for the 13<sup>th</sup> annual conference on sustainability transitions. This year's conference theme will focus on conceptualising, comparing and evaluating sustainability transitions across places and scales, thereby highlighting the intellectual, methodological and policy challenges of understanding and governing sustainable and just transitions in diverse contexts. The IST conference will take place in the week after the UNFCCC COP 27 in Egypt and provides an opportune moment to reflect on sustainability transitions research questions.

There are good reasons to deliberately expand sustainability transitions research with a global perspective. Challenges such as climate change and sustainable production and consumption cannot be addressed within single territories (national or otherwise) and involve collaborations and contestations between different types of actors across places and scales. A global perspective is also important to ensure that sustainability transitions in one place do not negatively impact efforts and actors in other places or at different scales.

Exploring and governing sustainability transitions in a global context requires a deep engagement with the diversity in histories, cultures, politics, institutions and knowledge paradigms in and through which transitions unfold and are steered. What works conceptually, methodologically or from a transition policy perspective in some places, sectors or social contexts, and why, and not in others, deserves further scrutiny.

Hence, this year we specifically invite contributions that propose new empirical, theoretical, and methodological insights and approaches into how sustainability transitions unfold and are governed across the world, from the local to the global, and from the Global South to the Global North. Topics can include, but are not limited to:

- Transition dynamics beyond the usual suspects and commonly studied geographies and sectors.
- New frameworks and conceptual approaches for researching or governing sustainability transitions in novel places, sectors or social settings, including theorisation from the Global South.
- Novel methodological contributions that compare, contrast or evaluate sustainability transition policy and practice in diverse settings, including participatory and transdisciplinary methodologies.
- Indigenous perspectives and scholarship relating transition to issues of sovereignty, self-determination, land and water rights and traditional ecological knowledge.

- Perspectives on decolonising sustainability transitions especially in relation to questions of power, inequality, justice, post-colonial thinking and non-Western worldviews of knowledge.
- Approaches that deal with the increasing complexity and new nuances of accelerating transitions, while taking into account multiplicity and trade-offs between social, environmental and economic outcomes, including interactions of multiple systems and transitions.

Beyond the theme of the conference, the call also welcomes submissions that engage with the core of the STRN research agenda:

- 1) Conference track – Sustainability Transitions in a Global Context
- 2) Understanding transitions - conceptual contributions to transition frameworks
- 3) Methodologies for transitions research
- 4) Governing transitions
- 5) Organizations and industries in transitions
- 6) Politics, power and policy in transitions
- 7) Movements, culture, and civil society in transitions
- 8) Transitions in practice and everyday life
- 9) Geography of transitions
- 10) Ethical aspects of transitions

## **Conference organisation: towards a new model for international conferences in the age of Covid and Climate Change**

The Sustainability Transitions Research Network (STRN) has successfully organised 12 annual international conferences since its inception in 2010. These conferences have taken place in different (mostly European) countries. Due to Covid-19, the 2020 (Vienna, Austria) and 2021 (Karlsruhe, Germany) conferences were organised online. For its 2022 conference, the network is exploring a new model that involves a partnership between three universities (Stellenbosch University, Monash University and Georgetown University) on three different continents (Africa, Australia and North America).

Why a new conference model? International conferences are an important part of networking, knowledge development and exchange in academic communities. COVID has disrupted this model and has forced conferences to go online. This limits the possibilities of face-to-face exchange, which is especially important for early- and mid-career researchers. At the same time, conferences are a major source of carbon emissions in academic communities due to international air travel. Traditional conferences also create challenges for those with different physical abilities or care responsibilities or financial and other travel constraints. Rethinking the way conferences are organised can overcome COVID-related challenges in the shorter-term and allow experimentation with low-carbon and just academic conferences for the longer term, all while maintaining the benefits of face-to-face exchange and network building.

This year the three universities will partner to create a week with a truly global experience that involves both online and in-person activities, in which conference participants will

virtually travel through three different time zones and continents, with the opportunity to also meet in person.

The conference will be run through a single integrated conference and abstract submission system. Over the course of the week, each university will virtually host 1 online conference day on the conference platform, in their respective time-zone. This is followed by 1 in-person conference day in Stellenbosch, Melbourne, and Washington DC. See the draft planning chart below for conferences times, time zones and locations.

Stellenbosch	Nov-21	<b>ONLINE CONFERENCE DAY 1</b>										Nov-22						<b>ONLINE CONFERENCE DAY 2</b>							
	9am	10am	11am	12pm	1pm	2pm	3pm	4pm	5pm	6pm	7pm	8pm	9pm	10pm	11pm	12am	1am	2am	3am	4am	5am	6am	7am	8am	
Melbourne	Nov-21	Nov-22																							
	6pm	7pm	8pm	9pm	10pm	11pm	12am	1am	2am	3am	4am	5am	6am	7am	8am	9am	10am	11am	12pm	1pm	2pm	3pm	4pm	5pm	
Washington DC	Nov-21											Nov-22													
	2am	3am	4am	5am	6am	7am	8am	9am	10am	11am	12pm	1pm	2pm	3pm	4pm	5pm	6pm	7pm	8pm	9pm	10pm	11pm	12am	1am	
CET	Nov-21											Nov-22													
	8am	9am	10am	11am	12pm	1pm	2pm	3pm	4pm	5pm	6pm	7pm	8pm	9pm	10pm	11pm	12am	1am	2am	3am	4am	5am	6am	7am	
Stellenbosch	Nov-22	<b>(CONTINUED)</b>																							
	9am	10am	11am	12pm	1pm	2pm	3pm	4pm	5pm	6pm	7pm	8pm	9pm	10pm	11pm	12am	1am	2am	3am	4am	5am	6am	7am	8am	
Melbourne	Nov-22	Nov-23																							
	6pm	7pm	8pm	9pm	10pm	11pm	12am	1am	2am	3am	4am	5am	6am	7am	8am	9am	10am	11am	12pm	1pm	2pm	3pm	4pm	5pm	
Washington DC	Nov-22											Nov-23													
	2am	3am	4am	5am	6am	7am	8am	9am	10am	11am	12pm	1pm	2pm	3pm	4pm	5pm	6pm	7pm	8pm	9pm	10pm	11pm	12am	1am	
CET	Nov-22											Nov-23													
	8am	9am	10am	11am	12pm	1pm	2pm	3pm	4pm	5pm	6pm	7pm	8pm	9pm	10pm	11pm	12am	1am	2am	3am	4am	5am	6am	7am	
Stellenbosch	Nov-23											<b>ONLINE CONFERENCE DAY 3</b>										Nov-24			
	9am	10am	11am	12pm	1pm	2pm	3pm	4pm	5pm	6pm	7pm	8pm	9pm	10pm	11pm	12am	1am	2am	3am	4am	5am	6am	7am	8am	
Melbourne	Nov-23	Nov-24																							
	6pm	7pm	8pm	9pm	10pm	11pm	12am	1am	2am	3am	4am	5am	6am	7am	8am	9am	10am	11am	12pm	1pm	2pm	3pm	4pm	5pm	
Washington DC	Nov-23											Nov-24													
	2am	3am	4am	5am	6am	7am	8am	9am	10am	11am	12pm	1pm	2pm	3pm	4pm	5pm	6pm	7pm	8pm	9pm	10pm	11pm	12am	1am	
CET	Nov-23											Nov-24													
	8am	9am	10am	11am	12pm	1pm	2pm	3pm	4pm	5pm	6pm	7pm	8pm	9pm	10pm	11pm	12am	1am	2am	3am	4am	5am	6am	7am	
Stellenbosch	Nov-24											Nov-25													
	9am	10am	11am	12pm	1pm	2pm	3pm	4pm	5pm	6pm	7pm	8pm	9pm	10pm	11pm	12am	1am	2am	3am	4am	5am	6am	7am	8am	
Melbourne	Nov-24	Nov-25										<b>IN-PERSON CONFERENCE DAY MELBOURNE</b>													
	6pm	7pm	8pm	9pm	10pm	11pm	12am	1am	2am	3am	4am	5am	6am	7am	8am	9am	10am	11am	12pm	1pm	2pm	3pm	4pm	5pm	
Washington DC	Nov-24											Nov-25													
	2am	3am	4am	5am	6am	7am	8am	9am	10am	11am	12pm	1pm	2pm	3pm	4pm	5pm	6pm	7pm	8pm	9pm	10pm	11pm	12am	1am	
CET	Nov-24											Nov-25													
	8am	9am	10am	11am	12pm	1pm	2pm	3pm	4pm	5pm	6pm	7pm	8pm	9pm	10pm	11pm	12am	1am	2am	3am	4am	5am	6am	7am	
Stellenbosch	Nov-25	<b>IN-PERSON CONFERENCE DAY STELLENBOSCH</b>																							
	9am	10am	11am	12pm	1pm	2pm	3pm	4pm	5pm	6pm	7pm	8pm	9pm	10pm	11pm	12am	1am	2am	3am	4am	5am	6am	7am	8am	
Melbourne	Nov-25	Nov-26																							
	6pm	7pm	8pm	9pm	10pm	11pm	12am	1am	2am	3am	4am	5am	6am	7am	8am	9am	10am	11am	12pm	1pm	2pm	3pm	4pm	5pm	
Washington DC	Nov-25											<b>IN-PERSON CONFERENCE DAY WASHINGTON DC</b>													
	2am	3am	4am	5am	6am	7am	8am	9am	10am	11am	12pm	1pm	2pm	3pm	4pm	5pm	6pm	7pm	8pm	9pm	10pm	11pm	12am	1am	
CET	Nov-25											Nov-26													
	8am	9am	10am	11am	12pm	1pm	2pm	3pm	4pm	5pm	6pm	7pm	8pm	9pm	10pm	11pm	12am	1am	2am	3am	4am	5am	6am	7am	

The in-person-days will be organised in line with countries travel protocols and restrictions that may apply at the time. In the unfortunate case that travel restrictions apply at the time of an in-person conference day, the day will be held online. There will be no hybrid sessions.

Participants can choose to only participate in the online conference and/or combine the online experience with a visit to an in-person location of their choice at an additional rate. Recordings of online days will be made available on the conference platform to allow participants to catch up on sessions outside of their time zones.

The in-person conference days will mirror the general conference tracks and session formats, but also provide regional emphasis through keynotes and special sessions. Next to the overall conference themes, the focus of the South African in-person conference day organised by Stellenbosch University will be a review of Africa's just energy transition dynamics and challenges considering the outcomes of the UNFCCC COP 27. The in-person

day organised by Monash University will place emphasis on the role of actors and behaviour change in place-based and just sustainability transitions. The in-person day organised by Georgetown University in Washington, DC, will focus on the governance and questions of justice related to the funding of sustainability transitions.

We encourage participants to limit international travel or compensate the carbon impacts of their travel. The number of participants at in-person days will be limited per location. For planning reasons, participants will be asked for their intention to participate in-person in either one of the conference locations at the time of abstract submission.

The organisers intend to evaluate the carbon emissions and personal experiences of this novel way of international conference organisation in order to draw lessons and inform future conferences.

## **Key dates**

April 15, 2022 – Abstract submission system opens  
May 8, 2022 – Abstract submission deadline  
July 8, 2022 – Expected notification of abstract acceptance  
July 8, 2022 – Early bird registration opens  
Aug 1, 2022 - Early bird registration deadline  
Sept 1, 2022 – Presenter registration deadline  
Nov 1, 2022 – Full paper submission deadline  
Nov 7, 2022 – Regular registration deadline  
Nov 21 – Nov 26, 2022 – Conference week

## **Newcomers & Early Career Session**

A Newcomers & Early Career Session is currently in consideration. This session traditionally provides an overview of international transition studies and their highlights. The aim is to introduce researchers who are not yet familiar with sustainability transitions literatures to this vibrant community, and to explore complementarities with related research fields, perspectives and approaches. The event is organized by STRN's Network of Early career researchers in Sustainability Transitions (NEST).

For an introduction to transitions research, follow NESTS' webinar [series](#). Check out recent activities and opportunities on the [NEST blog](#), and follow NEST on Twitter [@transitionsnest](#).

## **Session formats**

**Full paper sessions:** 90 minute sessions for presentation and discussion of original research papers (typically 3 per session). Full paper submissions will be grouped by the organisers into themed sessions in accordance with the conference tracks. Authors are required to submit a draft of their full paper in advance of the conference.

**Short paper sessions:** 60 minute sessions for 3 to 5 shorter talks (typically 5-10 minutes), which can introduce new research ideas, data and analytical insights, and early stage work to provide a basis for collective discussion. Like the full paper sessions, short paper submissions will be grouped by the organisers into themed sessions in accordance with the conference tracks. Submission of full papers is not required for short paper sessions.

**Dialogue sessions:** 60 or 90 minute sessions, which aim to stimulate discussion and interaction around a particular thematic focus. These sessions are proposed by an external session organizer and chair with pre-agreed speakers. The session organizer should propose the precise format of the session (e.g. a panel, sequence of speakers, debate, workshop). Submission of full papers is not required for dialogue sessions.

**Special sessions:** 90 minute sessions for presentation of full research papers under a pre-ordained topic. The format is similar to a full paper session, but a special session is proposed by an external session organizer with pre-agreed speakers. We suggest three or four pre-agreed speakers, but this can be flexible according to the convener. Like in a full paper session, authors are required to submit full research papers in advance of the conference.

## **Abstract submission requirements**

Extended abstracts (max 600 words excluding references) for all session formats should be submitted by May 8, 2022 through the abstract submission system. All submissions need to clearly identify the most relevant conference track.

Abstracts should describe the key research questions, theory, method, findings and policy or practice implications.

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). Please include brief biographies of authors and session organizers (max 4 lines).

Proposals for special sessions should include: i) a max 600 word abstract (excluding references) for the session overall; and ii) max 600 word abstracts (excluding references) for each speaker.

During the abstract submission process, authors will be asked to indicate whether they will participate online and/or in person in Stellenbosch, Melbourne or Washington DC. When in-person programming is at capacity, successful submissions will be allocated to the online program.

## **Paper format guidelines**

The full paper needs to be uploaded to the abstract management system by Nov 1, 2022. We encourage you to stick to 5,000 - 10,000 words including references, tables and figures. Manuscripts should be of very good quality, i.e. as if you would submit them to a peer-reviewed journal such as Environmental Innovation and Societal Transitions.

Although no (printed) conference proceedings will be published, it is foreseen to make pdf manuscripts available to the conference participants for a limited time.

## **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 July 8, 2022. 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.

## **Awards**

The conference organisers are currently discussing the option of a best paper award for early career scholars. This will be confirmed at a later stage.

## **Global South Scholarship**

The IST 2022 organizing committee is inviting applications for a limited number of grants (reduced conference participation fee) for selected presenters and co-authors from the Global South. This call will be open to presenters and co-authors with limited funding possibilities. Applicants need to (i) be affiliated with an academic institution / organization in the Global South or (ii) be a university student working on a master's or Ph.D. originating from a country in the Global South. Please note that the application needs to be granted by the organizing committee prior to conference registration, as conference fees that have already been paid cannot be refunded in this case. Application procedures for the scholarship will be made available at the conference website in due time (website t.b.c.)

## **About the organisers**

Conference organisation is led by:

- **Prof. Mark Swilling**, based at the [Centre of Sustainability Transitions](#) (Stellenbosch University) and the [Environmental Justice Program](#) (Georgetown University)
- **Prof. Rob Raven**, based at the [Monash Sustainability Development Institute](#) (Monash University), in collaboration with A/prof Megan Farrelly, based at the [School of Social Sciences](#) (Monash University)
- **Prof. Gaël Giraud**, based at the [McCourt School of Public Policy](#) and the [Environmental Justice Program](#) (Georgetown University)

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