

Responsibility
5th Global Conference

Call for Submissions 2016

Thursday 17th March – Saturday 19th March 2016
Budapest, Hungary

As evidenced by the outrage at banking institutions and the governments that failed to hold them accountable for the Global Financial Crisis, calls for Muslim leaders to take more responsibility for condemning Islamic extremists and the perennial accusations that young people lack the personal responsibility of previous generations, the concept of responsibility features prominently in a diverse range of social, political and cultural discussions. While issues of responsibility are seldom far from the public eye, the ways in which they are framed often send mixed messages about expected behaviour. On one hand, we are often told that the ability to recognise the consequences of our actions and take responsibility for them is not only a measure of maturity, it is a marker of good character. On the other hand, certain legal protections, cultural cues that encourage individuals to blame others for their circumstances and the public's willingness to look the other way when famous and powerful people misbehave provide opportunities – and even incentives – for avoiding responsibility.

It is precisely because responsibility is invoked in different ways, in different contexts and in the service of different viewpoints that the concept has acquired a richness of meaning that is complex and, at times, contradictory. We may use phrases like 'taking responsibility' and 'holding someone responsible', but what does responsibility really mean? What are the necessary conditions for responsibility? Where does responsibility begin and end? Is there ever virtue in irresponsibility or in sidestepping questions of responsibility altogether? How do perceptions of responsibility colour the way we behave in our personal relationships, our occupations and as citizens in communities? Can concepts of responsibility be applied meaningfully to non-human entities such as governments, corporations or organisations? How can discussions of responsibility lead to substantive, positive changes aimed at personal development and social justice?

The Global Project on Responsibility provides a platform for exploring these questions from an interdisciplinary perspective. As the project's inaugural event, the Global Conference on Responsibility serves as a broad survey of the meaning and implications of responsibility. Building on the discussions of the first conference, the project will offer conferences, workshops and seminars that enable participants to drill down into the dynamics of responsibility as it plays out on an individual, collective and institutional level. The strand of programming that highlights personal responsibility will focus on how responsibility informs the ways in which individuals live their lives and interact with each other. In recognition that institutions play a critical role in shaping the social, political and cultural landscape we occupy, a separate strand will explore what is at stake when the concept of responsibility is applied to non-human entities with their own structures, rules and objectives. The third and final strand of programming examines collective responsibility as a middle ground between the individual and organised institutions whose agency and obligations are legally recognised. This strand considers the implications of holding members of a group (usually defined on the basis of factors like race, gender,

sexuality, ethnicity, nationality or profession) accountable for the actions of other members as well as current and historical actions carried out in the group's name.

The project organisers welcome proposals for presentations, workshops, performances, installations, readings and panels that explore the concept of responsibility in ways that include, but are not limited to:

Defining Responsibility

Philosophical perspectives on responsibility and free will (and related concepts such as obligation, culpability, accountability and reparations)

Legal perspectives on responsibility and defences related to diminished capacity

Legislating responsibility

Responsibility in religious traditions

Concepts of responsibility in different cultures

Social forces that discourage or encourage taking responsibility

Responsibility and power: having power within a situation or state of affairs to be able to respond

Personal Responsibility

Role of parents/guardians, educators, public institutions, media and other social forces in shaping how personal responsibility is defined and experienced

Responsibility and the formation of civic character/notions of citizenship within communities

Limits on personal responsibility

Responsibility and personal development, including self-help models

Enforcement, punishment and other responses to lapses of responsibility

Legal perspectives on responsibility, the defence of diminished responsibility

Relationship between sanity and responsibility

Guilt and the by-products of accepting responsibility

Teaching responsibility inside and outside the classroom

Responsibility in the workplace and other professional contexts

Activism (ethical consumer practices, volunteerism, etc)

Financial responsibility (money and debt management)

Exploring personal responsibility through film, literature and the arts

Blame culture

Institutional Responsibility

Obligations of corporations (e.g. tax avoidance, banker bonuses and corporate bailout amid economic austerity, corporations as people)

Levels and limits of Governmental responsibility for shaping behaviour and preventing harms to the community

Responsibility and foreign policy involving governmental and non-governmental actors

Obligations of NGOs

Negotiating personal morality and professional duty (e.g. workers in abortion clinics, refusal of service on the basis of religious beliefs, etc.)

Institutional cover-ups and whistle-blowing around illegal/unethical practices (e.g. Jimmy Saville phenomenon, NHS whistle-blowers, Edward Snowden, Julian Assange)

Enforcement, punishment and penalties for institutional irresponsibility

Public management policy perspectives on accountability and responsibility
Community responses to institutions that assume/neglect responsibility

Collective Responsibility

Challenges of assigning and enforcing collective responsibility

Collective memory, shame and guilt

Inter-generational responsibility and guilt: does responsibility for events like the Holocaust end with the generation that perpetrated them?

Reparations

Acknowledgment of responsibility in the historical record and educational curriculum

Backlash against collective responsibility

Exploring collective responsibility through film, literature and the arts

Strategies for dealing with collective responsibility in governmental and non-governmental contexts

Professional responsibility (e.g. responsible scientific/medical research, the responsibility of the entertainment industry to promote racial and ethnic diversity, responsibility of labour unions to promote workers' interests, etc.),

For further details and information please see the project website:

<http://www.inter-disciplinary.net/probing-the-boundaries/persons/ethics-everyday-life/call-for-papers/>

Call for Cross-Over Presentations

The Responsibility project will be meeting at the same time as a project on Experiencing Prison and another project on Recognising Evil. We welcome submissions which cross the divide between both project areas. If you would like to be considered for a cross project session, please mark your submission "Crossover Submission".

What to Send

300 word abstracts, proposals and other forms of contribution should be submitted by Friday 9th October 2015.

All submissions be minimally double reviewed, under anonymous (blind) conditions, by a global panel drawn from members of the Project Team and the Advisory Board. In practice our procedures usually entail that by the time a proposal is accepted, it will have been triple and quadruple reviewed.

You will be notified of the panel's decision by Monday 19th October 2015.

If your submission is accepted for the conference, a full draft of your contribution should be submitted by Friday 5th February 2016.

Abstracts may be in Word, RTF or Notepad formats with the following information and in this order:

- a) author(s), b) affiliation as you would like it to appear in programme, c) email address, d) title of proposal, e) body of proposal, f) up to 10 keywords.
- E-mails should be entitled: Responsibility Abstract Submission

Where to Send

Abstracts should be submitted simultaneously to both Organising Chairs:

Organising Chairs:

sean@inter-disciplinary.net Sean Moran:
responsibility5@inter-disciplinary.net Rob Fisher:

This event is an inclusive interdisciplinary research and publishing project. It aims to bring together people from different areas and interests to share ideas and explore various discussions which are innovative and exciting.

All papers accepted for and presented at the conference must be in English and will be eligible for publication in an ISBN eBook. Selected papers may be developed for publication in a themed hard copy volume(s). All publications from the conference will require editors, to be chosen from interested delegates from the conference.

Ethos

Inter-Disciplinary,Net believes it is a mark of personal courtesy and professional respect to your colleagues that all delegates should attend for the full duration of the meeting. If you are unable to make this commitment, please do not submit an abstract for presentation. Please note: Inter-Disciplinary,Net is a not-for-profit network and we are not in a position to be able to assist with conference travel or subsistence.