

Conference Call

Crafting the flow: Navigating the intersectional complexities of water security.

Dear Esteemed Colleagues,

The conference on Water Security and Intersectionality invites scholars, researchers, activists, artists, and practitioners to participate in a transformative dialogue on water security, intersectionality, and ecological justice to expand how we 'know' and tackle water insecurity. We aim to capture the complex relationships between humans and nature in a hybrid context, fostering innovative approaches to addressing water challenges.

The *hybrid* conference is scheduled to take place on July 9th at the University of Leeds.

Crafting the flow: Navigating the intersectionality of water security



Call for Papers and digital multimedia:

We are excited to invite proposals for panels that will enrich our understanding of water security through diverse lenses.

We also welcome submissions for digital multimedia corresponding to the key theme. Please contact S.Singhal@leeds.ac.uk or L.Narayanaswamy@leeds.ac.uk for further details.

Please find below the **key themes and objectives**:

1. *Understanding Water Security through an intersectional lens.*

Description: Water security is not merely a technical issue; it is deeply intertwined with inequalities based on power. The dynamics of gender, class, race, indigeneity, religion, and politics significantly influence access to, use of, control over, and management of water resources. Recognising these interconnected dimensions is crucial for developing effective strategies to address water security challenges.

Under this theme, we invite reflections on subjects including (but not limited to):

- *What are the lived experiences of individuals and communities in accessing and managing water, considering the intersections of gender, class, race, indigeneity, religion, and political agency?*
- *In what ways do structural inequalities exacerbate water insecurity, particularly for marginalised and vulnerable populations?*
- *What strategies and interventions can be employed to address water security challenges through an intersectional lens? How can these approaches be tailored to diverse socio-cultural contexts?*
- *How can research and policy efforts better integrate intersectional perspectives to enhance understanding and response to water security issues?*
- *How can advocacy and activism leverage intersectional analyses to advance water justice and equity?*
- *How can interdisciplinary collaborations between academia, civil society, government, and local communities contribute to addressing water security challenges through an intersectionality lens?*

2. *Socio-Ecological Justice: Integrating a Holistic Lens to Address Water (In)security.*

Description: Socio-ecological justice encompasses a paradigm shift in how we understand and address the complex challenges of water (in)security. It emphasises reciprocity between human and non-human worlds, challenging traditional socio-cultural norms and values that govern social relations. This lens recognises the intrinsic relationship between ecological and social spheres, expanding our understanding of justice to include the ontological value of nature. Foundational to this concept are the contributions of

indigenous groups, challenging hegemonic western notions and offering alternative perspectives on human-nature relationships.

Under this theme, we invite reflections on subjects including (but not limited to):

- *How can we integrate socio-ecological justice principles into water governance structures and policies to promote equitable access and distribution of water resources?*
- *How can a holistic and interdisciplinary approach to socio-ecological justice enhance our ability to address the interconnected socio-environmental challenges associated with water insecurity?*
- *How can we ensure inclusivity and diversity in water governance and management processes, considering the multiplicities of ontologies and perspectives within different cultural contexts?*

3. *Exploring Feminist Ethics of Care in the Context of Water (In)security.*

Description: Feminist ethics of care scholars advocate for a shift from individual rights and interests to collective acknowledgement and responsibility. They argue for an expansive understanding of care that recognises the relational and interdependent nature of human existence. Care, in this framework, is seen as essential for the well-being of individuals and societies, encompassing both practical efforts to meet basic needs and emotional concern for the welfare of others.

However, it is important to acknowledge the ways in which care in market societies is often feminised and undervalued, leading to low or unpaid labour. This raises questions about the intersectionality of care and gender, as well as the implications for social justice and environmental sustainability.

Under this theme, we invite reflections on subjects including (but not limited to):

- *How might feminist ethics of care inform our understanding of water (in)security, particularly in relation to issues of access, distribution, and governance?*
- *How can reciprocity in care be expanded to encompass both human and non-human entities, including ecosystems and other forms of life?*
- *What are the implications of feminist ethics of care for policy and practice in the field of water management and environmental conservation?*
- *How can we address the gendered dimensions of care work and ensure that care labour is valued and recognised as essential for sustainable development?*

4. *Confluences of Art and Research – How can Creative Methods Contribute to Equitable Water Security?*

Description: Stemming from the curatorial process behind the exhibition ‘Confluences – Water and People’ (Newcastle Arts Centre, 23rd March – 13th April 2024), this panel will explore how Arts-Based Enquiry can contribute to more nuanced, contextualised, and impactful research in water security. It will consider the power and purpose of visual and sensory information in shaping meanings, and the role of the Arts (in their broadest sense) in creating alternative spaces for knowledge generation.

Under this theme, we invite reflections on subjects including (but not limited to):

- *How we can use creative research processes as platforms for open dialogue.*
- *Examples of how arts/creative research processes can help reveal hidden or de-platformed voices.*
 - *Existing projects which have used art for impact and engagement.*
- *Ways in which arts-based methods can pose productive challenges to disciplinary norms and facilitate reconsideration of both quantitative and qualitative methods.*
- *How can arts express and reflect environmental, social, and cultural values within international water research?*
- *Reflections on the challenges of communicating the importance and legitimacy of arts-led research within interdisciplinary and international projects that often privilege quantitative research.*

5. Diversifying WASH: Amplifying the lived experiences of vulnerable and minority identities in Water, Sanitation and Hygiene services

Description: Water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) are crucial components of ensuring the health of any population, and inclusivity is prioritised for WASH at policy and organisational levels, but at a community level, populations can be homogenised. When minority voices are excluded, diverse lived experiences are omitted from mainstream discussions. This panel emphasises the importance of inclusivity by exploring how vulnerable and minority identities (that could be shaped by a person’s gender, sexuality, race, social class, indigeneity, disability, or religion) face inequalities in accessing WASH services. We invite contributions that offer innovative insights, practical solutions, and best practices for promoting diversity and inclusion in WASH initiatives across global contexts.

Under this theme, we invite reflections on subjects including (but not limited to):

- *How does gender, sexuality, race, social class, indigeneity, disability or religion affect WASH access across diverse socio-cultural contexts?*
- *Thinking strategically:*
 - *What strategies can be employed to safely capture the lived experiences of vulnerable populations?*
 - *What strategies can be implemented to begin to dismantle systemic inequalities that disproportionately affect vulnerable populations?*
- *How can research and policy move towards holistic inclusivity of identities that encompasses multiple lived experiences and does not homogenise challenges?*
- *How can we move away from tokenistic representation to ensure equitable decision-making processes include diverse voices?*

Please submit your abstracts by 28th May [here](#).

Your expertise and insights are invaluable as we work towards innovative approaches to address water security challenges. We look forward to your participation in this conference.

We are able to provide a small travel bursary in certain cases.

For any queries please contact,

Dr. Shivani Singhal, Research Fellow, University of Leeds (S.Singhal@leeds.ac.uk)

Dr. Lata Narayanaswamy, Associate Professor in the Politics of Global Development, University of Leeds (L.Narayanaswamy@leeds.ac.uk)

Sponsors

