



Call for abstracts

Civil Society in the four UK nations: Past, Present and Future Challenges

Thursday 28 November 2019

Cardiff University

The next VSSN day seminar in Cardiff will explore how civil society has responded to socio-economic change in terms of national devolution and uneven patterns of localism in the UK. Alongside these, future uncertainties and dissatisfaction with a seemingly uncaring political elite have prompted a new identity politics and an upsurge of new civil society movements. Following on from the VSVRC (VSSN /NCVO Conference), papers are invited that continue the conversation by drawing lessons from the past, addressing contemporary challenges and/or reflect on future horizons.

We invite contributions that consider the positioning of civil society across the UK or in the nations of Wales, Scotland, and England – or the polity of Northern Ireland. We welcome contributions that explore the role of civil society organisations in their widest sense, including community groups, charities, voluntary organisations, third sector bodies and social movements.

For example, topics might include the following:

- Opportunities and challenges of state recognition of the role of voluntary groups and civil society across time
- Politicisation, de-politicisation and re-politicisation of voluntary action
- Relationships between voluntary organisations and civil society across the four UK nations
- New strategic policy directions and the role of civil society groups
- Changing dynamics of identity recognition and civil society
- Navigating tensions between advocating for change and meeting social needs; past lessons and future actions
- Changing discourses of the voluntary sector and social action

This day seminar invites researchers, activists and those working in civil society to reflect on how we have responded to the big issues of the day and what lessons we might learn in developing both a research agenda and action for the future.

To contribute a paper:

To submit a proposal to contribute to this seminar - either individually or through a panel session – please provide a short abstract or descriptive summary of between 200 and 300 words of what you would like to present and include your contact details and organisation/group. Please send to Christala Sophocleous at Sophocleousc1@cardiff.ac.uk by Monday 30th September. Please indicate how your proposal relates to the theme(s) of the day and your proposed format. If you have any questions about the event or want to discuss contributions, please contact us at WISERD.events@cardiff.ac.uk. Please see <https://wiserd.ac.uk/events> or <https://www.vssn.org.uk/events/> for further details.