

Association of Human Rights Institutes (AHRI) Annual Conference 2021
27-28 August 2021 * Maastricht, The Netherlands



Human Rights Strategies

Call for papers

A great diversity of strategies are deployed in order to create awareness of and expose current human rights violations. Social media and digital technologies are used as a modern and quick method for 'naming & shaming'. Undoubtedly this is a positive development when it leads to 'Walls of Silence' being broken down and the exposure of abusers. The other side of the coin is, however, that the use of such technologies has paved the way for spreading rumours about serious misconduct - regardless whether they are related to sexual misbehaviour or any other human rights violation - which are swiftly disseminated on the Internet and via social media, without being backed-up by a thorough investigation. Another strategy to expose human rights violations concerns strategic litigation. Here the goal is not only to win a case for a certain client but to bring about social, political and legal changes, particularly as regards situations of gross injustice or environmental degradation.

Language may also be used as a strategy to serve a certain human rights goal. Modern society is inundated with information, but the language used in information flows on human rights issues is not neutral but coloured by certain interests. States, NGOs or other interest groups fight for defining what will be discussed in political fora such as the UN. In this way, they determine what the problems are that need to be solved, which constrains policy choices. For instance, the struggle to get certain issues into the SDGs and leaving out others. In this way, language is used as a tool and a battleground for political struggle. The question arises how academics should deal with these information politics

The theme of the 2021 AHRI Conference opens up the possibility to study and discuss all kinds of strategies that are being used by a plethora of actors who wish to further the cause of human rights. This topic is not only interesting from a human rights perspective (both from the point of view of victims and alleged perpetrators), but it is also a thought-provoking issue for criminologists, sociologists, anthropologists, and political scientists.

That is why the conference aims at discussing the practice of human rights strategies from different angles and disciplines. Attention will be paid to the different dimensions such strategies play in discussions about alleged violations and abuses of human rights by a variety of actors while focusing on the question what role academics in the broad field of human rights research can and must play to preserve the delicate balance between exposing human rights abuses and retaining academic integrity.

Conference website

The conference website can be found at: <https://www.maastrichtuniversity.nl/events/call-papers-ahri-2021>



Abstracts

We invite anyone interested in these issues to submit an abstract, and/or to propose a topic for a breakout session for consideration under the following tracks:

Track 1: Naming and Shaming

Track 2: Strategic Litigation

Track 3: Information Politics

Abstracts and proposals for breakout sessions not directly linked to the three tracks will also be considered. Abstracts submitted by doctoral candidates will be considered for both the outlined conference tracks and the doctoral workshop, which will take place (completely on-line) on Thursday, 26th August 2021.

Abstracts of max. 300 words can be submitted to via the link on the event website.

Academics whose abstracts have been selected, will be invited to write a paper and present it during one of the sessions of the conference on 27 & 28 August.

Important Dates

The conference will be held on **Friday 27th and Saturday 28th August 2021**

The doctoral workshop will be held on **Thursday 26th August 2021**

Registration for the conference opens:	1 March 2021
Deadline abstract submission:	31 March 2021
Notification of abstract selection:	30 April 2021

Venue

The conference will take place on-site at the Crowne Plaza, Ruitersij 1 Maastricht (on 27th August 2021) and at the Faculty of Law, Bouillonstraat 3 Maastricht (on 28th August 2021).

However, in view of the COVID-19 pandemic and the current uncertainty as to how the situation will evolve, we will make provisions so that **online attendance** will be possible as well. In any case, the doctoral workshop will be completely on-line (on 26th August 2021).

Enquiries

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Organisers

The AHRI 2021 conference is a joint effort by the Maastricht Centre for Human Rights and the Association of Human Rights Institutes

The **Maastricht Centre for Human Rights** is based at the Faculty of Law of Maastricht University. There is great diversity among the members as regards nationalities and cultural and scientific backgrounds. Research conducted at the centre is interdisciplinary, with a focus on public international law, criminal law, criminology and other relevant social sciences. The Centre favours research themes that contribute to a better society within the context of the process of globalisation and that raise fundamental questions about human rights (as opposed to mere technicalities).

www.maastrichtuniversity.nl/MCfHR

The **Association of Human Rights Institutes** (AHRI) is a network of over 80 member institutions that carry out research and education in the field of human rights across every continent. The objective of AHRI is to promote research, education and discussion in the field of human rights.

www.ahri-network.org