

## Conference: “Fulfilling Indigenous Peoples’ and Minority Rights to Culture and Language”

Senate House, University of London, London, UK

11 October 2018

### CALL FOR PAPERS

2018 marks the 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (2003). Building on this occasion, this conference intends to reflect on the particular rights of indigenous peoples and ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities in the domain of cultural and language rights.

This conference is being convened jointly by the Human Rights Consortium and Institute of Modern Languages Research, School of Advanced Study, University of London, and Brunel University Law School. The conference is supported by the Open World Research Initiative (OWRI) project entitled ‘Cross-language dynamics: reshaping community’, funded by the UK Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC).

Both indigenous peoples and minorities have cultural life at the core of their collective identities. There are major weaknesses and also some opportunities in the existing international human rights law framework to address these rights, both in principle and in practice. Instruments such as the UNESCO Convention on Intangible Cultural Heritage complement existing human rights law and offer additional pathways to protection. The preservation and development of distinct ways of life, languages, values, sciences, legal systems, philosophies, beliefs, and other aspects of culture are both evolving and also under threat.

The conference seeks to place culture at the centre of discussions. The UN distinguishes between tangible and intangible cultural heritage but how does this equate with indigenous peoples’ and minorities’ own understanding of culture? In what ways do cultural rights, such as language rights, facilitate the realisation of other human rights for these groups? How have states accommodated cultural rights through legal or policy frameworks? What are the intersections between cultural rights and key issues of access to justice, land rights, gender equality or forms of autonomy and self-determination?

This is an inter-disciplinary conference and papers are welcomed from a wide variety of disciplines and practice areas. Some key topics include:

- Social mobilisation by indigenous peoples and minorities for cultural or language rights
- Cultural or language rights protection through forms of autonomy and self-determination
- Intersections or conflicts of cultural rights with other human rights issues
- Challenges for safeguarding and transmitting intangible cultural heritage (e.g. language, performing arts, festivities, oral traditions, craft skills)
- Gaps and opportunities in the legal framework for protecting cultural and language rights of indigenous peoples and minorities
- Everyday practices of cultural and language rights protection within communities
- The importance of cultural and language rights protection in the sustainability and resilience of communities

The conference invites scholars and experts to contribute to the discussions on this important area. Paper proposals of no more than 350 words should be submitted, along with a speaker bio, to the organisers at [hrc@sas.ac.uk](mailto:hrc@sas.ac.uk). **The deadline for proposals is 26 August 2018.** Accepted papers will be notified by 3 September. Early career scholars are encouraged to apply. We also welcome panel proposals: please submit the names and the contact details of panellists, titles and abstracts of the papers and title and description of the panel/roundtable.

One output of the conference will be a special issue of the [International Journal of Human Rights](#) (published by Taylor and Francis). Conference papers will be invited to submit to the special issue.

For more information on the conference, please contact Dr. Julian Burger ([julian.burger@sas.ac.uk](mailto:julian.burger@sas.ac.uk)) or Dr. Corinne Lennox ([corinne.lennox@sas.ac.uk](mailto:corinne.lennox@sas.ac.uk)) at the School of Advanced Study, University of London. For more details on the work of the School of Advanced Study and conference venue, see <http://www.sas.ac.uk>.