

## **Call for Proposals**

### **“Human Rights Research in Armenia: Current and Emerging Issues”**

*2<sup>nd</sup> International Conference organized by the Raoul Wallenberg Institute of Human Rights and Humanitarian Law and the American University of Armenia in Yerevan, December 3-4*

*The Raoul Wallenberg Institute of Human Rights and Humanitarian Law (hereinafter “RWI”), Lund, Sweden is pleased to announce the second international conference "Human Rights Research in Armenia: Current and Emerging Issues", to be organized in Yerevan on December 3-4 2024. The Conference will be organized in cooperation with the **American University of Armenia**.*

*The Conference aims to provide a platform for academics, human rights practitioners, international development partners, and policy makers to explore jointly current and emerging human rights issues in Armenia. We invite contributions from scholars, students, CSO representatives, and practitioners, including development partners, and encourage contributions willing to cross boundaries and build bridges between academic disciplines, as well as between theory and practice.*

*The Conference forms part of RWI's Armenia Programme 2022-25 to support the production of high-quality human rights research in Armenia and to generate opportunities for cross-sectoral cooperation in the area of human rights research. Selected participants in the conference will be offered the opportunity to receive continued support during 2025 to develop their research further through a fellowship opportunity, as well as publish their research through conference proceedings. You may find more information on both opportunities below.*

#### **Background:**

The Republic of Armenia is currently facing a number of pressing human rights challenges, exacerbated by both internal structural issues and external geopolitical pressures. Issues such as conflict and its consequences, environmental degradation, gender inequality, corruption, and restricted access to justice are deeply affecting the country's human rights landscape. These issues are not only matters of governance but also impede efforts to uphold international human rights standards in Armenia.

In this context, the RWI Armenia Programme (2022-2025) seeks to address these key human rights concerns through increased cooperation between academia, civil society, and government bodies. This conference aims to convene a diverse set of stakeholders, from researchers to human rights practitioners, to explore effective strategies for addressing Armenia's human rights challenges and to encourage policy recommendations that reflect RWI's ongoing commitment to human rights, equity, and sustainable development.

This year, the conference will also invite international participants who have research topics or focus areas related to Armenia, expanding the dialogue beyond local borders. Additionally, the 2024 conference will feature high-level plenary discussions and panels, including representatives from Armenian government agencies, international development partners, and civil society organizations, encouraging a comprehensive multi-stakeholder approach to human rights.

### Objectives:

1. **Facilitate Multi-Sectoral Dialogue:** Engage scholars, civil society, government representatives, and international organizations in productive dialogues surrounding Armenia's pressing human rights issues.
2. **Develop Solutions to Emerging Challenges:** Discuss practical and policy-driven solutions to critical issues such as human rights in conflict resolution, environmental justice, access to education for marginalized communities, and gender equality.
3. **Strengthen Armenia's Human Rights Framework:** Contribute to the strengthening of Armenia's institutional and legal frameworks for the protection of human rights, informed by research and best practices.
4. **Promote Cross-Border Collaboration:** Foster opportunities for Armenian and international participants to share knowledge, learn from each other, and collaborate on future research and initiatives.

### Conference Themes:

In particular (but not exclusively), we welcome proposals in relation to the following conference themes:

1. **Human Rights and Conflict Resolution:**
  - Addressing the intersection of human rights and conflict, with a focus on the Nagorno-Karabakh situation and its impact on the region.
  - Transitional justice mechanisms and their role in post-conflict resolution.
  - The rights of refugees, displaced persons and vulnerable populations in conflict-affected areas.
2. **Human Rights and the Environment:**
  - Exploring the impact of climate change on human rights, particularly in the areas of health, food security, and livelihoods.
  - Corporate accountability and environmental rights, with a focus on sustainable development.
  - Strategies for promoting environmental justice in Armenia.
3. **Gender and Human Rights:**

- Addressing gender inequality and gender-based violence, with a focus on cultural and systemic barriers.
  - The role of legal frameworks and civil society in advancing women's rights.
  - Gender, poverty, and economic rights, examining the intersection of social and economic inequalities.
4. **Rule of Law, Access to Justice and Corruption:**
- Investigating the barriers faced by marginalized groups in accessing justice.
  - The role of corruption in undermining human rights and legal protections.
  - Potential legal reforms and strategies for improving transparency and accountability in the Armenian justice system.
5. **Access to Education and Human Rights:**
- **Educational Inequality:** Exploring disparities in access to education, particularly for marginalized communities, including displaced populations and rural areas.
  - **Human Rights Education:** The role of human rights education in fostering tolerance, inclusivity, and empowerment, particularly for youth and marginalized groups.
  - **Legal Frameworks for Inclusive Education:** Examining Armenia's legal obligations under international human rights conventions to ensure equal access to quality education.
  - **Intersection of Education and Social Justice:** Analyzing how education can be a tool to combat poverty, gender inequality, and discrimination.
  - **Innovative Approaches to Education:** Exploring the role of digital technologies and alternative education models to improve access to quality education for all.
6. **Human Rights and Poverty:**
- Exploring how economic inequalities contribute to human rights violations, with a focus on poverty reduction strategies.
  - Empowering marginalized groups through human rights-based approaches to economic development.
  - Addressing the linkage between poverty, environmental degradation, and human rights.
7. **Human Rights and Digital Technologies and AI:**
- Analyzing the impact of artificial intelligence and digital technologies on human rights, privacy, and data security.
  - Examining the role of AI in promoting or violating rights, particularly in areas such as surveillance, automated decision-making, and digital identity systems.
  - Exploring ways to mitigate the risks of AI in human rights violations while maximizing its potential to promote social good.
8. **Human Rights and Non-Discrimination and Inclusion:**
- Addressing the challenges of ensuring non-discrimination and inclusion for marginalized groups such as ethnic minorities, LGBTQ+ communities, persons with disabilities, and others.
  - Exploring legal frameworks, policies, and practices aimed at promoting equal treatment and opportunities for all.
  - Examining the role of education and awareness-raising in fostering an inclusive society.
9. **Business and Human Rights:**

- Examining the responsibilities of businesses in respecting human rights, particularly in the context of labor rights, environmental impact, and corporate governance.
- Addressing challenges related to holding businesses accountable for human rights violations within global supply chains.
- Exploring innovative approaches to promoting corporate social responsibility and ethical business practices.

### **Expected Outcomes:**

- **Policy Recommendations:** Formulate policy recommendations that address Armenia's pressing human rights challenges, including access to education, informed by the discussions at the conference.
- **Research Collaboration:** Encourage partnerships between Armenian and international institutions to further human rights research and strengthen local capacities.
- **Action Plans:** Develop concrete action plans for integrating human rights principles into national and local governance structures, with a specific focus on education reforms.

### **Fellowship Opportunity:**

Participants of the conference will have the unique opportunity to apply for a fellowship, jointly organized by the RWI and the AUA. This fellowship program will allow selected individuals to benefit from the vast resources available at both institutions and receive mentorship from distinguished scholars. This initiative aims to deepen participants' engagement with human rights research and practice, providing them with tailored guidance and support as they develop their projects and research agendas. Fellows will also have the opportunity to network with global experts, enriching their professional experience and expanding their research capabilities.

### **Conference Proceedings:**

In addition to the fellowship opportunity, participants will also have the possibility of contributing to the conference proceedings, which will be published following the event. These proceedings will offer an excellent platform for researchers and practitioners to showcase their work to a wider audience, further increasing the impact of their contributions. Selected papers will be highlighted, offering participants a prestigious outlet for their research, thereby enhancing their professional profiles.

### **Participants:**

The conference will bring together a broad spectrum of participants, including:

- **Academics and Researchers:** Both Armenian and international scholars specializing in human rights, law, education, and gender studies.

- **Civil Society Organizations (CSOs):** Armenian and international CSOs working on human rights advocacy, education access, and capacity building.
- **Government Representatives:** Policymakers and public officials from Armenia who are responsible for the formulation and implementation of human rights policies.
- **International Organizations:** Representatives from international human rights bodies and development agencies.

### **Call for Proposals:**

We invite both individual paper and full panel proposals that address questions related to the above themes; proposals for other issues related to human rights more generally may also be submitted. Each full panel proposal should include 3 or 4 papers plus a chair and discussant.

Individual Paper proposals require:

- Paper title (maximum of 15 words per title)
- Paper abstract (maximum of 500 words)
- A 350-word (or less) biographical statement

Panel proposals require:

- Panel title (maximum of 15 words)
- Panel theme (maximum of 500 words)
- Panel keywords
- Contact and short bio from each session participant including: first name, last name, affiliation, e-mail address, and a 350-word (or less) biographical statement for each participant.

Abstracts are to be submitted by 10 November 2024. The conference will accept a restricted number of articles due to the limited space available.

Abstracts should be sent via email to Elina Amirjanyan: [Elina.amirjanyan@rwi.lu.se](mailto:Elina.amirjanyan@rwi.lu.se)

### **Language**

Contributions will be accepted in both Armenian and English. Panels and paper presentations during the conference can be held in both Armenian and English.

### **Registration of participants**

The conference is open to academics, students, civil society representatives, decision and policy makers who are engaged in or interested in human rights research in Armenia. The conference will accept **up to 100 participants**. Registration for participation for those that are not presenting a paper or part of a panel is available [here](#).

**Logistics:**

The conference will take place in **Yerevan, Armenia, on December 3-4, 2024**. It will feature a combination of keynote speeches, panel discussions, and thematic workshops. This year's conference will include high-level plenary sessions, providing a platform for engaging with representatives of Armenian government agencies, international development partners, and civil society.

For more information, please contact [arman.gasparyan@rwi.lu.se](mailto:arman.gasparyan@rwi.lu.se)