



## **Society for Social Work and Research**

### **CALL FOR PAPERS**

31st Annual Conference  
January 20-24, 2027  
Hilton San Francisco Union Square  
San Francisco, CA, USA

## **Social Work Research at the Service of Democracy: Advancing Rigorous Inquiry for the Common Good**

#### **Submission Deadline:**

Wednesday, April 15, 2026, 11:59 pm, Pacific Time

#### **Abstract Submission Site:**

Site will be opening early March, 2026.

The Conference Planning Committee of the Society for Social Work and Research (SSWR) welcomes submissions for presentations within all content areas of social work, social welfare services, and social policy.

The theme for the 2027 conference is “Social Work Research at the Service of Democracy: Advancing Rigorous Inquiry for the Common Good.” Social work research is a catalyst for building a more just, inclusive, and vibrant democracy for the common good, where every person participates equitably and communities thrive. At a moment when our society is being reshaped, it offers pathways of understanding that bring people together and ensure that no one is left behind. By grounding policies and practices in research evidence and compassion, our work creates bridges across difference and nurtures communities where equity and dignity can flourish. Applied research becomes not just a tool of accountability, but a source of innovation and hope—strengthening the bonds that connect us all. With a steadfast commitment to inclusive and rigorous inquiry, we help imagine and realize a future where democratic principles are not only protected but fully alive, and where every voice contributes to the flourishing of society.

The objectives of the conference are to:

1. Recognize policy and program impacts of social work research at the local, state, national, and international levels by social work scholars;
2. Advance social work as a discipline by reviewing the collective impact and potential for social work science; and
3. Center racial equity and social justice in social work research, policy, and practice.

Submissions should focus on what changes may have resulted due to the research that was conducted. These changes may be due to the research process itself or the dissemination and implementation of the research. We encourage submissions that describe how research has contributed to changes in individuals, organizations, communities, and policies. The challenge is to describe what has changed as a result of the research not just the research per se. Community partners, research participants, policymakers, and other research partners are welcome as co-presenters.

We also invite critical reflections on how research can better achieve social change. How might we better define issues and engage research participants? What designs, methods, analysis, and means of dissemination maximize public impact? How can social work researchers lead the academy in engaging community and influencing social policy?

We also continue our focus at this conference on racial and social justice. Of particular interest are submissions that address implicit and explicit bias in social work research, and describe research and research findings that advance racial and social justice for marginalized populations.

Research abstracts are encouraged in all substantive areas, using scientifically sound qualitative and/or quantitative methodology. The research may take place in any country and at the micro, macro, or policy level. This year's conference theme is cross-cutting by population, problem and substantive areas, as well as methodological expertise and as a result, we encourage submissions across all Clusters as they pertain explicitly to the impact of social work research in the form of proposals for individual papers and poster presentations, symposia, roundtable discussions, and workshops. These may span various forms of research.

**Cluster areas are:**

1. Adolescent and Youth Development
2. Aging Services and Gerontology
3. American Indian, Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian and Global Indigenous Populations (Indigenous Cluster)
4. Asian and Asian-Pacific Islander Focused-Research
5. Black and African Diaspora Focused-Research
6. Child Welfare
7. Communities and Neighborhoods
8. Crime and Criminal Justice
9. Disability
10. Gender
11. Gender-Based Violence
12. Health
13. History
14. Inequality, Poverty, and Social Welfare Policy
15. International Social Work and Global Issues
16. Immigrants and Refugees
17. LatinX Focused-Research
18. Mental Health
19. Military Service Members, Veterans and Their Families
20. Organizations and Management
21. Race and Ethnicity
22. Research Design and Measurement
23. Research on Social Work Education
24. School Social Work
25. Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity
26. Social Work Practice
27. Substance Misuse and Addictive Behaviors
28. Sustainable Development, Environmental and Climate Justice
29. Work and Work-Life Policies and Programs

## **SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS**

Abstracts must be submitted in the following formats (see Author Submission Instructions document). Abstracts should be 500 words or less. References are not required, and if included count towards the 500-word limit. Image(s) and table(s) are not permitted in any abstract.

1. Oral paper presentation
2. Flash Talk presentation
3. Poster presentation
4. Symposium of three or more papers on the same topic to be presented in the same session
5. Roundtable
6. Workshop

## **ORAL PAPER, FLASH TALK, POSTER, AND SYMPOSIUM PAPER SUBMISSIONS**

Abstracts should be submitted in a structured format and include the following:

- Background and Purpose: description of the problem, study objectives, research question(s) and/or hypothesis (es).
- Methods: study design, including a description of participants and sampling methods, data collection procedures, measures, and appropriate analytic/ statistical approach.
- Results: specific results in summary form.
- Conclusions and Implications: description of the main outcome(s) of the study and implications for practice, policy, or further research.

## **SYMPOSIUM SUBMISSIONS**

- please submit an abstract (500 words or less) for each symposium paper, along with an overall abstract (500 words or less) for the symposium session that describes the symposium theme and its importance.
- Preference will be given to symposia that demonstrate cohesiveness across presentations.
- Symposia will be accepted or rejected in total, i.e., abstracts will not be accepted independently.

## **ROUNDTABLE AND WORKSHOP SUBMISSIONS**

Session abstracts should add to the current knowledge base in social work practice, policy, theory, and research methodology, and offer clear meaningful implications for social work research, policy and practice.

- please submit an abstract of 500 words or less that describes the content and how it will be addressed.
- For roundtables, describe the topics that will be addressed elaborating on viewpoints and perspectives to be discussed.
- For workshops, the workshop session should offer training opportunities for methodology (study design, sampling, data collection, measurement, and analysis) and describe the pedagogical techniques.

**Abstracts should not be based on research previously published elsewhere.** Please note that only paper and poster abstracts reporting completed findings will be reviewed. We urge that studies with “findings pending” be submitted for future review after the study is complete. Peer reviews will be used to select submissions based upon technical merit and importance of findings. Please note that all abstracts are to be submitted online using the SSWR online abstract management system at [www.sswr.org](http://www.sswr.org).

## **PRESENTATION ROLE LIMIT**

SSWR seeks to optimize as many people participating in the conference as possible. SSWR, therefore, limits the number of roles that participants can play in the 2027 conference. There is a limit of two (2) presenting-author abstract submissions per person. This limit applies to these presentation formats: oral papers, both individual papers and papers within an organized symposium, posters, and workshops. It does not apply to co-authorship. Participants may, however, perform additional roles such as chairing an organized symposium, leading a special interest group, serving as moderator for a session of grouped oral papers, and a panelist in a roundtable session.

## **SSWR MEMBERSHIP AND CONFERENCE REGISTRATION POLICY FOR PRESENTING AUTHORS AND SPEAKERS**

Submission of an abstract for the 2027 conference does not require a current membership. However, all individuals whose abstracts are accepted for presentation are **required** to join or renew SSWR membership for the 2027 membership year and register for the 2027 Annual Conference **no later than December 31, 2026**.

**This policy applies to all presenting roles** such as oral paper, flash talk, and poster presenting authors; symposium organizers and discussants; symposium paper presenting authors; workshop and roundtable speakers; Special Interest Group (SIG) conveners; and Brief and Brilliant presenting authors.

**Co-authors listed on accepted abstracts are exempt** from this requirement unless they plan to attend the conference, in which case conference registration is required. Compliance with this policy is mandatory for participation in the conference program.

## **SUBMISSION DEADLINE**

Wednesday, April 15, 2026, 11:59 pm, Pacific Time

## **QUESTIONS**

If you have any questions about the Call for Papers and/or abstract submission process, please contact A. DeeJay Hastings, IOM, CAE, program director, [dj@sswr.org](mailto:dj@sswr.org) or 703-352-7797, ext. 2.