

COALITION CALENDAR

April 30: Call for Proposals for the 2021 AAAS Science, Technology and Human Rights Conference

The annual AAAS Science, Technology and Human Rights Conference will take place online October 21-22, 2021. The deadline for the call for proposals has just been extended to April 30! The theme of this year's conference is *Urgent Responses, Emerging Challenges: Collaborations to Advance Human Rights*. The conference will highlight successful collaborations to address urgent human rights issues around the world, as well as emerging challenges that could benefit from the contributions of scientists, engineers, and health professionals working in partnership with human rights NGOs and frontline communities. Proposals from those whose human rights are being threatened and who urgently need a platform for their voices to be heard so that their human rights can be respected are especially welcomed. [More information here](#).

May 1: 2021 Coalition Student Essay Competition

The Coalition's annual Student Essay Competition begins on May 1! The essay competition was created to inspire students to explore connections between human rights and science, engineering and the health professions. Students may write on any topic at the intersection of science and/or technology with human rights. More information is available at <https://www.aaas.org/shr2021essay>. Essays are accepted through June 4, 2021.

May 4: Webinar: Community Science – Local Knowledge and Scientific Tools Joining Forces to Document Urban Health Hazards

On May 4 at 11:00am Eastern Time, join the AAAS Science and Human Rights Coalition's Scientific Collaborations with Human Rights Organizations project team for the webinar [Community Science: Local Knowledge & Scientific Tools Joining Forces to Document Urban Health Hazards](#). The webinar highlights the work of the [Claiborne Avenue Alliance](#), a coalition of New Orleans, LA residents who came together in 2017 to raise awareness of the ongoing negative impact of the Claiborne Expressway (part of Interstate I-10) and to advocate for change. Working with the Alliance, scientists joined with community members to document the effects of the highway and to share their expertise with community members – including local public school students – so that strong evidence of the toxicity brought by the expressway would be made available to the public and to New Orleans officials. More information [is here](#). You can register for the [webinar here](#).

COALITION ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND ACTIVITIES

Coalition Submits Comments on Right to Science and Toxics

To support an upcoming United Nations expert report on the connections between toxics and the human right to science, the Coalition [prepared and submitted comments](#) drawn from its past research and recommendations on the right to science, as well as the specific scientific and technical expertise of member organizations. The Secretariat has also provided a list of scientific experts recommended by Coalition member organizations to consider for future consultations on this subject. The UN Special Rapporteur's report will be released later this year.

NCSCE Online Conference: Transcending Barriers to Success: Connecting Indigenous and Western Knowledge

Coalition member the National Center for Science and Civic Engagement (NCSCE) is hosting a free online conference and showcase April 23-25 on the work of its project *Transcending Barriers to Success: Connecting Indigenous and Western Knowledge*. The conference will highlight the work of the project partners and feature “other initiatives and efforts taking place globally to advance inquiry, research, and education that honor indigenous knowledge, and connect indigenous, local, and “Western” knowledge systems, in order to work towards effective and equitable solutions for the important and contested issues of our time.” More information [is available here](#).

Editorial: The Importance of the Right to Science During Pandemics

Coalition member Dr. Natallia Sianko, along with two colleagues, published an editorial in *KONTAKT: Journal of Nursing and Social Sciences Related to Health and Illness* on why the right to science matters in the context of the pandemic: “A universal human rights approach appears well-suited to address a universal health care problem. Using the right to science to frame a universal response to the pandemic is a unique opportunity to elevate the status of this right and provide concrete examples of how it should be applied.” [Read the editorial here](#).

Recordings from 2020 AAAS Science, Technology and Human Rights Conference

Recordings of 20 sessions from the 2020 AAAS Science, Technology and Human Rights Conference are now available on the AAAS [YouTube channel](#). Highlights include Lesley Iaukea’s [keynote address](#) on human rights, ethics, and climate change and an [Ask Me Anything session on eliminating racism](#) through the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

COVID-19 & Human Rights Resources

The COVID-19 and human rights [resources page](#) on the Coalition website features resources on [access to science](#), [overarching issues](#) during the pandemic, and more. Please feel free to share additional resources you have found helpful or information about what your organization is doing to respond to the pandemic.

CALLS FOR INPUT

May 7: UN Seeks Input on Transitional Justice Measures and Human Rights

The UN Special Rapporteur on the promotion of truth, justice, reparation and guarantees of nonrecurrence is seeking input for a report to be presented at the UN General Assembly in October 2021 on transitional justice measures to address the legacy of serious violations of human rights and humanitarian law committed in colonial contexts. Of particular interest are specific examples regarding the design and implementation of measures in the field of truth, justice, reparation, memorialization, and guarantees of non-recurrence to address gross human rights violations and serious violations of international humanitarian law committed in colonial contexts, or the considerations that prevented their adoption, and the legal and institutional frameworks underpinning those measures or lack thereof. The deadline for submission is May 7, and further information may be found [here](#).

May 26: Call for Papers for 2021 AAA Annual Meeting

The American Anthropological Association (AAA) is calling for papers for its Annual Meeting, to be held November 17-21, 2021, with a [theme of “Truth and Responsibility.”](#) The meeting, which will be a hybrid of in-person and virtual formats, will examine how anthropologists can work to secure a capacious, progressive vision of the human, including how movements for anti-racism, decoloniality, queer liberation, and healing may advance future anthropology and its limits and possibilities. The conference will further examine the quantitative methods used to identify patterned truths and the responsibility in challenging conventional wisdom about these patterns and the need for increased transparency and ethical grounding in data collection, analysis, and presentation. The deadline for submission is May 26, and further information may be found [here](#).

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

April 26-28: Nobel Prize Summit, “Our Planet, Our Future”

The first Nobel Prize Summit, “Our Planet, Our Future” will be held April 26-28 to bring together Nobel Prize laureates and other leaders in the sciences, policy, business, the youth movement, and the arts to explore actions that can be achieved this decade to put the world on a path to a more sustainable and prosperous future. Hosted by the Nobel Foundation and organized by the U.S. National Academy of Sciences in partnership with the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research, Stockholm Resilience Centre, and the Beijer Institute of Ecological Economics, the summit will draw upon lessons learned in the global response to the COVID-19 pandemic to mobilize action on fighting climate change and biodiversity loss, reducing inequality, and advancing technologies and human rights. Registration is free and open to the public; further information may be found [here](#).

Job: May 3: Director, Technology and Human Rights, Human Rights Watch

Human Rights Watch is seeking a Director of Technology and Human Rights to grow its newly created Technology and Human Rights Division. The position involves overseeing, supporting, and collaborating with experienced staff on two complimentary bodies of work: (1) investigating and advocating against the role of technology in human rights abuses globally and (2) using technology to research and expose human rights abuses. Applications are due May 3; further information may be found [here](#).

May 7: Registration Deadline for Data for Justice Conference

The Data Justice Lab at Cardiff University in the UK is hosting a conference, *Civic Participation in the Datafied Society* on May 20-21 to bring together international scholars, practitioners, activists, and community groups to discuss the possibilities and challenges of civic participation in a datafied society. The deadline to register is May 7, and further information may be found [here](#).

May 16: Call for Abstracts: Digital Transformation and Human Rights

Frontiers, an open access publisher and open science platform, is calling for abstracts for *Frontiers’ Research Topics*, peer-reviewed article collections, for an issue on “The Digital Transformation of Knowledge Production: Promises and Perils for Democracy, Humanitarianism and Human Rights Practice.” The Research Topic explores the promises and perils for democracy, humanitarianism, and human rights posed by the digital transformation of knowledge production. Abstracts are due May 16 and manuscripts August 24. Further information may be found [here](#).

May 21: Call for Submissions: APA’s Technology, Mind, and Society Conference

The American Psychological Association (APA) is calling for papers for a virtual conference, *Technology, Mind, and Society*, which will be held November 3-5. The conference will bring together scientists, industry leaders, practitioners, students, and policy-makers to explore the critical role psychology plays in the design, use, adoption, and impact of technology and artificial intelligence, including the ethical and policy questions concerning the opportunities and challenges arising from human–technology interactions. The deadline for submissions is May 21. Further information may be found [here](#).

June 1: Call for Proposals: Social Practice of Human Rights Conference

The Human Rights Center at the University of Dayton is calling for proposals, roundtables, and workshops for its conference, the *Social Practice of Human Rights*, to be held in December 2021. The conference’s theme is “Between Peril and Potential: Human Rights Advocacy in the Wake of a Global Pandemic.” It will address the challenges and opportunities the pandemic has created for human rights advocacy and whether current human rights methods, strategies, and approaches are comprehensive, deep, and robust enough to achieve improved human rights outcomes. Submissions are due June 1; further information may be found [here](#).

Job: Doctors Without Borders: Mental Health Activity Manager

Doctors Without Borders is seeking clinical psychologists to serve as Mental Health Activity Managers to provide technical expertise and consultation to national staff on the set-up, implementation and/or evaluation of culturally and socially appropriate psychosocial interventions. The programs would be directed to people suffering from post-traumatic stress related to a conflict situation or natural disaster, victims of sexual violence, or people being treated for HIV/AIDS and/or tuberculosis. Mental Health Activity Managers will recruit, train, and supervise locally hired mental health workers and adapt tools to local cultural needs/contexts and to changing circumstances in the field. Further information may be found [here](#).

Opportunity: USPTO Patents for Humanity: COVID-19

The United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) is expanding its *Patents for Humanity Awards Program* to include a new category for those who are responding rapidly to the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic by using or developing game-changing technologies. This new award category will provide business incentives for patent applicants, holders, and licensees whose inventions track, prevent, diagnose, or treat COVID-19. Any U.S. patent or patent application that addresses COVID-19 is eligible for this award, including any inventions created to track, diagnose, prevent, or treat the disease. Further information may be found [here](#).

SCIENCE AND HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE USA

NSF Adds Broader Impact Framework to Funding Proposals

Arthur Lupia, Assistant Director, Directorate for Social, Behavioral and Economic (SBE) Sciences at the National Sciences Foundation (NSF), has issued a [letter](#) to the scientific community to specify an additional criterion, a Broader Impacts Framework, which encompasses the potential to benefit society, as part of proposals for funding to the NSF. The criterion offers a framework for connecting fundamental research outcomes to quality-of-life improvements for others. The Broader Impacts Framework poses three questions to help researchers more clearly articulate the broader impacts that their work can have: (1) who can the scientific opportunities and communicative products empower; (2) whose quality of life can the empowerment improve; and (3) what actions make these broader impacts more likely.

Article Examines How to Increase Diversity in Biomedical Research in the U.S.

A recent [article](#) in *Science* examines the role and practical steps that institutional review boards (IRBs) and research ethics committees (RECs) can have in helping to achieve greater diversity in clinical research. The authors point out that the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on certain populations, such as Black, Latinx, and Indigenous populations in the U.S., has focused attention on inequalities in health and on the need to increase enrollment of racial and ethnic minorities and other underrepresented groups in biomedical research.

More Inclusive Journal Policies Address Author Name Changes on Published Papers

A recent [article](#) in *Science* examines new policies by the scientific publishing industry to make it more inclusive by allowing name changes in published works by authors who may change their names midcareer due to a change in marital status, religion, or gender identification. In general, new policies allow authors to change their names without public notification, a change from previous practices, which generally either didn't allow for a name change or required a correction notice and co-author approval if a change were made. Many journals view their policies as a work in progress and are continuing to engage in discussions about how to implement the changes.

Human Rights Groups Call for Maternal Health to be a Focus in U.S. Domestic Climate Policy

A coalition of more than 50 human rights, reproductive rights, reproductive justice, environmental justice, maternal and child health, healthcare professional organizations, medical societies, and other advocates sent a [letter](#) to President Joe Biden to call for concrete action to ensure that the country's maternal health crisis, which includes racial inequities, is a central focus of U.S. domestic climate policy. The letter was [in response](#)

to the President's January executive order on tackling the climate crisis and for his commitment to racial justice and environmental justice. "Climate health adaptation efforts should adopt a reproductive justice lens and acknowledge the added vulnerability faced by birthing people, particularly Black and Indigenous women, and others most affected by the country's maternal health crisis," said the letter. The groups outlined a series of recommendations to address climate-change impacts on maternal and infant health outcomes, including ensuring that climate human health impacts, gender equality, racial equity considerations, and human rights are all addressed in the Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) by naming the domestic maternal health crisis as an area of concern and action. NDCs are commitments made by countries under the Paris Agreement to reduce national greenhouse emissions and adapt to the impacts of climate change.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

UN Global Compact Launches Climate Ambition Accelerator

The United Nations Global Compact, an agreement from companies to align their operations and strategies with 10 principles in the areas of human rights, labor, environment, and anti-corruption, has launched the Climate Ambition Accelerator, a six-month learning program to equip companies with the knowledge and skills they need to help halve global emissions by 2030 and to reach net zero emissions by 2050. The Climate Ambition Accelerator aims to scale up credible climate action across companies of all sizes, sectors and regions, to enable them to set and deliver on meaningful commitments to reduce emissions and deliver on the Paris Climate Agreement. The new program builds on the UN Global Compact's work to develop and promote the [Science Based Targets initiative](#) and the [Business Ambition for 1.5°C campaign](#). It also complements the Global Compact's existing environmental sustainability efforts such as the [Action Platform on Climate Ambition](#), the [Sustainable Ocean Business Action Platform](#) and the [Water Resilience Coalition](#), which in turn contribute to the Race to Zero and Race to Resilience campaigns in the lead up to the United Nations Climate Change Conference in November 2021.

Scholars at Risk Has Human Rights Concerns for Myanmar's Higher Education Community

Scholars at Risk (SAR) has sent a [letter](#) to the United Nations Human Rights Council (HRC) to raise concerns over widespread human rights violations by Myanmar's military and police following the February 1 military coup and the effects on Myanmar's higher education community. SAR is calling on the HRC and other state and non-state stakeholders, including the higher education community, to take all available steps to secure an end to actions by Myanmar's military and police that restrict or punish peaceful protest; secure the release of imprisoned students, scholars, and other political prisoners; restore civilian-led government and rule of law; and protect and promote fundamental human rights, including academic freedom, in Myanmar.

Separately, health researchers and scientists in the U.K. recently authored an [op-ed](#) in *The Lancet* to call for protection for healthcare workers in Myanmar that are participating in the civil disobedience movement in the country in keeping with a United Nations resolution that prohibits harm against health workers in situations of conflict.

Groups Advocate for Making Ecocide an International Crime

A recent NBC News [article](#) tracks the push to make "ecocide," generally referring to acts of environmental destruction, an international crime. An ecocide crime would require International Criminal Court members to enact their own national ecocide laws, and failure to enforce those laws would enable the international court to intercede. China, the U.S, India and Russia are not members of the International Criminal Court, but if an entity/business based in one of those countries were to operate within a member state, they would fall under the court's jurisdiction. The Stop Ecocide Foundation, a group advocating for ecocide laws, independently convened a panel of international legal experts to draft a definition of ecocide with plans to publish their definition in June, with the goal that at least one of the court's member nations will formally propose that the court adopt ecocide as the fifth international crime against peace.

Human Rights Watch Stresses Health as Human Right in Response to COVID-19 Pandemic

April 7 was World Health Day, with the World Health Organization (WHO) [calling](#) for increased government investment and cooperation to address global health inequities, including with respect to the COVID-19 pandemic. Human Rights Watch published an [article](#) further advocating for health as a human right and called for improved access to COVID-19 vaccines and treatments, protection of healthcare workers, and improved outcomes for groups disproportionately affected by the pandemic, such as low-income individuals, older individuals, people with disabilities, and women.

Applying Social Science Research in COVID-19 Policymaking

A recent [op-ed](#) in *Nature* calls on policymakers to involve experts from social sciences and the humanities, in addition to STEM experts, to address the COVID-19 pandemic. The author, Hetan Shah, head of the British Academy, the U.K.'s national academy for the humanities and the social sciences, asserts that SHAPE (social sciences, humanities and the arts for people and the economy) disciplines provide an understanding of social realities, such as vaccine hesitancy, and therefore such experts would provide valuable insights. He cited a study by the British Academy that drew on SHAPE disciplines to review the pandemic's social impacts that involved the mapping of more than 550 relevant research projects as well as workshops and written submissions to draw on the views of leading SHAPE scholars, early-career researchers, and representatives of national academies and learned societies. The review was structured to align with policy workflows in three areas: (1) knowledge, skills and employment; (2) communities, culture and empowerment; and (3) health and well-being. In each area, the study explored governance, trust, cohesion, inequalities and sustainability in the U.K., but its findings can be applied globally.

European Qualifications Passport for Refugees Pilot Program Assessed

A recent [op-ed](#) advocates for the use of the European Qualifications Passport for Refugees (EQPR), which provides a methodology for assessing refugees' qualifications even when they cannot be fully documented and to have that assessment accepted across borders. The EQPR has been implemented on a pilot basis in 11 European countries. The pilot started in 2018 and runs through 2021 with a third phase envisaged. It provides an assessment of higher education qualifications based on available documentation and a structured interview. It also presents information on the applicant's work experience and language proficiency. The document provides reliable information for integration and progression toward employment and admission for further studies. The article describes the successful use of EQPR in Italy.

New Study in Canada Supports a Right to Food Framework to Reduce Farm Edible Food Loss

A new study from Food Systems Lab at Fraser University in Burnaby, British Columbia, Canada proposes implementing a "right to food" framework that would support the needed funding, infrastructure, and stability that can reduce losses of edible food at farms while creating better access to local foods for consumers. The study, [published](#) in the journal *Resources, Conservation and Recycling*, looked at the reasons for on-farm losses of edible food in Canada and how to mitigate them. Recommendations from the study include focusing on the "food as a right" paradigm, investing in processing infrastructure, connecting farmers with alternative markets such as "farm to school" programs, and revising policies such as the current donation tax incentives in Canada.

UN Experts Raise Human Rights Concerns over \$3 Billion Tourism Project in Indonesia

UN human rights experts are [calling](#) on the Indonesian government to respect human rights and the rule of law amid reports that a \$3 billion tourism project on Lombok Island has involved aggressive land grabs, forced evictions of Sasak indigenous peoples, and intimidation and threats against human rights defenders. The experts also criticized a lack of due diligence by banks and private businesses involved in the project to identify, prevent, mitigate and account for how they address adverse human rights impacts as set forth in the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights.

NEW REPORTS AND RESOURCES

New Mechanism Provides A Community Science Approach to Funding Science

Thriving Earth Exchange, which seeks to strengthen and enhance collaboration among communities, scientists, and partner organizations to achieve an ecologically responsible future, has launched the Thriving Earth Exchange Neighborhood Fund, a community science approach to funding science. The fund seeks to provide greater decision-making and funding to community organizations to allow them to choose science projects and scientists for their projects. Further information may be found [here](#).

Report Examines Water Shutoffs and Incidence of COVID-19

Food & Water Watch, a national advocacy group, and Cornell University have issued [a report](#), *The Relationship Between Water Shutoffs and COVID Infections and Deaths*, to examine the connections between water shutoffs and increased incidence of COVID-19 infections in the U.S. The study found that if a nationwide water shutoff moratorium had been put into place, it might have reduced total COVID cases by 4.0% and COVID deaths by 5.5% in 41 states without a full moratorium between April 17, 2020 and December 31, 2020. Extrapolating from model results, a nationwide water shutoff moratorium during the study period might have prevented 480,715 COVID-19 infections and 9,052 deaths.

Recorded Webinar on the Right to Academic Freedom

Science for Democracy, an organization fostering public awareness of the right to science, the Associazione Luca Coscioni, a non-profit organization focused on the freedom of scientific research, and Eumans, a pan-European citizens movement addressing human and civil rights, hosted a webinar in early March on the right to academic freedom. The event focused on several case studies where academic freedom has recently come under attack, including in China, Hungary and Turkey. A list of speakers may be found [here](#), and a recording on the webinar may be found [here](#).

Report Examines Human Rights Concerns of Healthcare Workers Treating COVID-19

Physicians for Human Rights has issued a [report](#), *Silenced and Endangered: Clinicians' Human Rights and Health Concerns about Their Facilities' COVID-19 Response*, to gain input from healthcare workers on their organization's practices during the COVID-19 pandemic to better understand the human rights and health concerns of healthcare workers who provide direct patient care. The study examined healthcare workers' experiences with respect to: (1) access to adequate resources such as personal protective equipment and necessary materials for patient care; (2) retaliation or reprimands from employers or government officials for speaking out in defense of the safety and rights of patients and healthcare workers; and (3) provision of clear, transparent guidelines and training around resource allocation.

The Lancet Article Examines Impact of COVID-19 on Disabled People

A recent [article](#) in *The Lancet* examines the disparate impacts of COVID-19 on people with disabilities due to three factors: the increased risk of poor outcomes from the disease itself; reduced access to routine health care and rehabilitation; and the adverse social impacts of efforts to mitigate the pandemic.

UN Issues World Ocean Assessment to Address Climate Change and Biodiversity Loss

As part of policy and action to implement the UN's 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, particularly its ocean-related goals, including for the environment and climate change, the UN issued its second [World Ocean Assessment](#). In announcing the report, UN Secretary-General António Guterres addressed the pressure from human activities and pollution of the ocean that have endangered the oceanic environment, caused climate change impacts, and contributed to biodiversity loss through ocean warming and acidification. "The COVID-19 pandemic has exposed the fragility of our societies and demonstrated that human health and the health of our planet are linked," he said in an April 21, 2021 statement. "To recover better, achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, and keep the 1.5-degree target of the Paris Agreement within reach, we must

transform our relationship with nature. This includes our relationship with the ocean, the life support system of our planet.”

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