The International Association for Media and Communication Research (IAMCR) invites submissions of abstracts for papers and panel proposals for the 2015 IAMCR conference to be held from **12 -16 July, 2015** in Montreal, Canada. The deadline to submit your abstract is midnight GMT on **9 February 2015**. This deadline **will not be extended**.

See the individual CfPs of Sections and Working Groups as they become available at
http://iamcr.org/congress/montreal2015-cfp#sections

**Conference theme:**

# Hegemony or Resistance? The Ambiguous Power of Communication

This year's conference theme seeks to explore the ambiguous relationship of communication towards hegemony and resistance. It relates, for example, to the various ways in which communication has been described not only as a value of our times – echoing an ideal for social transparency and communality – but also as a threat in terms of global domination. This ambiguity has prompted debates in academia about communication being at the same time a value and a tool, a space of consent and one of struggle, and having (more authentic) local and global dimensions.

For example, recent demonstrations around the world, such as Occupy Wall Street, the Arab Spring, the Chilean students' protest, or the *Los Indignados* movement, as well as the Québec student's strike and *Idle no more* in Canada, have triggered discussions and reflections about the utopia of communication. Massively supported by digital media and organised around the ideal of building more authentic forms of community, these mass movements of "global solidarity" have mobilized communication as a value that challenges authorities, financial or economic globalisation and dominant representations of the world-as-we-know-it. These movements draw on the argument that global corporate media and cultural industries have distanced us from more faithful forms of communication. In this sense, they echo what John Durham Peters has described as our obsession for communication as a "registry of modern longings," whether based on democracy, social and economic justice, or "the mutual communion of souls." While embracing these arguments, protest movements have a paradoxical relationship to communication, resisting its role in the domination of global cultural industries and capitalism while at the same time applauding its capacity to foster values and communality that would otherwise have been lost. They often do so through disruptive communication practices using communication technologies or cultural productions.

While multiple sites of resistance are spreading around the world, much of the debates about

communication technologies mark an increasing suspicion towards the new media's capability for empowerment. The crisis unveiled by the Edward Snowden case, the importance of Big data and the NSA's large-scale espionage practices, just to name a few examples, reveal part of the ambiguous relationship that the public maintains with the media. Despite a general consensus over the past few years, which is critical of the use of communication technologies for surveillance and ideological purposes, few people have really changed their own use of communication devices. Political reform promises, as well as the social, economic and cultural prominence of new technologies seem to contribute to the maintenance of a negotiated status quo. Such situations are far from exceptional and examples abound of what Antonio Gramsci referred to as hegemonic domination by consent, where communication not only represents an instrument for control, but also a space for the expression of the majority – "organs of public opinions […] that are artificially multiplied" – that legitimate these practices.

Beyond these examples, this year's conference theme concentrates on this ambiguous power of communication. What are the finalities of communication with regards to opposing forces acting at micro, meso and macro levels? To what extent can media and communication "change our living world"? How can communication contribute to the empowerment of individuals and groups in their local contexts? How do modern forms of communication interact with the ideal of democracy, considered as much an apparatus for manipulation as for freedom? If communication has power, what is the nature of this power? How do media represent hegemonic processes and acts of resistance? In what ways do entertainment, social media, journalism or public relations act as symbols of resistance or control for corporations and civil society? In what ways does media and communication research constitute in itself a site of hegemonic domination or of resistance? Contributions may include empirical research from a wide variety of terrains, or methodological and theoretical papers from a large scope of epistemological perspectives.

## Submission of Abstracts

Each Section and Working Group of the IAMCR will issue its own Call for Papers, based on the general thematic outline above. The list of Sections and Working Groups and links to their respective Calls may be found at http://iamcr.org/congress/montreal2015-cfp#sections

Abstracts should be submitted only via IAMCR's **Open Conference System (OCS)** at http://iamcr-ocs.org from **1 December 2014 – 9 February 2015**.

Early submission is strongly encouraged.

## Deadlines

The deadline for submission of abstracts is **9 February 2015**. Please note that this deadline will not be extended. The **OCS system** at http://iamcr-ocs.org will close on **9 February 2015**.

Decisions on acceptance of abstracts will be communicated to applicants by their Section or Working Group Head no later than **23 March 2015**.

Conference registration will be open in **March 2015**.

For those whose abstracts are accepted, full conference papers are to be submitted via IAMCR-OCS by **19 June 2015**.

## Guidelines for Abstracts

Unless otherwise stated by a Section or Working Group, abstracts should be between 300 and 500 words in length.

All abstract submissions **must** be made via IAMCR's OCS at http://iamcr-ocs.org. There are to be no email submissions of abstracts addressed to any Section or Working Group Head.

It is expected that for the most part, only one (1) abstract will be submitted per person for consideration by the Conference. However, under no circumstances should there be more than two (2) abstracts bearing the name of the same applicant either individually or as part of any group of authors. Please note also that the same abstract or another version with minor variations in title or content must not be submitted to other Sections or Working Groups of the Association for consideration, after an initial submission. Such submissions will be deemed to be in breach of the conference guidelines and will be automatically rejected by the Open Conference System, by the relevant Head or by the Conference Programme Reviewer. Such applicants risk being removed entirely from the conference programme.

Upon submission of an abstract, you will be asked to confirm that your submission is original and that it has not been previously published in the form presented. You will also be given an opportunity to declare if your submission is currently before another conference for consideration.

Technical guidelines, if any, are defined by the individual Sections and Working Groups. Consult the Section or Working Group's specific CfP or contact the heads of the Section and Working Group you want to submit to if you have questions.

For further information, please consult the conference website at: http://congresiamcr.uqam.ca/ or contact the Local Organizing Committee (LOC) by email: iamcr2015@uqam.ca.

## Criteria for Evaluation

Submitted abstracts will generally be evaluated on the basis of:

1. theoretical contribution
2. methods
3. quality of writing
4. literature review
5. relevance of the submission to the work of the Section or Working Group
6. originality and/or significance of the work

Sections and Working Groups may use additional criteria and may assign different weights to the above criteria. Consult the specific CfP or contact the heads of the Section and Working Group you want to submit to if you have questions.

## Sections and Working Groups

The individual CfPs of IAMCR's Sections and Working Groups will be accessible via the links at http://iamcr.org/congress/montreal2015-cfp#sections