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YORK
ST JOHN
UNIVERSITY

Research ~ Education ~ Practice

CALL FOR ABSTRACTS

Sixth International Conference of the British Association for the Study of Spirituality

incorporating a celebration of the 10th Anniversary of the
Journal for the Study of Spirituality

Spirituality in Research, Professional Practice and Education

Monday 1 June – Wednesday 3 June 2020

***York St John University
York, UK***

Further information and booking at: yorks.ac.uk/BASS2020

Academic queries: Dr Joan Walton at j.walton@yorks.ac.uk

BASS 2020: Spirituality in Research, Professional Practice and Education

In his Opening Address at the launch of the British Association for the Study of Spirituality (BASS) in January 2011, the then President, John Swinton, asked:

Why is it that everyone talks about spirituality in such different terms? Why is it that everyone seems to know what it is, yet no one seems to be able to offer a definitive description? Sometimes it is perceived as the manifestation of love; sometimes it is the search for hope, meaning and purpose; for some people it is about religion and God; others clearly and self-consciously want to exclude God and religion. How can we claim to have a coherent field of enquiry if those who are participating in the field appear to have no coherent understanding of what the central concept is?

Part of the 'problem' of spirituality is that it straddles different cultures, academic disciplines and professional contexts. Studies in and of the field draw on scientific and literary concepts, on quantitative and qualitative data, and on objective measures as well as subjective experiences. BASS came into being with the expressed intention of providing a forum where studies shaped by the diverse approaches and priorities of different cultures, perspectives and professional obligations might be brought together in the context of what Swinton referred to as 'hospitable conversation' in both 'physical and conceptual' spaces.

The Sixth International BASS Conference, like its predecessors, will be specifically designed to offer plenty of space for hospitable conversation, whether in plenary sessions following keynote presentations, in smaller groups in the parallel sessions devoted to participants' own presentations, or simply in the social context of shared meals and refreshments or a stroll in the grounds. The conference will be interdisciplinary and inter-professional, bringing together a broad range of scholars and practitioners from around the world who have interests in the theory and practice of spirituality. It will provide opportunity for conversations and syntheses across international, academic and professional boundaries that sometimes pose their own challenges to the development of a 'joined-up' field of spirituality studies.

The conference title reflects the three key elements in the study of spirituality that underpin the work of BASS: Research, Education, Practice. Four internationally-renowned Keynote Speakers will each highlight what they see as significant aspects of spirituality within their own disciplinary/professional context, including particular challenges to, and opportunities for, the development of research, professional practice and/or education in the field.

The conference venue, York St John University, has deliberately been chosen to enhance the conversational aspects of the conference. It prides itself on being a small, friendly university with a strong community spirit. The oldest higher education institution in the beautiful riverside city of York, it has been at the forefront of teaching and education for over 175 years. The University's self-contained campus is just a short walk away from the city's Roman walls, ancient cobbled streets and medieval buildings - and the iconic York Minster, a towering 13th-century Gothic cathedral. There is a wide range of accommodation close to the university. However, early booking is highly recommended as York attracts many visitors, especially during the summer months.

ABSTRACTS are invited for:

- Individual oral paper presentations
- 'Dialogue pairs' (two people jointly presenting a topic in dialogue with one another)
- Workshops
- Posters

These may present accounts and findings from theoretical research and reflection, studies in professional settings and/or in contexts involving learning, teaching or facilitation in the field of spirituality. They may be from any academic, professional or community setting in which the study and practice of spirituality plays a part.

Doctoral students and new researchers in the field are warmly invited to participate and will have an opportunity to join the *BASS Spirituality Scholars Network*.

Process

Each accepted oral presentation and dialogue pair will be allocated a total of 40 minutes (25 minutes for presentation + 15 minutes for discussion) in one of the seven parallel sessions taking place at different times during the conference. *Two* consecutive presentations will be scheduled in each of the seminar rooms used for the parallel sessions. They will be matched as far as possible in terms of theme or approach. In order to facilitate discussion, participants are kindly requested to select one pair of presentations to attend in each session.

There is a limit of one oral presentation per presenter.

Depending on numbers, workshops may be allocated up to 60 minutes each.

Poster presentations will be on display during Day 2 of the conference and there will be a 'live' poster session scheduled during the afternoon when participants will be able to discuss the content with poster presenters.

All presenters will have the opportunity to submit a full paper (maximum 6,000 words) based on their presentation for consideration for inclusion in the *Journal for the Study of Spirituality* (See: <https://www.tandfonline.com/loi/yjss20>)

Preparing your Abstract for Submission

Your Abstract will serve two purposes:

1. It will be reviewed anonymously by the conference committee to select presentations for inclusion in the conference.
2. If your presentation is accepted, your Abstract will be published in the conference booklet.* This will help to inform conference participants' choices of which sessions to attend.

**Please note that Abstracts will only be published after the conference fee has been paid.*

Your Abstract should be of no more than 300 words. It should be anonymous throughout.

The Abstract should be *preceded* (on the same page) by:

- (i) Detail of the **nature** of your presentation (*i.e.* Oral, Dialogue Pair, Workshop, Poster)
- (ii) The **title** of your presentation (see note on titles, below)

In addition to your Abstract, please supply the following information, on a separate sheet.

1. Author information (primary presenter*)

- ✓ First Name
- ✓ Middle Initial (if appropriate)
- ✓ Last Name/Surname
- ✓ Email address
- ✓ Postal address
- ✓ Contact telephone number(s)
- ✓ Affiliation (institution/company *etc*)
- ✓ Names and affiliations of any additional authors*

*** One author must be designated as the primary presenter.** Correspondence will be by email and will be sent to the primary presenter only.

2. Presentation title

Capitalize *only* the first letter of the first word and any proper nouns. The title is strictly limited to no more than 30 words. Registered names and trademarks are not permitted in the title.

3. Technical requirements

Powerpoint will be available in some rooms. Please indicate whether or not you will wish to use this to assist your presentation.

Submitting your Abstract

Please check that you have completed your Abstract and additional information *in the format outlined above.*

The Abstract and all additional information should be contained in a single Word document.

The document should be sent in a virus-free email attachment to Dr Joan Walton at:

j.walton@yorks.ac.uk.

Please write 'BASS Conference Abstract' in the email header line.

DEADLINE

The Deadline for receipt of Abstracts is

17.00 GMT on 1 November 2019

Notification of acceptance will be sent by the beginning of December 2019 to enable presenters to take advantage of the reduced 'early bird' booking fee.

Early booking for the conference AND overnight accommodation is highly recommended.
York is a popular visitor destination and many hotels and bed & breakfast accommodations become fully booked well in advance of the summer months.