



UN IYC 2012 Co-ops Conference

CALL FOR PAPERS: UN International Year of the Co-operative Conference, 8-9 November 2012 Perth Western Australia.

CO-OPERATIVES IN THE FOURTH SECTOR: THE ROLE OF MEMBER-OWNED BUSINESSES IN THE GLOBAL ECONOMY

The United Nations had declared 2012 to be the International Year of Co-operatives (IYC 2012). As noted in the UN statement on the IYC 2012 “Co-operatives are a reminder to the international community that it is possible to pursue both economic viability and social responsibility”.

Co-operative and mutual enterprises comprise some of the largest and oldest business enterprises in the world and while they are found in a wide range of different forms, they share a common DNA in their business models. A key element of this is their ownership and control by members which makes them very democratic as business entities.

Despite their importance the academic knowledge-based relating to member-owned businesses remains under developed. Co-operative and mutual enterprises are also characterised for their ability to deliver both economic and social capital outcomes in a manner that is not always found within other types of business organisation.

This has led to the suggestion that co-ops and mutual businesses are part of a ‘Fourth Sector’, separate from the investor-owned enterprises of the first, government agencies of the second and charitable or non-profit organisations of the third sectors. This unique role of these member-owned businesses has a particular resonance in the aftermath of the recent Global Financial Crisis (GFC). The GFC has shaken the foundations of many economies and raised questions about the sustainability of the mainstream investor-owned business as the superior business model.

UWA in conjunction with Co-operatives WA¹ and its members invites you to join us in Perth for a research exchange focusing on the theme of the member owned business in the global economy and how they may contribute to a Fourth Sector. Papers of a multi-disciplinary nature are welcome as the study of co-operative and mutual enterprises requires both economic and social perspectives. Papers may be both theoretical and empirical in nature with qualitative and quantitative methodologies welcome, in particular case studies.

Areas of focus can include but are not limited to:

- The sustainability of the co-operative and mutual enterprise;
- Financing the co-operative business; member loyalty, identity and value recognition;
- Governance and leadership including member share capital and voting rights;
- Social capital formation of co-operatives and mutual enterprises;
- Innovation within co-operative and mutual businesses; and
- The role of co-operative and mutual businesses in economic development.

¹ Co-operatives WA is the peak industry body for Western Australian co-operatives.



PAPER SUBMISSION GUIDELINES:

Please submit a one-page abstract of your conference paper by **5 April 2012** along with a brief biographical profile of up to 200 words. Abstracts and bios should be emailed directly to Dr Elena Mamouni Limnios at: elena.limnios@uwa.edu.au.

We will provide feedback on the acceptance of these abstracts by 30 April 2012. Full papers should then be submitted via email to elena.limnios@uwa.edu.au by **31 July 2012**.

All papers will be subject to peer review and a monograph will be published containing all accepted papers.

Paper format:

- Papers should be no longer than 15 pages, not including references, tables or figures, which should be attached at the end of the paper rather than embedded in the document.
- Files submitted should be WORD format, Times New Roman 12 point font single spaced.
- Separate Title page to include:
 - Paper Title – Times New Roman 16 point centred and bolded
 - Author name(s) Times New Roman 12 point left aligned bolded
 - Author affiliation Times New Roman 12 point left aligned
 - Abstract of not more than 250 words Times New Roman 12 point italics
 - Author bios
- Main Document format:
 - Paper Title – Times New Roman 16 point centred and bolded
 - Headings – Times New Roman 12 full capitals and bolded
 - Sub-Headings – Times New Roman 12 first letter of each work in capitals and bolded
 - Text – Times New Roman 12 point font single spaced
 - All titles and paragraphs should be separated by a single space before and after.
- References should be in Harvard Referencing format.
- Tables and figures should be noted in the text as to their suggested location (e.g. Table 1 here), and placed in an appendix at the end of the paper. They should be clearly titled and should be in WORD format that can be manipulated later for future publication.
- All pages should be numbered.

We look forward to welcoming you to the Co-operatives Research Exchange in beautiful Perth, the capital city of Western Australia and the home of four of the top five member focused businesses in Australia.

Professor Tim Mazzarol

Winthrop Professor UWA Business School