CALL FOR PAPERS: Critical University Studies Conference 2024
(formerly International Academic Identities Conference)

Conference theme: Rage against the machine: Remaking universities for hopeful futures
Dates: 19–21 June 2024
Venue: The Education University of Hong Kong
Conference chair: Professor Bruce Macfarlane (Education University of Hong Kong)

The inaugural Critical University Studies Conference (formerly known as the International Academic Identities Conference) will take place in June 2024 in Hong Kong. The conference has been renamed to broaden its horizon towards a wider range of interests among higher education researchers and scholars than the earlier title might have suggested. Upholding and strengthening the distinctive culture of AIC – that entails values of companionship, creativity and criticality – will remain a key aspiration for the Critical University Studies Conference.

The conference takes its new title from the work of Jeffrey Williams (2012), Liz Morrish (2018) and others who argue for the need to take a 'resolutely critical perspective' on the 'knowledge factory itself' (Williams, 2012, pp. 2-3). As both Morrish and Williams point out, a central target for critical university studies is the effects of neoliberal policies on higher education institutions. The job of critical university studies is twofold: to draw on a range of disciplines to argue against the 'academic practice as usual' produced under a thoroughly economic logic and to imagine how those usual practices might be different – and better.

The 2024 theme of 'Rage against the machine: Remaking universities for hopeful futures' is intended to energise researchers and scholars to enquire into all the usual and multi-layered aspects of university work (practices of teaching, research, citizenship or service) but with renewed attention to possible and hopeful transformations. And we hope it will provoke some new foci for enquiry as well. We need to understand more clearly and more deeply the nature of contemporary changes *and* constancies in the university as well as their many effects for all who dwell there. We also need to understand how these matters and their effects impinge on the place of universities within their societies and within far-reaching formations such as globalisation, financialised capitalism, and a wide range of social-political upheavals.

We welcome submissions on a wide variety of topics – or ways of apprehending/studying the university – and we are especially interested in those that ask critical questions of their material.

More traditional themes might include academic capitalism, academic work and practice, curriculum, doctoral education, internationalisation/globalisation, leadership and management, and performativity. Newer themes might include affect and bodies, ecologies of knowledges, neo-nationalism and the university, relationality and mattering, studying, teaching the university, temporality and spatiality. These lists are not exhaustive …

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Submission information

We welcome submissions from researchers across the board (doctoral, early-career, established) in a range of different styles including:

- Papers
- Symposia
- Roundtables
- Performances
- A creative presentation.

Papers (30 mins) – abstract of no more than 350 words

Single paper presentations explore one or more dimensions of the conference themes. The goal of these sessions is to share work-in-progress and engage in dialogue with conference participants, so timing should be balanced between presentation and discussion (20m+10m is optimal). You should also aim to demonstrate how your paper contributes (or is likely to contribute) to the existing body of scholarly research.

Symposia (90 mins) – abstract of no more than 1000 words

Where presenters have 3-4 thematically linked papers, you may propose a symposium with a maximum time of 90 mins. Provide an overarching abstract for the symposium as a whole as well as titles and reduced abstracts for each paper within the symposium. Please nominate a contact person for the symposium.

Roundtable (60 mins) – abstract of no more than 350 words

Roundtable discussions provide the opportunity for a lively discussion around a particular topic or area of research. They are an ideal opportunity for networking and for building collaborations. If you wish to propose a roundtable, the submission should include an overview of the topic, and pose some critical questions that the roundtable discussion will explore. These sessions will be chaired by the person who proposes the roundtable.

Performance and/or Creative Presentation (30 or 60 mins) – abstract of no more than 350 words

Performance-based presentations provide an opportunity for presenters to invent or draw on new forms and expressions as well as traditions of arts-based inquiry for exploring the conference themes. We welcome performance in all its variety. Some possibilities include: readers' theatre, performance ethnography, and poetic representations of research. If you wish to propose a performance, your submission will need to be strong in both the idea (related to the conference themes), and in the description of the type of performance. If the performance involves audience participation, you need to indicate that in your submission.

Ensure your submission includes:

- Submission type
- Title of submission
- Presenters and their institutional affiliations
- Name and email address of the key contact person
- Abstract (noting the maximum word count)
- Up to 5 scholarly references.

Review criteria

Every submission to the conference will be double-blind peer reviewed according to the following criteria:

- It **responds** and **contributes** to the conference theme
- It is **connected** to, and in **conversation** with, appropriate scholarly literature
- It demonstrates how and why it is **of interest** to the intended audience
- It is **well written**.

Note: This conference will be held in English and is an in-person event only.

Conference dates: Wed 19–Fri 21 June 2024
Deadline for submission of abstracts: 30 October 2023
Date of notification of acceptance: 10 December 2023
Send to: cusconf2024@gmail.com

Registration opens: 15 January 2024
Early bird closes: 29 February 2024
Registration closes: 15 May 2024

Conference organising committee:
- James Burford (University of Warwick)
- Barbara Grant (University of Auckland)
- Trevor Holmes (University of Waterloo)
- Bruce Macfarlane (Education University of Hong Kong), Conference chair
- Tai Peseta (Western Sydney University)
- Eva Bendix Petersen (Roskilde University)
- Jan Smith (University of Galway)
- Linlin Xu (University of Electronic Science and Technology of China).

References

Morrish, L. (2018). Can critical university studies survive the toxic university? https://criticallegalthinking.com/2018/06/11/can-critical-university-studies-survive-the-toxic-university/

Williams, J. (2012). Deconstructing academe: The birth of critical university studies. *The Chronicle of Higher Education, 58*(25), B7–B8.