



Fourth International Conference on Responsible Leadership

## *Leadership Challenges That Matter*

***First call for abstracts***

15 – 17 March 2017, The Gordon Institute of Business Science, South Africa

Presented in partnership with

**Gordon Institute  
of Business Science**  
University of Pretoria



The Albert Luthuli Centre for Responsible Leadership and the Gordon Institute of Business Science (GIBS) at the University of Pretoria in South Africa will host the Fourth International Conference on Responsible Leadership on 15 to 17 March 2017 at the GIBS campus in Johannesburg. Two international partners will co-host the conference – the Leadership Collaboratory at the Copenhagen Business School and the Globally Responsible Leadership Initiative.

We invite proposals for papers, panels, and workshops on a wide range of topics related to responsible leadership, especially those addressing the conference theme, “**Leadership Challenges That Matter**”. By means of this theme, we call on scholars of leadership, business, organisation, environmental studies, and the humanities to grapple head-on with complex and pressing challenges confronting business and society in a problem-driven, solution-oriented, and collaborative manner.

Far too often, leadership research starts from a particular disciplinary approach or definition of leadership and then proceeds to test existing concepts or theories against research data in a manner that rarely transgresses the boundaries erected by previous scholarship. While this model may help scholars in their quest for “validity”, it is ill-suited to keep up with the fast pace of contemporary change or to address complex global challenges and at times, wicked problems that cry out for new kinds of leadership, collaboration, and problem-solving. We therefore encourage conference proposals that incorporate elements of action research, grounded theory, ethnographic enquiry and dialogue to address these complex challenges in ways that expand the the boundaries of traditional leadership theory and research. We call on contributors to address “challenges that matter” in order to stress that leadership carries with it the responsibility to engage with issues of moral, ethical, economic, environmental, and social significance that affect diverse groups of stakeholders and interests in global, regional, and local contexts. By hosting a conference on this theme at GIBS, one of Africa’s premier business schools, we intend to emphasise that the business community shares these ethical and social responsibilities, and that business practitioners and scholars bring a wealth of practical skills and valuable insights to the task of addressing major leadership challenges.

## CONFERENCE THEMES:

Under the umbrella of the broad theme **“Leadership Challenges That Matter”**, we invite papers, panel conversations, symposia, case studies, and workshops, in the following sub-theme areas:

- **Local Challenges That Matter: Crisis in SA higher education**

The refugee and migration crisis brings into sharp focus the complex politics of diversity and inclusion among multiple groups of stakeholders with conflicting interests, different cultural loyalties, and disparate levels of wealth and privilege. South Africa is no stranger to such complexities, especially as ongoing post-Apartheid struggles bear testament to this. One such complex challenge playing itself out is the current crisis in SA Higher Education. It speaks to a systemic problem that demands leadership that can find new solutions to these intractable problems, and generate new perspectives on leadership theory and practice in the process. We also encourage conference proposals that focus in these directions.

- **Regional Challenges That Matter: Refugee and migration crisis**

The current global refugee and migration crisis provides one glaring example of the kinds of major societal challenges to which leadership scholars and practitioners should be turning their attention. Violent conflicts in the Middle East, Africa, and elsewhere have forcibly displaced more than 50 million people worldwide, while a rising tide of global economic and climate-related migration has added to these numbers and complicated policy responses to the problem. We encourage conference participants to take up this call by means of proposals that address the leadership dynamics of the refugee and migration crisis, the leadership challenges faced by organisations engaging with these issues, and how to address them.

- **Global Challenges That Matter: Crisis for humanity and the planet**

The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are essentially a list of 17 major **“Leadership Challenges That Matter”**. In the words of the UN, the SDGs seek to “stimulate action over the next fifteen years in areas of critical importance for humanity and the planet” on a range of issues related to people, planet, prosperity, peace, and partnership. We encourage proposals for individual presentations and for workshops or other innovative conference formats that address the leadership dynamics of the UN’s Agenda for Sustainable Development. These could address the SDGs process as a whole or take up individual challenges within the 17 Goals or the 169 related targets.

We invite abstracts that address the above and other **“Leadership Challenges That Matter”**. These abstracts should explore the relevance and meaning of responsible leadership in the context of these kinds of challenges, in ways that add to our understanding of responsible leadership.

Since we are calling for new approaches to responsible leadership, we also invite creative proposals for different types of conference formats that will foreground dialogue, interaction, and constructive engagement with leadership challenges.

## **SCHEDULE FOR SUBMISSIONS:**

Please note: In your submission, please clearly indicate whether you are submitting either a paper, dialogue session or professional development workshop. Irrespective of the format you choose, an abstract should be submitted.

Abstracts of papers (**max. 500 words**) should be submitted to the conference office electronically via email on [CRL2017@up.ac.za](mailto:CRL2017@up.ac.za), in RTF/MS Word format as file attachments (not as part of the message).

**30 June 2016:** **Deadline for abstracts of 500 words**, to be submitted to [CRL2017@up.ac.za](mailto:CRL2017@up.ac.za)

**15 August 2016:** **Notification of acceptance of abstracts**

All abstracts will be reviewed following a blind review process. The conference manager will remove all author-identifying information and process the review of abstracts. A committee was established to handle the review of abstracts.

**15 October 2016:** **Deadline for full paper submission**, to be submitted to [CRL2017@up.ac.za](mailto:CRL2017@up.ac.za)

**SOME GOOD ADVICE:** We strongly recommend that you start writing your full paper as soon as possible – even prior to receiving feedback from the conference committee on the outcome of your abstract submission. Full papers will not be accepted after the given deadline.

All full paper submissions will go through a peer review process. Therefore, all author-identifying information should be removed from the paper except for a cover page. We advise all non-native English speakers to have their papers checked by a native speaker before submission. Papers should be no longer than 35 pages (Arial, font size 12 & double-spaced) including tables, graphs, references and endnotes.

Please consult our website on <http://www.up.ac.za/crl> for up-to-date information on deadlines and procedures.

Any further queries about the academic conference can be addressed to:

E-mail: [CRL2017@up.ac.za](mailto:CRL2017@up.ac.za)

Tel: +27 12 420 4271

Kind regards,

Carto Abrams-Swarts

The Albert Luthuli Centre for Responsible Leadership: 2017 Conference Organiser