

Association for Institutional Thought

2020 Meeting, Portland, Oregon

Call for Papers

The 41st Annual Meeting of the Association for Institutional Thought is scheduled to take place on April 1-4, 2020, in Portland, Oregon, at the Portland Marriott Downtown Waterfront in conjunction with the 62nd Annual Western Social Science Association Conference.

Conference Theme

“The Institutional Relevance of Institutional Economics”

The Association for Institutional Thought (AFIT) invites you to submit papers and/or propose full sessions that examine the broader significance and impact of institutional economics. This year’s theme is intended to encourage a discourse on the historical and continuing relevance of institutional thought—not only within academic economics, but also for social theory more generally, as well as beyond academia altogether.

John Dewey’s *Reconstruction in Philosophy* derived from a series of lectures given shortly after the First World War. In the new introduction, penned in 1948, he gave the atom bomb as an example of the “defection and distortion that results from viewing science in isolation” from the moral and social milieu. These “institutional conditions,” Dewey argued, “into which [science] enters and which determine its human consequences have not as yet been subjected to any serious, systematic inquiry worthy of being designated scientific,” (p. xv).

In the context of Dewey’s observations, the theme of the 2020 meeting of AFIT could be understood as asking the following:

- How does institutional economics help to build scientific analyses of our institutional conditions? And how should it do so?
- How does or should institutional thought contribute to the realization of participatory democracy? And how could efforts toward the same contribute to institutional thought?
- In what ways can institutional economic theory benefit from work done in the arts, technology, and governance? And in what ways can the latter three benefit from institutional economics?

Naturally, we welcome papers that do not fall into these areas as well.

AFIT values pluralism and interdisciplinarity, and papers/sessions from non-economists as well as those connecting institutional economics to other heterodox traditions are encouraged. We also encourage sessions reviewing and discussing recently published books, especially those written by AFIT members.

As an organization with a student-development and pedagogical emphasis we encourage papers and panels in the area of economics pedagogy. Likewise, students, both graduate and undergraduate, are welcome to submit paper and panel proposals; and AFIT (along with the Association for Evolutionary Economics) will be sponsoring a prize for outstanding student papers.

In the concluding pages of *Reconstruction*, Dewey observed that the “increasing acknowledgement that [moral] goods exist and endure only through being communicated and that association is the means of conjoint sharing lies back of the modern sense of humanity and democracy.” Organization, Dewey contended, “is never an end in itself. It is a means of promoting *association*, of multiplying effective points of contact between persons, directing their intercourse into the modes of greatest fruitfulness.” The Association for Institutional Thought hopes you will join us in April to do just that.

Registration

Online conference registration is open now at the following link:

<https://www.wssaweb.com/conference-registration.html>

The regular rate prior to January 8 is \$170, rising to \$210 on the 8th, and discounted rates are available to students, retirees, and non-participating guests.

Proposals

Proposals for complete sessions are strongly encouraged, but the conference organizer will construct sessions from individual paper proposals according to theme. Traditionally, AFIT sessions do not include discussants, as we find a more general discussion with the audience preferable. However, proposed panels that designate discussants will be accepted.

Submitters of **individual papers** will need to provide the following:

- Name, institutional affiliation, and email address of each presenter
- Paper title
- Abstract, not to exceed 250 words

Submitters of **complete panels and roundtables** will need to provide the following:

- Name, institutional affiliation, and email address of moderator/panel organizer
- Title of the session
- Name, institutional affiliation, and email address of each presenter
- Title and abstract (250 word maximum) for each paper, or short description of roundtable topic

Detailed instructions for submitting a paper, panel, or roundtable are available at:

<https://www.wssaweb.com/article/submissions-for-papers-panels-roundtables-2020-conference-are-now-open>

The deadline for submissions is December 1st, 2019.

Current membership in AFIT is required for presenting a paper. For more information about AFIT, to renew membership, and so on, visit <https://institutionalthought.org>

For general queries regarding the conference, contact the conference organizer and Vice President of AFIT, Erik Dean, at erikndean@gmail.com.