

International Association for Mission Studies
15th General Assembly



**Powers, Inequalities, and Vulnerabilities:
Mission in a Wounded World
Sydney, Australia
July 7-11, 2022**

The International Association for Mission Studies (IAMS) will convene for its 15th Assembly in Sydney, Australia, from July 7 to July 11, 2022. This is the second announcement for Call for Papers after we had to postpone the Assembly that had been scheduled for July 2020 because of the extraordinary measures taken throughout the world as a result of the COVID pandemic and the restrictions imposed on gatherings and travel. IAMS has been once again invited to Australia, and in 2022 we will be hosted by the Australian Association for Mission Studies while the meeting is going to take place at Morling College in greater Sydney.

We chose the theme of “Powers, Inequalities, and Vulnerabilities: Mission in a Wounded World”, as we were seeking to name and explore our perception that missionary activity is now and has always been undertaken in a world constituted by wounds in many forms. At the same time, the events since the beginning of the pandemic in early 2020 in a most vivid, and sometime painful, way showed what powers, inequalities and vulnerabilities truly mean in our contemporary world. We would like our assembly to consider Christian mission as addressing powers, inequalities and vulnerabilities from a variety of perspectives across the spectrum of mission studies and mission practice. Let us once again reaffirm our understanding of these challenges in our mission research and while doing mission.

Power is a constitutive aspect of Christian mission, an inescapable context in which it is pursued. Powers, understood collectively, name such realities as well as the ways that life-enhancing and life-diminishing structures can take a social and cumulative quality. Of course, those powers are understood differently depending on theological assumptions – that is, as spiritual or material, political or economic, human or non-human, individual or collective. Most Christians understand Christ as one who wielded power, gave up power, and confronted power, though in surprising and counter-intuitive ways.

Inequality has always shaped Christian mission. In the first place, one meaning of mission has always been to bring the Gospel to those who do not know it – who thus are unequal compared to those who bear it. Aware of this longstanding notion, we also appreciate other inequalities that have shaped Christian mission – contexts of inequality in which mission has proceeded, that have shaped mission, been exploited by missionaries, and to which Christian mission responds. These include the inequalities based on gender and race shaping historical processes such as colonial and imperial domination, economic exploitation, corrosive corruption, lack of access to health care, education, or security, as well as numerous discriminations based on a variety of other social distinctions – for example, ecological circumstances, culture, language, social class, sexuality, geographic location, ethnicity, age, physical or other disability. Christians appreciate that Christ was born into a world shaped by inequalities and that he responded to them with compassion and, at times, prophetic denunciation.

Vulnerability is a human constant, shaping every human life. Yet vulnerability is also distributed differently across different human groups, part of ever-present inequalities and differences in power in human experience. Self-critical practitioners of Christian mission embrace their own vulnerabilities as they share the *missio Dei*. They also seek to mitigate the vulnerabilities that render so many human lives precarious. In addition, mission has exploited and increased vulnerabilities of people at times, often in situations of unequal distributions of power.

At the 15th Assembly of IAMS, we want to offer new perspectives on Christian mission in the context of a wounded world. Pressing global and regional concerns reflect such wounds, including those linked to the forced dislocations of populations, discrimination toward migrants, increasing economic inequality, rising nationalisms, vulnerability to the spread of diseases in a global scale, and the challenges of climate change. New perspectives on such issues linked to mission and reflective of a world shaped by power, inequality, and vulnerability might draw from theological or from any other disciplinary perspectives, mindful of the interdisciplinary nature of mission studies today.

IAMS-2022: Study Groups and Thematic Panels

The academic procedure for the 2022 Sydney Assembly remains the same as it was announced for the 2020 Assembly, and it will include Plenary Sessions, Study Group sessions, and Thematic Panels.

Many papers will appear within the framework of the work of IAMS' nine ongoing Study Groups:

- BISAM: Biblical Studies and Mission
- Children, Youth, and Mission
- Christian Communities and Mission
- DABOH: Documentation, Archives, Bibliography and Oral History
- Gender and Mission
- Interreligious Studies and Mission
- Pentecostal/Charismatic Expressions in World Christianity
- Religious Freedom
- Theology of Mission

We hope to cover other areas of mission studies and to encourage scholarly innovation, this is why we invite proposals for what we are calling *Thematic Panels*. These would be the fruit of organized efforts to assemble **at least three papers** around a theme not easily circumscribable within the existing Study Groups. These papers would be presented as a group, with at least one person serving as convener of the Thematic Panel.

The organization of the panels will be done in dialogue between the conveners and the Academic Committee of IAMS. All proposals with abstracts will be reviewed by the IAMS Academic Committee that will finalize the Sydney program in early 2022.

1. Paper proposals of 250 words, whether for Study Groups or Thematic Panels, are due by **31 December 2021**.
2. Applicants will be notified of the acceptance of their papers by the end of February **2022**.
3. Draft papers of 2000 words are due **31 May 2022**.

Panel and paper proposals should be sent to:

conferencepapers2022@missionstudies.org.

For general questions regarding the conference:

conferencesecretary2022@missionstudies.org.

Important Notes:

- a) Paper presenters who want to **keep the original papers**, that were submitted in December 2019 and early 2020 and that were approved by the IAMS Academic Committee, do not need to go through the above process: they only need to **confirm that they will be presenting their original paper**.
- b) Paper presenters who want to **update their original papers**, as well as those who want to submit a **paper proposal, different from the original**, should **follow the above procedure**.
- c) Paper presenters who want to **withdraw their original papers** and their participation in the conference, please let us know **by 31 December 2021**.

Guidelines for writing papers

1. Papers presented during the conference are not to exceed 2000 words – thus a presentation time of **20 minutes** – to allow **10 minutes** to be allocated to **questions and answers**.
2. If conference participants intend to submit their papers to Mission Studies for publication after the conference, they should develop them to between 6000 and 10,000 words, including notes.
3. Authors are expected to adhere strictly to the Style Guide for Mission Studies:
https://brill.com/fileasset/downloads_products/Author_Instructions/MIST.pdf

Papers admittance criteria

While writing your paper and before submission, check that you can answer the following questions positively:

1. Is your paper topic relevant to the IAMS-2022 Assembly general theme? Is it also relevant to the theme of a particular Study Group? Or, as the case may be, would it be better as a free-standing Thematic Panel?
2. In what way does your paper make an original contribution to the chosen field of study?
3. Does your paper show the following features? Clarity and logic of argument Originality and concreteness of content Level of engagement with relevant scholarship Accuracy of form, expression, and language inclusiveness
4. Is your paper abstract less than 250 words, and your draft paper for presentation less than 2000 words?

Concluding Notes

All IAMS members have already received the IAMS President's Letter of September 2021 where the Executive Committee provided a detailed report on why the IAMS Assembly had been postponed and what the next steps in the 2022 Assembly are. Still, let us once again remind you of some important announcements of that Letter and add some more details in preparation of the Assembly and the conference itself.

First, we are aware that travel restrictions may continue well into 2022 up to the summer of that year and that most of you may not be able to attend the conference in person and present papers at Morling College. This once again makes us remind you to refrain from making flight reservations or other travel plans.

Second, since the Assembly will proceed in a hybrid, or hi-flex, format we will be using electronic means of presenting papers in study groups and thematic panels. This approach gives more freedom to organizing the paper sessions: the convenors are encouraged to organize sessions a couple (or more) days before the actual start of the conference on 7 July 2022, thus concluding with the academic work of the study group / the thematic panel and during the conference days be ready to summarize or report on the outcomes of the sessions.

Third, during the days of the Assembly, where at Morling College the actual conference will be taking place – mostly for participants from Australia – we will be listening to the Plenary Papers and be able to interact via electronic means with the presenters and also with conference participants at the College Hall where they will be gathered. In the same way, we will be using online interaction during the conference to share the outcomes of the papers presented at study groups / thematic panels' sessions or to present some of them so that those at the College can view and listen to the presenters.

Fourth, could you please check your IAMS membership status and update it, if needed, as this is one of the preconditions for presenting a paper at the Assembly.

The IAMS Academic Committee

25 November 2021