



CALL FOR PAPERS

Theme: Doing Peace Differently
Dates: 13 - 16 November 2025
Venue: Johannesburg, South Africa
Deadline: 15 September 2025

Context and Rationale

In 2025, South Africa holds the G20 Presidency - a rare opportunity for the African continent to influence the global agenda on peace, justice, and sustainability. The official G20 theme, Solidarity, Equality, and Sustainability, provides a powerful backdrop for reflection and action. These principles resonate deeply with South Africa's own historical journey and the philosophy of Ubuntu that underpins so much of its social fabric.

The World Peace Forum - South Africa, held just days before the official G20 Leaders' Summit, will create a space for those working at the frontlines of peace, healing, and justice to gather, reflect, and co-create. It will offer a complementary narrative to that of formal diplomacy - one that is grounded in community, relationality, and possibility.

The theme Doing Peace Differently invites new ways of thinking and being. It encourages us to move beyond peace as absence of conflict, and toward peace as the presence of dignity, collaboration, and ecological care. This is not a technical peace. It is a living one.

The Importance of Peace and the African Contribution

In a world shaped by polarisation, climate crisis, displacement, and inequality, peace remains our most vital and elusive aspiration. Yet peace is often imagined through frameworks that are linear, institutional, and externally imposed. Africa offers another way.

Rooted in ancient wisdom traditions, the African view of peace is relational and rhythmic. It sees the self not as separate but as part of a greater whole - people, ancestors, land, and spirit. Peace is not negotiated in isolation; it is cultivated in the way we live, relate, eat, mourn, and celebrate. It is not a moment, but a movement.

The principle of Ubuntu - "I am because we are" - is not only a cultural value; it is a cosmological proposition. It invites us to belong differently. It invites us to lead differently. It is in this spirit that the World Peace Forum takes place: not to instruct the world, but to remind it.

The African continent, often portrayed through the lens of conflict, carries within it vast reserves of indigenous knowledge, community practice, and spiritual insight on how to hold complexity, restore dignity, and heal the fractures of time. In doing peace differently, we are also doing peace deeply.

Themes and Tracks for Contribution

We welcome submissions that explore the following themes, each intended to offer a doorway into the deeper work of peace in our time:

- **Solidarity and Multilateral Peacebuilding:** Exploring collective, transnational, and relational approaches to peacebuilding. How might we strengthen interdependence in an increasingly fragmented world?

COMING HOME TO UBUNTU *Do Peace Differently*



- **Peace and Equality:** Examining the structural and systemic conditions necessary for equitable peace. Submissions may focus on gender, race, economic justice, youth inclusion, or access to decision-making.
- **Sustainability and Peace:** Considering the environmental dimensions of peace - where land, water, food, and future generations are seen as sacred. We invite contributions that explore regenerative models of living.
- **Peace Innovation and Technology:** Engaging with the promise and the shadow of technology in the peace domain. Can AI, digital platforms, or decentralised technologies help us build more just societies?
- **Regional and Southern Peace Models:** Highlighting Indigenous knowledge systems, Southern resistance movements, African cosmologies and community-based models of healing. This theme is rooted in the belief that the Global South holds essential wisdom for our collective future.

Submission Details

Abstracts of between 300 and 500 words are welcomed. These may take the form of academic papers, reflective case studies, storytelling, experiential formats, artistic expressions, or hybrid methods. Presentations may include lectures, dialogues, workshops, rituals, or installations. Creativity and authenticity are encouraged.

Submissions must be made by 15 September 2025 to Dr. Rica Viljoen at drrica.viljoen@gmail.com who will oversee, with a scholarly and a consulting committee. The Forum will be conducted in English only.

Two submission streams are available:

1. **Academic (peer-reviewed)** - selected papers will be considered for publication in a dedicated peer-reviewed journal volume as well as for submission to credible international academic journals.
2. **Practitioner** - focused on experience-based, embodied, and creative contributions that inform peace building practice.

All submitters will be notified of outcomes by 30 September 2025. For questions, please contact info@wpfsouthafrica.com

Who Should Respond?

This call is open to all who carry peace - not only in theory, but in practice.

We invite academics, practitioners, activists, artists, peace workers, educators, spiritual leaders, elders, and futurists to contribute. Whether you work in community, policy, healing, or research; whether you write, teach, lead, or hold space - we welcome your voice.

We are especially interested in contributions that weave together scholarly rigour and lived experience. Both traditional research papers and alternative formats are encouraged, including case studies, rituals, visual or performance art, interactive processes, indigenous methodologies, and experiential workshops.

Peace is not the property of any discipline. It is the concern of all humanity. If your work nurtures justice, healing, sustainability, or human dignity - this Forum is yours.

Why This Matters

- To centre South African leadership and imagination at a globally significant moment
- To contribute to the G20 dialogue through grounded, inclusive peace narratives
- To amplify wisdom from the Global South, often sidelined in traditional peace discourse
- To honour peace not as theory, but as lived practice
- To co-create futures where peace is not an ideal, but a practice

