

**Call for Proposals**  
**15<sup>th</sup> Biennial Conference of the**  
**Society for Community Research and Action**  
**June 25<sup>th</sup> – 28<sup>th</sup>, 2015**

The Society for Community Research and Action (Division 27 of the American Psychological Association) invites you to our 15<sup>th</sup> Biennial Conference!

**Sponsor:** The University of Massachusetts Lowell (Lowell, MA), Graduate Program in Community Social Psychology

**Theme:** *Celebrating 50 Years of Community Psychology: Bridging Past and Future*

The 2015 SCRA Biennial will be held in Lowell, MA and hosted by the Graduate Program in Community Social Psychology at UMass Lowell. Lowell is one of the most diverse cities of its size in the U.S. and is located just 25 miles from Boston. Among its many distinctive features, the city is home to the Lowell National Historical Park (the first such urban park in the country), a burgeoning arts scene, and a variety of innovative urban initiatives. Our graduate program is closely connected to the local community, and the university is enjoying a period of rapid growth and a dramatic rise in our national reputation.

The 2015 Biennial will be a landmark event, providing an opportunity to celebrate and reflect on 50 years of community psychology and to commemorate the 1965 gathering in nearby Swampscott. Accordingly, we encourage submissions that document and honor the ways in which community psychologists have advanced individual, family, community, and global well-being and thriving, and/or which consider what community psychologists can and should be doing to help address current and future challenges.

Above and beyond its appeal vis-à-vis the history of the field, UMass Lowell and the City of Lowell provide a particularly appropriate venue to explore themes that have long animated the work of community psychologists, and which will undoubtedly anchor our shared agendas and visions for the future. As a public institution that is a vital part of the community in which it is located, UMass Lowell has a longstanding commitment, as part of our university mission, to contributing to the social and economic development of our region. For the last 35 years, our Master's degree program in Community Social Psychology has prepared graduates for leadership roles in organizations and communities, and our alumni/ae are well-represented in local and regional social service networks. The city itself provides a particularly fitting location for the Biennial, given its long history of welcoming diverse immigrant groups and its special place in American labor history, and its more recent efforts to reinvent and reposition itself as an innovative, sustainable "gateway" city.

In light of the historical and ongoing contributions of our university and city, and given urgent local, national, and global challenges, we particularly encourage proposals on the following broad topics: Immigration, citizenship, displacement, multiculturalism, globalization, community organizing, coalition-building, civic engagement, income inequality and economic justice, women's labor history and activism, reproductive justice, sustainable communities, creative economy and arts-based community action, community-campus partnerships, and grassroots change efforts. We also encourage submissions that prioritize participatory processes and identify specific session formats for engaging the audience.

### **INSTRUCTIONS FOR PREPARING PROGRAM SUBMISSIONS**

To submit a proposal, please visit <http://www.scra27.org> and select the biennial conference link. The system will be ready to accept proposals on or about October 17, 2014. **The deadline for receipt of program proposals is: 11:55 PM (EST), Monday, December 15, 2014.** Proposal submission guidelines will be available online.

### **PROGRAM FORMATS**

Priority will be given to high-quality proposals that fulfill one or more of the following criteria: (a) congruence with conference themes, (b) audience participation, (c) the inclusion of examples of community-academic engagement. Submissions should fall under one of the following five categories:

1. *Poster Presentations* facilitate individual and small group conversations through the use of visual aid.. Poster presentations can emphasize research, practice, action or other initiatives as reflective of the conference themes or tracks. Posters will be organized in thematic groups in an effort to promote interaction among participants.
2. *Symposia* provide a forum for discussion, debate, and explication of diverse perspectives as they pertain to the conference themes and/or tracks. Symposia may be used to present practice and/or research themes; however, submissions that explicitly describe the process or method that will be used to facilitate audience interaction and dialogue will be preferred. Most symposia will be 50 minutes long, but a few slots will be reserved for 75-minute sessions. A 75-minute session may be requested, but we cannot guarantee that all such preferences will be honored.
3. *Roundtable Discussions* should provide a forum for the sharing of ideas related to innovative methods for research and/or practice in community psychology, or debate of the issues reflective of the conference theme. This format is especially appropriate for sessions in which the presenters' role is to facilitate the audience's exploration of the issue. One or more facilitators may lead a roundtable discussion. Please note that we may recommend that

some sessions that are submitted as symposia be transformed into roundtable discussions.

4. *Town Meetings* feature discussion of critical issues pertaining to the future of community psychology and/or other conference themes. This format is most appropriate for exploring the broad issues that cut across the conference theme, subthemes and related topics. One or more facilitators may lead a town meeting.
5. *Workshops* provide a means to teach new skills of relevance to the field. One or more instructors may teach a workshop.

**All proposals should include a session title (limit 25 words), an abstract (limit 300 words), keywords, and information for each participant. You may also include a plan for audience interaction and any other information you would like to provide. Note that for symposia, an additional 300-word abstract should be submitted for each presenter.**

We will consider other proposal formats that would engage the audience, stimulate activity discussion, and advance our disciplinary mission of community research and action. To ensure that all formats are as participatory and innovative as possible, submitters are encouraged to consider the following possibilities:

- World Café
- “Meet the Speakers”
- Site visits to community organizations/projects or invited performances/presentations from community members
- Audience response polling
- Q&A session systems
- Visual learning (e.g., *ImageThink*)
- Storytelling, group art, or theatrical/musical performances
- Reflective processes
- Structural participatory strategies (e.g., fishbowl seating arrangements)

### **CONFERENCE SITE INFORMATION**

The conference will take place primarily at the UMass Lowell Inn and Conference Center in downtown Lowell. It will begin on Thursday, June 25<sup>th</sup>, including an opening plenary and welcome reception in the late afternoon, and conclude on Sunday morning, June 28<sup>th</sup>. Pre-conference sessions will take place during the day on Wednesday, June 24<sup>th</sup>.

Details about conference registration, including travel, lodging and transportation arrangements, and conference accessibility, will be provided on the SCRA website and in the Preliminary Conference Program which will be available in March 2015. **All presenters must register for the conference and pay registration fees.**

*Lodging:* There are two housing options will be available to participants.

The Inn and Conference Center (ICC). The ICC provides both hotel rooms and dorm rooms. To make hotel room reservations at the ICC please either call 978-934-6920 and asked to be booked with the "SCRA" group; or book online (if you book online you will not need to enter the group code). Hotel rooms are \$89 per night plus tax.

Dorm rooms at the ICC are available at \$40 per night (plus a linen fee). Information for booking a dorm room will be available shortly.

**All of these rooms are limited in supply and we encourage SCRA members to make their lodging arrangements with friends.**

There are also several hotels within a 10- to 20-minute drive of the venue. SCRA has a room block reserved at the Radisson Hotel & Suites Chelmsford-Lowell. See below for additional information. Note: This lodging option is not within walking distance of the conference center.

Radisson Hotel & Suites Chelmsford-Lowell  
110 Independence Drive  
Chelmsford, MA 01824  
978-256-0800

Rate: \$109.00 per night plus taxes for our deluxe rooms for either 2 double beds or 1 king be. Guests may also reserve a Studio Suite for \$129. Both rates include breakfast for one.

Guests can book online at <http://www.radisson.com/chelmsford> and enter the promotional code UMASS, or call the reservations team at 978-256-0800 and mention the University of Massachusetts rate.

Read more at <http://www.scra27.org/event/biennial-conference/2015-biennial/#IERmyDzzRCU7J26x.99>