

## Centring Intersex Issues: Global and Local Dimensions

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**Dates:** 20-23 February 2023

**Format:** Virtual – anticipated 2 timezones to ensure global accessibility

**Background:** Intersex people face social erasure and discrimination at every stage of their lives, from birth to old age. Babies who are born with noticeable intersex characteristics are usually operated on or subjected to other non-consensual medical treatments on infancy, early childhood or adolescence. There has been limited implementation of the Council of Europe Resolutions and the United Nation recommendations to stop these harmful non-consensual and unnecessary medical interventions on minors. Other key issues for intersex people and their families include a lack of inclusion in anti-discrimination legislation, bullying and erasure in schools (for example an absence of representation in school curricula), and high levels of direct discrimination and harassment in public places. Knowledge about the reasons for the lack of implementation of international human rights directives is needed, as is better understanding of intersex people's needs regarding appropriate healthcare and related policy and practice reform. This conference will provide a forum for knowledge generation and networking in these areas.

Intersex people are sometimes also trans. When an intersex baby is assigned to a gender they then cannot identify with, they may decide later to live in a different gender. While many intersex people identify as male or female, some identify as non-binary. Key issues may be shared, such as the importance of bodily autonomy and legal rights, but the ways these apply to intersex people and non-intersex trans people vary. The conference will facilitate alliance-building and the recognition of diversities amongst intersex people and others.

Whilst a considerable amount of research has taken place about intersex issues, much of this is located in the global north. The conference will take an international approach, foregrounding voices from the global south as well as the north. It will bring in dimensions associated with postcoloniality, both in interrogating the historical construction of intersex and its medicalisation in the global north, and in addressing issues concerning intersex and variations of sex characteristics in the global south. In this way, it aims to shift the field of intersex studies forwards, whilst also complementing existing activist and scholarly networks that are international and/or based in the global south.

### **The conference aims:**

The proposed conference will facilitate the ongoing development of an international network of scholars, students, and stakeholders with an interest in supporting intersex people's equality, wellbeing, and social and economic success. It will generate original knowledge across a range of fields and academic disciplines. The conference will also generate improved policy advice for key stakeholders especially those in policy and practice positions across sectors such as healthcare, education, and social work. The action will also facilitate

greater data collection by bringing scholars and other stakeholders together and showcasing research, both quantitative and qualitative.

**Key themes:**

- Alliance building and related political and policy analysis
- Human rights and activism
- Postcoloniality and global dynamics
- Identities: Complexities, intersectionalities, communities, and divergences
- Cultures, arts, and representations
- Service provision, including healthcare, education, social work, and community safety
- Policy making (including equality, diversity and inclusion, and sectors such as education, healthcare, and employment)
- Theory

We will also be hosting a virtual exhibition space for artists to show their work and we will invite contributions at the same time as the call for papers.

Overall, the conference will create an innovative international space for networking and scholarly activities. It will be run as a collaboration with the HO2020-funded INIA project <https://www.intersexnew.co.uk/> , and a range of stakeholder organisations will be invited to take part. Outputs from the conference will include a Special Edition of the international journal [Social Sciences](#).

**Conference organisation:**

The conference will have multiple streams to address (for example) healthcare issues, family and community, rights and legal issues, identity and cultural representations, social policy and practice issues, and activism and alliances.

Fees for the whole event will be as follows:

Unfunded activist or ally: £10

University student (funded): £40

Funded academic or other professional: £100

Note: Fees are kept low to enhance accessibility and there is no day rate due to the low fee. Fees are in GDP because the lead University is based in the UK.

**Abstract submission, registration and booking arrangements will be announced in due course**

This conference will receive financial support from the University of Huddersfield and the journal Social Sciences.