

To: SSSP Board of Directors

Cc: Elroi Windsor and Michele Koontz

**From: Jamella N. Gow,
Chair of the Transnational Initiatives Committee**

Date: July 10, 2026

Re: Report from the Transnational Initiatives Committee (TIC)

Membership of TIC

The following members comprised this year's Transnational Initiatives Committee (TIC) as of TBD:

- **Jamella N. Gow, Chair (2025-2026)** Bowdoin College
- ***Angus A. Nurse, Chair-Elect (2025-2026)** Anglia Ruskin University
- **Debadatta Chakraborty (2023-2026)** University of Massachusetts Amherst
- ***Pouya Morshedi (2025-2026)** Memorial University of Newfoundland and Labrador
- ***Agata Pacho (2025-2027)** London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine
- ***Foroogh Mohammadi (2025-2028)** Acadia University
- ***Sanjay Tewari (2025-2028)** Indian Sociological Society and Federal Center of Theoretical and Applied Sociology of the Russian Academy of Sciences
- **Elroi J. Windsor, Voting, Ex-Officio, Executive Officer (2025-2026)** University of West Georgia

****Denotes non-U.S.-based members***

According to the TIC's by-laws, the TIC will need a new Chair-Elect for 2026-2027 and replacements for members who will step down. These new TIC members shall be nominated by the President-Elect in consultation with the Committee on Committees and appointed by the Board of Directors.

The 2026-27 Transnational Initiatives Committee shall consist of the following members:

The following members comprise next year's Transnational Initiatives Committee (TIC) with the above appointments TBD:

- ***Angus A. Nurse, Chair (2026-2027)** Anglia Ruskin University
- **Chair-Elect (2026-27)** TBD
- **TBD Graduate Student (2026-27)**
- ***TBD (2026-27)**
- ***Agata Pacho (2025-2027)** London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine
- ***Foroogh Mohammadi (2025-2028)** Acadia University
- ***Sanjay Tewari (2025-2028)** Indian Sociological Society and Federal Center of Theoretical and Applied Sociology of the Russian Academy of Sciences
- **Elroi J. Windsor, Voting, Ex-Officio, Executive Officer (2025-2026)** University of West Georgia

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Annual Meeting of the Transnational Initiatives Committee

The TIC held its official Annual Meeting on July 1, 2026, before the SSSP Annual Meeting, as requested by the Board of Directors. Throughout the year, we also met twice online on September 11, 2025 and on March 19, 2026 because our members lived or worked in distant time zones. We also discussed decisions via email.

Goals achieved by TIC in 2025-26

Most of the committee's efforts this year focused on organizing sessions for the 2025 Annual Meeting and on providing financial support to members from the Global South to enable their attendance at the event. The committee accomplished the following goals this year:

Goal 1). Provide financial support for qualifying participants at the 2026 Annual Meeting

TIC funding is available to partially cover travel expenses for scholars from the Global South, as well as economically disadvantaged countries and nation-states, and politically, economically, and culturally subjugated regions within all countries. As per previous years' committee recommendations, the definition of qualifying countries was based on the American Sociological Association's criteria.

We used the point system crafted and approved in March 2025 to rank applicants for the travel grant. The committee received seven requests. The available funding of \$6,000 allowed the committee to partially fund the requests for each applicant. One of the applicants was unable to secure enough additional funding to attend. The applicant who could not travel was given the opportunity to present remotely. Thus, we divided the grant money among the remaining participants.

More information about TIC Support Funds is available at <https://www.sssp1.org/index.cfm/pageid/2469/>

Goal 2). Sponsorship of two sessions proposed for the 2026 Annual Meeting

Last year's committee recommended allowing at least two sessions sponsored only by the TIC for each Annual Meeting. The committee organized two calls for papers.

CRITICAL DIALOGUE: Engaging with Indigenous knowledges in universities with colonial legacies: challenges and guiding principles for good practice

This session explores the challenges of recognising and including Indigenous knowledges (IKs) in research and teaching practices within institutions that continue to carry colonial legacies and perpetuate colonial violence through everyday practices. Through critical dialogue, scholars will reflect on both the obstacles and examples of good practice. The discussion will focus on how IKs are conceptualised within university structures, the challenges IKs pose to dominant institutional processes, and the ways colonial legacies continue to constrain or endanger them. The session aims to reveal opportunities for transformative change in the politics of knowledge.

Organized by: Agata Pachó

REGULAR SESSION: "On Being Included": the Promises and Pitfalls of "Diversity Management" in the Neoliberal Era

In her work *On Being Included*, Sara Ahmed contends that "'diversity management' becomes a way of managing or containing conflict or dissent" (2012:13). In an attempt to eradicate inequality, she explains how these processes ultimately elide the very institutions and structures that reproduce it. In the current political-economic climate, diversity management has taken on a new meaning as universities, whether by mandate or "anticipatory obedience," have dismantled DEI policies and brutally repressed student and faculty protest engaged in the real work of local and transnational social change. This session invites papers to reflect on "being included" in this changing landscape and the cost of resisting diversity management in favor of more liberatory scholarship and activism.

Organized by: Jamella N. Gow

Both sessions were ultimately cancelled due to not enough paper submissions.

Goal 3) Address struggles across related committees to dedicate time and resources to designated objectives.

In our virtual March 19 meeting, Elroi Windsor made a proposal for committee consolidation among groups with similar/overlapping objectives i.e. the Accessibility Committee, the Anti-Harassment Committee, and the Transnational Initiatives Committee. According to Elroi, while the committees are not having identical conversations, there's a lot of overlap and commonality across scopes of our respective charges. Some overlaps exist over issues of class hierarchies and barriers to participation with accessibility. There is also a broader initiative to downsize as

member numbers have decreased, and, as a result, there are fewer people to do the work of service. Hence, there's been a lot of burn-out. Elroi has put together a plan for committee consolidation as follows: consolidate the Accessibility Committee, the Anti-Harassment Committee, and the Transnational Initiatives Committee into one group and have designated representatives for each area: "meaning, there would be 1-2 reps on issues of harassment/discrimination based on gender violence and oppression, 1-2 international reps, and 1-2 reps specializing in disability justice" (quoted email exchange). We could have a few at-large members, too. Attendees at the March 19 meeting agreed with this suggestion. Elroi has volunteered to get the three chairs of these committees into an email chain to discuss interest and create a draft proposal to then share. Part of this will go over the bylaws and pulling out tasks that each group does. Elroi has an intern that can help with this research.

Goal 4). Understand the barriers to participation for international members as well as consider ways to support their engagement.

In our virtual March 19 meeting, those present had a discussion regarding how to support conference participants traveling abroad including through SSSP issuing letters of support to attendees without divulging potentially vulnerable topics or persons, SSSP-supported virtual info-session in case of possible ICE encounters, and reminder of resources already available. I (Jamella N. Gow) have also researched various international organizations and email corresponded with Dr. Cecilia Delgado-Molina, Executive Secretary of the International Sociological Association for solutions to support international members' engagement.

Trainings: It was reported that there are currently no virtual training happening this summer as we collectively know a lot more about immigration concerns and ways to respond. Further, there hasn't been any requests from anyone yet.

Letters: Letters for those who need an invitation, have the option to remove the title of their presentation but not the conference itself. We determined that people could make that request at the following ["Request a Letter of Invitation" link](#).

Other Resources: The Anti-harassment committee has provided resources at this [link](#). However, Elroi Windsor requested the above link be changed to "Anti-Harassment Policy and Resources" to reflect the broader array of resources now available. The website was updated on March 20, 2026.

Financial Barriers: As a first-time chair, I had the opportunity to directly interact with applicants and engage with their questions and concerns during and after the application process. Two problems arose most visibly amongst two of our applicants: the limits of the funding allocated to international scholars who apply for the fund as well as a financial burden levied by the requirement to stay at the conference hotel. Applicants shared that the funding is not enough to fully cover the myriads of expenses incurred over international travel including the mandatory stay in the conference hotel, airline costs, and visa fees, for example. Each year, the Transnational Initiatives Committee has had \$6000 to distribute to qualified applicants. A pattern that has emerged is the number of scholars who apply and yet are unable to attend based on the

need for more substantial funding. Hence, the committee proposes several actions listed in the Action Items section below to help ameliorate this issue.

Action Items:

The following action items are proposed for the Board of Directors' consideration.

ACTION ITEM 1: Allow applicants to apply for a travel award fund without being members of SSSP first.

Currently, many international scholars face, especially from the Global South, many barriers related to accessing the conference. One applicant raised a concern about having to pay for membership before applying for funding to help support their engagement with the conference. The rationale given was that the fund is a member benefit, hence the need to pay membership before applying for funds. However, international scholars (and other applicants for travel awards who rely on those funds to travel) are unduly placed on a different timeline from other presenters as a result.

The current timeline is as follows:

- January 31: call for papers deadline for 2026 Annual Conference (applicants do not have to be members of SSSP to apply)
- March 15: application for Transnational Initiatives Fund due (applicants must be members of SSSP to apply)
- May 15: exemption request from SSSP registration fees due
- June 1: deadline to register for the SSSP conference (registrants must be a SSSP member by this deadlineⁱ)

One suggestion is that applicants can apply for the fund without being members of SSSP, but they still must meet other requirements. Ultimately, in order to attend the conference and receive travel funds, participants must both register and be members. With this timeline revised, applicants can draw on award funds to pay for membership and/or registration, if desired. That way, only members can still benefit from the award, but applicants will not have to navigate a rushed timeline to provide funds to attend the conference. Further, as noted above, not all members who received a travel award are able to attend based on other financial burdens. Hence, applicants may end up paying for SSSP membership just to apply and then be unable to benefit from a key part of SSSP engagement: attending the conference.

ACTION ITEM 2: Amend membership fee categories to include national income; hence, lowering the bar to participation for international members from the Global South and lower-income nations.

In email correspondence with Dr. Cecilia Delgado-Molina, Executive Secretary of the International Sociological Association, she shared that the ISA supports international members by, for example, having different fee structures for members based on their Gross National Income. According to their website: "Membership fees are based on country of current residence. Countries are classified into 3 categories, A, B and C, according to the Gross National Income of the economy of countries." I elaborate on their fee structure in an endnote.ⁱⁱ Providing a varied

fee structure based on nation of origin will present a visible and concrete gesture of support for international membership and help ameliorate the burden of costs for those members. One member also made this point regarding the membership fee structure in an email exchange in advance of one of our meetings. As the TIC fund relies on the ASA definition to define the scope of the Global South, the board could use the same measurement to delineate membership categories for our international members.

ACTION ITEM 3: Address the financial costs for attending the conference for Global South members (and the requirement for staying at conference hotel for travel awardees) by providing both a virtual option to present remotely with partial funding and an affordable room-share option at the hotel for all travel award applicants.

Currently, the Transnational Initiative Fund requires applicants who receive funding to stay at the conference hotel. This requirement was raised as a point of concern for placing an added financial burden to Global South members. The rationale given was that the requirement allows the Transnational Initiative Fund to continue and that the SSSP is under considerable budget restraints. Further, last year the TIC raised the concern that Global South scholars would benefit from a virtual option. However, similar budget constraints and actions taken in the past were raised as the rationale for not including a virtual option for attendees.

Virtual Conference Option

Still, while recognizing these valid and understandable concerns, the Board might consider exploring the possibility of a future virtual annual conference. Conference attendance has become even more expensive and the practice of meeting in major cities is a financial burden for many. Further, as TIC funding requires awardees to stay at the conference hotel, these added costs make it even more expensive for Global South attendees. A virtual SSSP conference would address accessibility for our international attendees as well as those beyond this scope who nevertheless have limitations to travel based on their embodiment of marginalized and vulnerable positionalities. Having a virtual option might also alleviate higher costs associated with hybrid conference costs.

Caveat: Transnational Initiatives Fund applicants who present virtually should still have opportunities to receive partial funding to pay for registration and/or membership fees to alleviate the financial burden it might be for some. Additionally, as costs allow, allowing individual virtual access for conference presentations during in-person years should remain an option for international members who are unable to attend due to this added burden—and be highlighted early on. This option has been provided in the past and can perhaps be provided automatically as an alternative for recipients upon announcement of awards or including it as an accommodation in the call for papers. If a virtual conference becomes a standard part of the cycle, perhaps these added costs can be alleviated.

Added context: Because of the current U.S. administrations' policies pausing the issuance of visas from certain nations, several scholars from these nations are effectively banned from traveling to the United States.ⁱⁱⁱ **As such, not having a virtual option means that several of our international colleagues have no opportunity to attend the SSSP conference or other US-**

based conferences. A virtual option would be an especially concrete means to support scholars in this current climate.

Affordable Room-Share Options

Further, another option to help Global South attendees participate (and address the hotel requirement for the Transnational Initiative Fund) might be that the TIC help facilitate resources for participants to organize affordable room-sharing at the hotel. The Transnational Initiatives Committee can help facilitate this by adding a line offering to connect award recipients with one another so that they can coordinate room-shares. This could also be included as an added yes/no question on the Transnational Initiatives Fund awardee email (in which awardees must confirm participation, for example) as follows: “Would you be interested in being contacted about room-share options, and, if so, having your name and email address shared with other interested fund recipients?” As the TIC has access to all applicants’ email contact information, it can communicate with each years’ awardee “cohort” to share this and other resources. Hence, even if applicants must stay at the hotel, they can easily coordinate with others to make the cost more affordable. The International Sociological Association and the Caribbean Studies Association, for example, at their last conferences, both offered and announced this service for participants. The ISA had an arrangement with the local venue to provide affordable housing and the CSA offered to help attendees facilitate coordination for room-shares. The TIC could provide the latter service for free to participants, and depending on the venue, offer the former.

Note: This service could also certainly be of use to other conference participants beyond the TIC’s scope. Elroi’s proposal (see Goal 3) to consolidate the Accessibility Committee, the Anti-Harassment Committee, and the Transnational Initiatives Committee could also be a potential space for committee leadership to help coordinate room-share (and other) resources for our most marginalized attendees who fit within the scope of these committees. Another option could be to suggest that each award committee collaborate on such communications regarding room-shares and other potential forms of support for awardees.

Revisit Hotel Requirement

Still, as the SSSP budget changes, it is hoped that the Board revisits the hotel requirement altogether for Transnational Initiative Fund awardees. This requirement remains a financial burden for Global Scholars (and all faculty and students without enough funds to pay for a traditional hotel in larger cities). Perhaps the Board might consider removing this requirement or finding other ways to make conference attendance more affordable for all.

Revisit ASA relationship and Consider Affordable Conference City Options

In the final, July 1 meeting of the TIC, it was discussed how SSSP’s budget has become more limited over the years and how its decisions are historically tied to ASA’s conference planning due to its value for attendees of both conferences, especially graduate students in need of networking. This point was raised when discussing the high costs of planning conferences in larger cities, the possibility of a virtual conference, and the overall rising costs for conference organizers and attendees to engage in SSSP events. For example, SSSP traditionally meets where the American Sociological Association (ASA) meets and tries to reserve spaces walking distance from ASA. However, meeting in other locations beyond ASA could be more affordable and allow

for more flexibility in type (virtual vs in-person) and location (convention center, hotel, or college campuses, for example)

One possible solution raised was to move away from ASA and organize conferences based on SSSP's financial needs first. Doing so allows the possibility of choosing more affordable cities and having a virtual option. ASA has not consistently coordinated with SSSP and recently revoked a decision to have a virtual conference (without much clarity). SSSP's history also emerged from its break from ASA. As discussed in our July 1 meeting, ASA has become both more expensive and more opaque in its decision-making, so this could be a good time for SSSP to become more independent. Even though ASA is invaluable due to its centrality to sociologist professional development and networking, the TIC and other committees can and have put on past virtual events (see [here](#)) that can address these needs. The TIC could independently organize and facilitate such events on its own easily and have support from SSSP.

ACTION ITEM 4: Include a category for contingent or unemployed faculty to the Transnational Initiatives Fund evaluation sheet.

In our March 19 meeting, an issue was raised regarding the fact that the evaluation sheet does not account for those on partial contracts (and thus are paid less) and assumes an academic trajectory, hence excluding non-academic presenters. Further, four applicants this year paid dues for the unemployed category. Hence, one revision could be to add a category to the evaluation sheet pasted below. Suggested change is highlighted in yellow.

Transnational Initiatives Committee

Global South Travel Grant Evaluation

Name of Applicant _____ TOTAL POINTS _____

Is this applicant working in the Global South (using the [ASA definition](#))?

___ **Yes**, then proceed with evaluation

___ **No**, inform the committee that this applicant is not eligible

The committee will evaluate applicants using a point system based on the following criteria (maximum 13 points):

- **Conference role (maximum 3 points):** 3 for multiple roles, 2 for discussant (or being a

Division Chair), 1 for organizing/presiding

- **Presenting a paper (maximum 3 points):** 3 for three papers, 2 for two papers, 1 for one paper, 0 if no paper but playing another role (which should be counted above)
- **Academic career stage (maximum 3 points):** 3 if recent graduate, post-doc or on the job market, **contingent/part-time faculty, or unemployed**, 2 if working two to five years after graduation, 1 if working over five years, non-tenured or tenure-track, 0 if tenured.
- **Received a travel award last year (maximum 1 point):** 0 for yes, 1 for no
- **Amount of financial support received from university or institution (maximum 3 points):** 3 if \$0, 2 if \$1-\$500, 1 if \$501-\$1,000, 0 if more than \$1,000

ⁱ “All participants (except individuals from community, labor, and comparable organizations working on social problems or social justice issues who have been invited by a session organizer to serve on a panel or to make a presentation) must be current members of the Society (you may join upon acceptance of your presentation) and must register (paying the guest registration fee is not an option for program participants) for the annual meeting by June 1.” See: https://www.sssp1.org/index.cfm/m/1017/Annual_Meeting_FAQ/

ⁱⁱ A separate list nations sorted into “Category A: High income. Category B: Upper middle income. Category C: Low and lower middle income.” See <https://www.isa-sociology.org/en/membership/individual-membership/guidelines> and here: <https://www.isa-sociology.org/en/membership/table-of-economies-by-category>

ⁱⁱⁱ See for example: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/12/restricting-and-limiting-the-entry-of-foreign-nationals-to-protect-the-security-of-the-united-states/>