



Centenary of the **International Committee on Intellectual Cooperation** of the League of Nations

International Conference, May 12-13, 2022, Geneva

www.intellectualcooperation.org

Call for papers

The Centenary of Intellectual Cooperation

On August 1, 1922, on the shores of Lake Geneva, the International Committee on Intellectual Cooperation (ICIC) met for the first time in what would later become the "Palais Wilson". Although this was the first time that these twelve international personalities from the sciences and arts, including Henri Bergson, Kristine Bonnevie, Marie Curie-Skłodowska, Albert Einstein, Gilbert Murray, Jules Destrée and George E. Hale, came together, the idea of creating such a coordinating body for intellectual matters predates the founding of the League of Nations and has its origins in the internationalist movements of the late 19th century. What would later be considered by its actors as an attempt to build a "General Republic of Intelligence"¹ or a "League of the Minds",² was just one element of the vast diplomatic and bureaucratic machine that was set up at the end of the Great War to try to pacify Europe and create a new world order based on multilateral cooperation. But the idea of intellectual cooperation nonetheless inspired the work of bodies and institutions that operated for nearly 20 years, trying to find their place and define their missions in a rapidly changing context. From a consultative committee, it quickly grew to become a real center of activity with the founding of the International Institute of Intellectual Cooperation (IIIC) in Paris in 1926 and other third-party structures like the International Educational Cinematographic Institute (Rome, 1928). Not without generating some tensions with the League of Nations at the turn of the 1930s, this institutionalization led to intellectual cooperation gradually becoming independent from the League's Secretariat. Although the Second World War interrupted the transformation of the Committee and the Institute into a full-fledged international organisation, UNESCO would resume and expand the activity in this field at the end of the conflict.

The centenary of the creation of the ICIC is an opportunity for historians to step back and examine the achievements but also the limitations of this enterprise, its lack of diversity and cultural representativeness. In recent years, there has been a renewed interest in this field of research (see bibliography), in parallel with a renewed interest in the League of Nations as a whole, in a context of doubts about the capacity of multilateral institutions. Without attempting to cover all the areas that remain to be studied in relation to intellectual cooperation and soft power diplomacy in the interwar period, such an event therefore seems to be a useful place of exchange at the crossroads between the archives, teaching and research communities. To do this, the scientific committee invites participants to reflect in particular on the renewal of our methods: whether it is about new approaches or the use of innovative digital tools, the aim of this conference is not only to look at the past but also to inspire future research.

Research axes

Communications can focus on the following areas (but are not limited to):

- The International Committee on Intellectual Cooperation, its sub-committees and activities
- The International Institute on Intellectual Cooperation, its sections and activities
- The International Educational Cinematographic Institute
- The International Bureau of Education and its relations to the League of Nations
- The Congresses of Intellectual Cooperation, intellectual networks and debates
- Actors that have been overshadowed or from countries not represented in the Council of the League of Nations
- Women involved in intellectual cooperation or playing a role in any of the organisations concerned with intellectual cooperation
- The historiography of Intellectual Cooperation and the intellectual foundations of the League of Nations
- Innovative methods, impact of digitization and use of digital tools on the study of Intellectual Cooperation or the League of Nations archives
- Bureaucratization of cultural, educational and scientific relations during the interwar, administrative machinery of Intellectual Cooperation at the League of Nations
- Other cultural, educational and scientific organisations during the interwar period and their relation to the League of Nations
- Transition between Intellectual Cooperation and UNESCO, legacy of this first experience

¹ Julien Luchaire, Discourse, Jan 16, 1926, UN Archives Geneva, 13C/37637/48765, p.5.

² Paul Valéry, Report to the Sub-Committee on Arts and Letters, July 21, 1930, League of Nations document C.428.M.192.1930.XII p.108 (UN Archives Geneva).

- Successful or unsuccessful implantation of Intellectual Cooperation in specific countries/regions, National Committees on Intellectual Cooperation (especially in contexts outside Western Europe)
- National and regional responses to intellectual cooperation initiatives in the field of education
- Coordination of the exchanges of students and professors during the interwar period, university relations and education
- Specific issues dealt with by the League of Nations in relation to cultural, educational and scientific questions (eg. museums, intellectual property, textbooks, libraries, intellectual workers, radio, etc.)
- Relationship to moral disarmament in the interwar period

Submission guidelines

Paper proposals should be sent to info@intellectualcooperation.org by **November 15, 2021**. They should be submitted in the form of an abstract of 500 to 1000 words (not including references), accompanied by a short biography of the author (50 to 100 words). In addition to the purpose of the study, the abstract should indicate precisely how the topic will be addressed (based on which archives/data, with what approach or method).

Prior to the conference, authors will be invited to share an extended version of their paper so that participants can prepare for the discussions. The organizers are considering the publication of a collective monograph based upon the papers submitted to the conference.

Organisation

Organisers

- **Blandine Blukacz-Louisfert**, United Nations Library and Archives Geneva, Switzerland
- Dr. **Martin Grandjean**, Swiss National Science Foundation / University of Lausanne, Switzerland



Scientific committee

- **Jens Boel**, Independent, formerly UNESCO Archives and Library, France
- Dr. **Juliette Dumont**, Université Paris 3 Sorbonne Nouvelle, France
- Prof. **Harumi Goto-Shibata**, University of Tokyo, Japan
- Prof. **Madeleine Herren-Oesch**, University of Basel, Switzerland
- Dr. **Tomás Irish**, Swansea University, United Kingdom
- Prof. **Sandrine Kott**, University of Geneva, New York University, Switzerland
- Dr. **Daniel Laqua**, Northumbria University Newcastle, United Kingdom
- Dr. **Adama Pam**, UNESCO Archives and Library, France
- Prof. **Corinne Pernet**, Zurich University of Teacher Education, Switzerland
- Dr. **Alexandra Pita González**, Universidad de Colima, México
- Prof. **Davide Rodogno**, Graduate Institute Geneva, Switzerland
- Prof. **Diana Roig Sanz**, ICREA and IN3-Universitat Oberta de Catalunya, Spain
- Prof. **Ludovic Tournès**, University of Geneva, Switzerland
- Prof. **Sacha Zala**, Diplomatic Documents of Switzerland

Practical information

Location

The conference will take place at the United Nations Library in Geneva (Palais des Nations) on May 12-13, 2022. Due to the uncertainty of international travel, this will be a hybrid event: it will be possible to join the conference online, both for the presenters and for the participants.

Registration

Registration will open in spring 2022.

Bibliography

The centenary of intellectual cooperation is an opportunity to coordinate our efforts to compile all publications on the subject. This list of references is constantly updated on intellectualcooperation.org/publications. If you want to complete it or add your recent publications, send them to info@intellectualcooperation.org.

Archives and online resources

Both the United Nations Archives in Geneva (ICIC documents) and the UNESCO Archives in Paris (IIIC documents) are digitizing their collections. Find more about these invaluable resources here: <http://intellectualcooperation.org/archives>
Several research projects on intellectual cooperation have taken place in recent years or are currently in progress. More information on this page: <https://intellectualcooperation.org/projects>

Social Media

Please use [#ICIC2022](#) on Twitter. Follow the LONTAD project ([@Lontadinho](#)) and the United Nations Library&Archives ([@UNOGLibrary](#)).