

Invitation to participate in ILERA Study Group on Employer Associations

We would like to invite your participation in the newly-established Employer Associations Study Group of the International Labour and Employment Relations Association (ILERA). The first session of this study group will be held at **the ILERA World Congress in Seoul in July** and we **invite** all those with an interest or intellectual curiosity about employer associations **to join us in this inaugural session together**.

PARTICIPATION IN THE STUDY GROUP

The **Employer Associations Study Group** is open to **everyone interested and/or involved in the work and world of employer associations (sometimes called “employer organisations” or “business associations”) in industrial relations and human resource management**. Co-Chairs are Louise Thornthwaite (Macquarie University, Australia) and Peter Sheldon (University of New South Wales, Australia).

A small, provisional Study Group Committee will have been established, before its expansion and formal confirmation at the Seoul ILERA World Congress, 23-27 July 2018.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY GROUP

The Employer Associations Study Group invites anyone interested in employer associations within employment relations to join us. We wish to encourage scholarship and scholarly exchange across studies of employer associations: their origins, purposes, roles, strategies, internal dynamics, relationship with other organisations and institutions, and their impact and implications .

For many employer associations, this is a time of change and challenge. Employers have mostly established their employer associations to confront various IR challenges, particularly from unions and state intervention. Lacking the resources to confront these challenges, individual employers associated for co-ordination, solidarity and a more substantial political profile. Associations subsequently developed a range of roles and activities on behalf of their members, including the provision of ‘collective goods’: leading or supporting employers in multi-employer collective bargaining; lobbying governments; and mounting public policy campaigns. As the IR world has changed, particularly where there has been a decentralisation or substantial weakening of bargaining, evolving employment arrangements and shifting political contexts, employer associations have faced new challenges. This has been accompanied by a growing organisational and research interest in employer associations’ efforts to achieve organisational sustainability and how these efforts influence their purpose, strategies, membership dynamics, organisational identities, external roles and commercial profiles.

Participants in the Study Group may be interested in any or all of the following:

- The membership, purpose, roles and strategies of employer associations.
- Comparative analysis of employer associations across countries, sectors, regions and globally.
- Industrial relations institutions and their relationships.
- The impact of employer associations on change in IR, HRM and employment law.

- Interdisciplinary approaches to employer associations from the fields such as public policy, sociology, politics, law, history, management and organisational studies.
- any other new or emerging issues in relation to employer associations and the labour and employment field.

ILERA WORLD CONGRESS

The initial opportunity to pursue these studies and discussions will be at the ILERA World Congress in **Seoul July 23-27, 2018** (see <http://www.iera2018.org/congress/welcome.html>). (Please note, this will be on the same day as other study group meetings).

We will also arrange an opportunity to discuss plans for future meetings of the Study Group, for continued interaction between practitioners and academics on areas of common comparative interest, including sessions at future conferences.

More information

More information about the Seoul conference is provided via the ILERA 2018 website. If you have any questions about the study group activities, please email Louise Thornthwaite (louise.thornthwaite@mq.edu.au) or Peter Sheldon (peter.sheldon@unsw.edu.au)

Regards

ILERA Employer Associations Study Group
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