
**Organizing in the Face of Global Crises:
Communication, Strategy, and “Doing the Right Thing”**

Sponsored by the Organizational Communication Division

This preconference explores the complex communicative processes by which organizations constitute strategies to “do the right thing” in response to global crises. In concert with the conference theme of “Reclaiming Authenticity in Communication,” the preconference invites proposals that examine how organizations adjust their values and morals to be in tune with what is publicly conceived of as ethically just. The focus will be on the communicative constitution of strategies to *overcome* crises the world is facing, rather than strategies to *manage* a crisis the organization is facing.

Logistics:

- Thursday May 25, 2023
- Begins 9:00 a.m. (ET) agenda to be determined
- Fully-remote conference (via online platform)
- No registration fee
- ICA membership not required
- Conference Registration not required

Organizers:

- Cecilia Cassinger, Lund University
- John McClellan, Aalborg University
- Visa Penttilä, Hanken School of Economics
- Monica Porzionato, Lund University
- Charlotte Simonsson, Lund University

Over the past few years, we have witnessed a variety of global crises ranging from the Covid-19 pandemic and the war in Ukraine to the ongoing specter of environmental and climate change. As organizations encounter these global wicked problems, leaders are increasingly expected to “do the right thing” in navigating, negotiating, or neglecting these crises.

This preconference invites students, scholars, and practitioners interested in the communicative constitution of organization (CCO) (see Basque, Bencherki & Kuhn, 2022) and strategic communication (Botan, 2021) into a focused conversation about the complex ways in which organizations develop strategies in response to global crises. Such crises are often contested and embedded in conflicting discourses concerning their nature and solution (Bourne et al., 2022). With rising public demand for corporations to be good citizens of the world or even activists, there is increased pressure on organizations to act politically and adopt a moral position (Von Schwedler, 2011; Cöster et al., 2020).

Departing from the assumption that organizational strategies emerge in situations where organizations encounter global problems, there is a potential to redefine and refocus crisis communication as the emergent constitution of global strategies to global problems. Crisis communication can be reimagined not simply as a strategy managed by the organization but as a process more deeply situated in public discourse associated with global issues.

More specifically, this preconference addresses questions with reference to the constitution and consequences of companies attempting to “do the right thing” with attention to what is lost and forgotten in these practices. How do organizations make decisions with regards to supporting public health during Covid-19, canceling business in Russia in response to the war in Ukraine, or legitimizing organizing practices in relation to the sustainable development goals (SDGs) in the 2030 agenda. These strategies adopted among corporations, NGOs, and other organizations have meaningful ramifications for globalization, morality, and politics and thus become significant activities to understand and critique as we continue to move into the 21st century.

We are open to contributions from a wide variety of perspectives ranging from CCO and strategic communication to critical and globalization studies. Submissions may address a wide range of themes including, but not limited to the following:

- Communication related to global crises (e.g. Covid 19, climate change, the war in Ukraine, financial crisis, etc.)
- Communicative constitution of strategy
- Communication and organizational sustainability
- Rethinking response strategies to crisis
- Reconceptualizing crisis communication
- Morals and ethics of “doing the right thing”
- Authenticity and “doing the right thing”
- Global crisis and critical discourse studies
- Global crisis, meaning and organizational identity
- Global crisis and corporate activism
- Far-right or other political appropriation of global crises
- Strategic paradoxes of global crises

Deadlines / Submission Process:

January 16, 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Submit an abstract and a bio of each author to Organisingglobalcrisis@gmail.com – Abstract should be 250 to 500 words – Bios should be no more than 100 words per author
January 31, 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Authors notified of acceptance and invited to participate in the preconference – Brief bios will help the organizers coordinate meaningful virtual discussion groups
May 1, 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Submit full or extended papers to Organisingglobalcrisis@gmail.com – Full or extended papers are not a prerequisite for participation
May (prior to preconference)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Agenda and log in information provided; along with access to full/extended papers – Preconference attendees to read select papers and prepare for discussions

Additional Information: For more information please link to our [preconference webpage](#)

The specific agenda and keynote speakers will be announced as we approach the preconference date.

We aim to create an active and engaged agenda for this completely online conference with the hope of encouraging conversations among the participants to spark the development of ideas and promote collaborative research.

Publication Opportunity: Select papers will be considered for inclusion in an edited book proposal.

Questions: Informal inquiries can be sent to our convenor, John McClellan, at johnngm@ikl.aau.dk

References

- Basque, J., Bencherki, N., & Kuhn, T. (Eds.) (2022). *Routledge handbook of the communicative constitution of organization*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Botan, C. H. (Ed.) (2021). *The Handbook of strategic communication: The cocreational model*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Bourne, C., Mumby, D., Munshi, D., Das, A., Chaudhuri, H-R. & Edwards, L. (2022). *Narrating the anxious market: in search of alternatives during global crises*, *Consumption Markets & Culture*. DOI: 10.1080/10253866.2022.2066656.
- Cöster, M., Dahlin, G., & Isaksson, R. (2020). Are they reporting the right thing and are they doing it right?—A measurement maturity grid for evaluation of sustainability reports. *Sustainability*, 12(24), <https://doi.org/10.3390/su122410393>.
- Von Schwedler, M. (2011). CSR in the UK water industry: ‘Doing the right thing’? A case study. *Social and Environmental Accountability Journal*, 31(2), 125-137.