INNOVATION: FROM THE MARGINS TO THE CENTER

The journey from exclusion to inclusion in societies constructed for the able bodied, the able minded and the ‘able to pay’ is fraught with obstacles and barriers, some of which have been challenged and eradicated, others not. No doubt, there have been numerous local, regional and international successes, especially in the last two decades. And yet, more and more people are falling behind, thrown into an abysmal hole where economic, political, social and cultural access eludes them. The ever-widening gap between the rich and the poor, for example, have created a more expansive system of inequality, leaving more human beings vulnerable to exclusionary practices, secondary conditions and preventable emotional and physical illnesses.

This area of inquiry – Innovation – is concerned with those practices, whether they are ideas, advocacy initiatives, policies, community innovations, inclusionary models throughout the lifespan, or anti poverty initiatives, which have the potential to positively, affect substantial numbers of people, especially people with disabilities. We are interested in the innovation and why the idea/practice/action holds promise for moving forward to an inclusive society.

The Pacific Rim team is interested in the following areas:

- Replicable Individual and community journeys from exclusion to inclusion;
- Ways forward in promoting inclusion for people with mental health challenges;
- Transcending ideologies and the politics of exclusion through inclusive political pathways;
- Successful inclusive and affordable housing initiatives that mitigate the homeless challenges for millions of people, many of which have a disability;
- Dynamic entrepreneurial initiatives which have proven success to relieve the negative consequences of poverty for millions of people with disabilities;
- Recent policies/reforms/actions at the local, community, regional or international level which show promise for inclusion and are replicable in other areas;
- Initiatives that promote equality, social justice, diversity and mutual understanding and that counter extremism and prejudice;
- Innovative actions in embedding diversity in all areas of an organization – strategic planning, governance, ethics, leadership, staff recruitment and retention and the mission, goals and objectives of an organization.

If you have a proposal that may not fit in to the above targets, we will welcome them as part of our discussion. We welcome proposals in any presentation format.
For this thematic area please include a) the Innovation; and, b) what makes it an innovation. Please include this with your abstract as the Innovations will be highlighted during the conference.

Please see presentation formats on our webpage at http://www.pacrim.hawaii.edu/presenters/formats. Please check the criteria for each format and ensure that you have the appropriate number of presenters for your chosen format. You may submit proposals online at: http://www.pacrim.hawaii.edu/submissions or send your proposals via email to prcall@hawaii.edu.

For more information about this topic area, contact prcall@hawaii.edu.

For general information on the conference, please contact Charmaine Crockett at cccrocke@hawaii.edu, (808) 956-7539.

For registration questions please contact the registration desk at (808) 956-8816, fax (808) 956-4437 or email prreg@hawaii.edu.