

SRN 2021 Seminar Series Online

Dear SRN2021 Delegates and SRN Members

Finally!

I am now able to announce the proposed format and dates for the SRN2021 Research Seminar Series Online (replacing the SRN2021 Annual Conference originally due to be hosted in Oxford). You will find all the facts and info here below: be prepared, it's a long list with lots of bullet points (if more convenient you can find all the details in the enclosed PDF as well). It goes without saying, this is the initial plan with lots of TBCs and TBDs yet to be sorted out, and therefore things may still change.

FORMAT

- [BEFORE] Papers: pre-recorded 15-minute presentations (to be made available in advance via the event website; so far we expecting as many as 90). Delegates are asked to watch as many as possible so as to enable lively discussions during the relevant live sessions.
- [DURING] Live sessions (via Zoom, see dates below):
 - 24x chaired Q&A panels (3-4 papers each): each speaker will be asked to give a 3-minute abstract of their respective pre-recorded paper presentations, followed by 30-35' interactive discussion (chairs will be able to collect questions from all attendees – in person or via the chat boxes – during as well as before their live sessions).
 - 2x Keynote speakers.
 - 2x AGMs (includes EC elections): the same session run twice, to cover all time zones.
 - SRN Awards: prize winners announced by Jury + 2x winners' 30-minute lectures.
 - 2x Working Groups (TBC)
 - 1 or 2 Round Tables (TBD)
 - 1x Projects and Collaborations (TBD)
 - "Happy hours": at the end of many live sessions attendees will be able to stay online for one more hour of networking, informal chatting, etc.
- [AFTER] Bonus content (via Zoom, TBC):
 - Special guests (TBD)
 - 1 or 2 "SRN in Conversation with..." (TBD)
 - SRN Early Career Researchers 2021 Symposium (November, TBC)

DATES

[BEFORE] Pre-recorded presentations

All shortlisted speakers will be asked to submit a pre-recorded 15-minute presentation of their paper in advance so as to give all delegates enough time to watch as many as possible before the scheduled live sessions. Please plan to record and submit your presentations according to the following rules of thumb:

- Ideal world deadline for submission: ASAP in **June/July**. In other words, start now and submit as soon as you can.
- Formal deadline: **31 July 2021**, however...
- “If-you-still-can’t-make-it” deadline: any time after that, in the awareness that the later you submit, the less time other delegates will have to watch it.

Guidelines for recording and submitting presentations:

- File type for submission: MP4
- Is there a maximum file size: no, but on average a 15-minute mp4 file tends to be 3-600 MB.
- How do I submit my MP4 file? Hopefully, I will be able to set up a dedicated submission dropbox to share with everyone ASAP. Until then, a few options are:
 - o Upload it to your GoogleDrive/OneDrive or similar, than share it with me, or
 - o Upload it to DropBox and share it with me, or
 - o Send it to me via WeTransfer
 Pick anyone that you can use for free.
- Maximum duration: 15 minutes. In my experience, slightly shorter pre-recorded presentation are much more effective than longer ones and consider the subsequent live session/Q&A an integral (if delayed) part of your presentation as well. As a rule of thumb, begin the recording by introducing your core research question briefly, avoid excessive contextualizing/framing, then argue your 3-4 main points concisely and leave the audience wanting for more during the live session (when you can have all your other notes at hand to complement your presentation).
- What device should you use to record your presentation? Any – PC, Mac, tablet, phone, camera, webcam, Zoom recording (or similar), etc.
- What format should your presentation be? Again, any, as long as it suits the presentation. Examples include but are not limited to:
 - o You simply reading your paper to camera
 - o A PowerPoint/Keynote presentation + you reading your paper as Voice Over
 - o A PowerPoint/Keynote presentation + you reading your paper to camera in PiP in one corner of the screen
 - *Note: if you use slides (in any app) summarize the main points of your arguments as opposed to cram them with long paragraphs pasted verbatim from your paper.*
 - o A video-essay (either formal, creative, performative)
 - o A podcast-like presentation (audio only, no video)
 - o A mix of the above
- Can you embed clips/include citations in your presentations? Yes, you can, within “fair use” limits as you would normally do in an in-person paper presentation, as long as you cite sources correctly.
 - o *Try to limit the use of embedded clips anyway as they will eat away time from your 15-minute allocation. If available, it is best to provide links/references to freely available online resources that can be consulted by delegates when watching your presentations. Remember that delegates will watch presentations in asynchronous before the live sessions and therefore they are not bound to the 15-minute limit of the presentation itself.*

[DURING] **Live sessions**

Five (5) dates for your calendar!

- Monday 30 August
- Friday 3 September
- Wednesday 8 September
- Monday 13 September
- Friday 17 September

In the past year I have attended about 20 online conferences/festivals/events/seminar series trying to figure out what works best and what not. I can say, without a doubt, that:

- Those who tried to simply transfer their original in-person conference schedule/format online failed regularly. It simply won't work like that online.
- Attending any online event for more than 3-4 hours straight is most counterproductive, let alone full-day sessions (I managed to attend one that started at 8.30 am and ended at 10 pm for three days – I will abstain from adding any comments).
- Events that schedule several days in a row tend to see their audience wane exponentially the longer they went on.
- On the other hand, events that scheduled sessions are regular intervals every few days over a few weeks (essentially turning into a “series” of dates) generally worked rather well.

So, on the five days listed above we will have:

- All our papers Q&A sessions: these will all be one-hour slots – 50 mins. discussion + 10' break (see above for some more details)
- Keynotes, AGMs, Round Tables, SRN Awards: these will likely be 75-90 mins.

TIME ZONES

After much thinking, calculating, trialling and errors, I can confirm that we will follow two main criteria for scheduling our live sessions: 1) by time zone/geographic area, and 2) thematic grouping (based on papers' keywords/content).

However, I have realized that the best way to proceed is to split our planet/time zones into 2 big regions rather than 3. This takes into account the fact that, although we do have speakers whose geolocation spans 20 time zones, the vast majority are still from Europe.

Therefore, the following schedule will divide each Live Session Day into two slots of roughly 4 hours each:

| | US West | US East | South America | Western Europe | Central Europe & Africa | Eastern Europe | Middle East | India | Western Australia | Japan & Central Australia | Eastern Australia | New Zealand |
|--------|---------|---------|---------------|----------------|-------------------------|----------------|-------------|-------------|-------------------|---------------------------|-------------------|-------------|
| Slot 1 | 24-4 | 3-7 | 4-8 | 8-12 | 9-13 | 10-14 | 11-15 | 12.30-16.30 | 15-19 | 16-20 (+30') | 17-21 | 20-24 |
| Slot 2 | 9-13 | 12-16 | 13-17 | 17-21 | 18-22 | 19-23 | 20-24 | 21.30-1.30 | 24-4 | 1-5 (+30') | 2-6 | 5-9 |

While it's basically impossible to have colleagues from the Americas and from Asia-Pacific attending live simultaneously (unless they decide to burn the past-midnight oil), the above will allow for the largest and broadest possible audience: Slot 1 will be on in the morning (for Western and Central Europe), early afternoon (for Eastern Europe, Africa, Middle East and India), and in the late afternoon/evening (for Asia-Pacific countries); a 5-hour break will

then be followed by Slot 2, which will allow attendance at decent hours for colleagues in the US (morning and early afternoon), in South America (late afternoon), in Europe and Africa (late afternoon/evening), as well as in the Middle and India (albeit in the late evening). The AGM will be run in both slots so as to give everyone the same chance to attend and participate in the discussion and in the EC Elections.

By the way, as you know, you have time until Sunday 20 June 2021, 3 pm (UK time) to vote the motion to amend two articles of the SRN Constitution (see email sent out on 20th May) to enable hosting AGMs and EC elections virtually. You will receive plenty of details soon enough once the results are in, so I won't add any here.

ZOOM AND RECORDINGS

In all likelihood, we'll be using Zoom for our live sessions. As I will be setting up all sessions, I will be able to use my University's license which grants unlimited use and allows for up to 1,000 participants in Meeting mode (the one with interactive audience, as opposed to the boring Webinar mode, where only hosts and speakers can be seen and heard).

I will then make all chairs and speakers co-hosts.

It doesn't matter whether you or your university have a Zoom license: once you register for a session, you will receive a link to attend freely. You will be able to log in to Zoom either within your browser or you can download the Zoom app for free on any device.

We are also exploring the possibility of streaming the live sessions via YouTube and/or Facebook: this option won't require prior registration and logging it to Zoom, but you may not be able to interact with the speakers and the other delegates (yes, I know, we can use the chat boxes on YouTube and Facebook as well, but that will depend on how many people will be on hand to help out in any given session – so let's say we will follow up on this with more precise details in due course).

We will record all live sessions so as to make them available via the SRN2021 website to all those delegates and members who cannot attend live. However, we will likely require registration to access all recorded content.

[AFTER] **Bonus content**

I am trying to organize a few extra events that will hopefully make SRN 2021 an even more lively and engaging event. I have contacted a few guests from the industry (writers, producers, a few policymakers) and am awaiting their responses regarding their availability to join us for some informal conversations and Q&A. If available, I will leave them the option to choose from either a live session or a pre-recorded one to be then shared with you. In any case, as a rule these extra sessions will be at later dates in September/October (unless their availability is limited to one of the dates above, in which case we might want to shuffle things around a bit).

The same goes for another possible type of extra session. As you will remember, a couple of months ago the Executive Committee launched the first of a series of recorded sessions titled "SRN in Conversation with..." past conference organizers with the aim of building a memory archive of our main events and activities of the past 15 years. We have more in the pipeline, and it might well be that one or two could be planned for the Autumn. In which

case, again, we have a choice of pre-recording it, just like the first one, or going live and give access to all of you for more interactivity.

Finally, we also have one more event in store for you – likely to be in November 2021. The Early Career Researcher Symposium will be announced later in June (via a regular CfP) and will be organized by our ECR rep on the EC, Ann Igelström. Although the ECR Symposium will be a stand-alone event in its own right and with its own format, we can consider it as a great closing event to what is going to be a very exciting Autumn season despite having to postpone meeting in person for another year. All ECR will be eligible to submit a proposal for the Symposium, including those who will participate in the Seminar Series in September should they wish so. Stay tuned for more soon!

So... Is that all? Pretty much but not necessarily. If you have any further suggestions, just throw them our way and we can discuss whether they can make a good addition to this programme of online activities.

Help needed!

Many of you have already come forward to help out with the Seminar Series. Thank you ever so much to all of you and I will be contacting each one of you in the next few weeks: perhaps we can arrange a Zoom briefing session so we all get together and get an idea of what I might need from you apart from the usual chairing. Although, in principle, some help in coordinating by geographic area might be the main priority.

Website and registration

Most pages on what used to be the SRN2020 website are now disabled as I am redesigning it and repurposing it for the SRN2021 Seminar Series Online. The idea is to make the website the go-to navigation platform for the event, with lots of useful features, a repository for the pre-recorded presentations, links to everything (recordings and live sessions), guidelines, as well as a thematic map of the content shared by everyone. After all, our Annual conferences (and their current virtual replacement) are all about exchanging our research findings, networking, finding shared interests, etc. I will do my best to make sure that the website enables all this in the best possible way. I have also obtained some funds to purchase a Business Wordpress domain which means all the event content will be available to registered delegates/members for the next two years at last, so the exchanges are not limited to the live interaction next September.

As soon as the website is ready, it will include instructions to register to attend the SRN2021 Research Seminar Series Online. Registration will be FREE but required as it will give us the chance to monitor and optimize access to all content and sessions, and avoid any uninvited guests (e.g. Zoom bombing and similar).

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Quite a lot to digest already, but more (and more precise) information yet to come in the forthcoming weeks.

Any clarification needed, just give me a shout.

Take very good care of yourselves

Best