

Role of the Arts and Cultural Capital in Rural Innovation & Entrepreneurship

Research Conference

February 23 & 25, 2021

Virtually Hosted by the Rural Policy Research Institute

Call for Proposals for Virtual Research Conference

This is a Call for Proposals for a special *virtual* research agenda setting conference about the important role that arts and cultural capital play in rural innovation, community well-being and rural community sustainability and resiliency. This conference will encourage a multi-faceted approach to explore the role of arts and culture in rural communities through both qualitative and quantitative studies. Cultural capital expresses the identity of a community and contributes to a community's sustainability and resiliency by providing an anchor of self-reference and through its interaction with and influence over the other community capitals such as natural, social, built, financial, and human capital. The arts as a critical component of cultural capital that can provide new insight on the role of imagination and aesthetics in the generation of new ideas and innovations. This part of the innovation process has been largely overlooked in rural community sustainability and resiliency research. And agreeing on the most appropriate indicators for measuring the defining characteristics and level of cultural capital in a community has been widely debated. The comparative advantages of rural communities in the production of cultural capital and how this differs across rural geographies and with urban areas are other under researched topics.

The **Role of the Arts and Cultural Capital in Rural Innovation and Entrepreneurship** conference will ask the research community to explore all these issues through basic research and collaborations of researchers and the rural arts and culture research community. Addressing what we do *not* know about rural arts and cultural capital and its importance in rural innovation and rural community resiliency and sustainability will be as critical to the future work of this research community as explaining what we do know.

Conference Logistics

December 22: Proposal Deadline

Notice of Acceptance by early January

Due to the opportunities presented with a virtual format, accepted presenters will be asked to record your presentation in advance, for viewing by conference attendees in advance. Instructions and technical assistance support will be provided.

Video presentations will be due January 29.

Conference submissions should be directed to Jocelyn Richgels, jrichgels@rupri.org and Tom Johnson, johnsontg@missouri.edu. Thank you for your participation.



Submission criteria

Submissions for consideration should be a well-formulated synopsis of your research proposals that include a short narrative and proposed methodology. A description of proposed format for virtual presentation is welcome. A fully formed research abstract is not expected for submission for consideration. Conference presentations should be based on a more developed abstract, but fully finished research papers are not expected. This conference is intended to develop ideas for research and build a research community to address gaps in research.

Conference Themes

- *The proclivity of the arts and cultural capital to generate nonobvious solutions to complex problems will be a focus of this conference and will draw on historical and contemporary examples to demonstrate the utility of this asset in addressing a broad range of rural development challenges.*
- Developing and sustaining cultural capital as a community capital through promoting arts and culture as a means of unleashing creative capital and innovation.
- *The interaction of the arts and cultural capital with other community capitals and the importance of these interactions for developing rural community stability and resiliency, including in response to trauma, change and uncertainty and in communities experiencing systemic injustice.*

Conference Goals

- Establish an approach that examines and builds support for research that centers on the role played in rural innovation by cultural capital and the arts.
- *Provide a comprehensive approach for studying and supporting rural innovation, with a focus on the early stage of innovation, through the generation of new ideas through imagination, the creative spark and the harnessing of community relationships to support this innovative process.*
- Build a deeper research community that is called upon to address research gaps and supports the research foci of emerging scholars. Inclusion of researchers and community partners studying and representing communities who have experienced cultural misappropriation and cultural dismissal, including Indigenous, Black Belt, and Border communities, will be of particular focus.

Topics of interest include but are not limited to the following:

Impacts of arts avocations on the innovative capabilities of rural entrepreneurs • Rural strategies for sustaining and promoting arts production • Examples of creative place-making promoting cultural interaction • Coordination of natural, built, and cultural amenities in the form of music, culinary, wine, or other thematic trails • Use of arts programming as a coping response to personal or community crisis • Restoration or rediscovery of craftsmanship enriching aesthetic experience • Establishment and scaling of Arts Ecosystems • Sustaining historic and culturally appropriate attributes in communities experiencing systemic injustice • Comparing the development and sustainability of cultural attributes in different types of rural communities, i.e. destination communities, multi-generational, retirement • The role of community relationships - the “currency of relationships” - in cultural wealth • The role of social spaces – schools, grocery stores, community diner - that may or may not exist anymore – in the development of community culture • The ownership of data to form your community’s story

Additional questions for consideration can be found in [The Rural Differential: A Literature Review at the Nexus of Arts & Culture, Creativity, Entrepreneurship, and Innovation](#), presented by the Rural Cultural Wealth Lab. A list of questions for further research considerations is presented on pages 16-17.