

# Call for Sessions - WEHC 2015 [S20037]

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## Proposed title of the session

New Histories of Global Inequality and Global Governance

## Abstract

Thomas Piketty's *Capital* (2014) has re-energised debate about the history of income inequality. Parallel to Piketty's analysis of inequality as a challenge to contemporary globalisation, our panel will take up the implications of the longer history of global inequality.

This panel brings broad-ranging historical expertise to a discussion of the historical contribution of conceptualizations of international economic governance (including norms, values, rules, leadership, and structures), and to the problem of global economic inequality. The panel will address the questions: When, where, and why has a commitment to global economic justice underwritten the history of development programs? What principles defined international organizations and programs established during the 20th century (particularly between 1919-1950s) with the primary goal of raising standards of living? What contribution can historians working inside and at the margins of traditional economic history make to the current debate about global inequality?

Each of our participants has begun to address these questions in new work on the League of Nations Economic and Finance Committee (Clavin), on GATT (McKenzie), on the engagement of bankers with international economic institutions (Sluga), or through a close study of the Food and Agriculture Organization (Amrith), and United States' development programs in India (Engerman).

The topics that the panel will canvas through their case studies include:

- i. Economic ideas and International Institutions, with a particular focus on the World Bank and IMF, but also the GATT, FAO, the ILO, UNESCO, and the UN.
- ii. Global Inequality and the rise of International Development programs.
- iii. A comparative understanding of US, Indian and Soviet Union versions of development, and their respective engagement with international institutions.
- iv. The role of the private sector in the creation of an international system of economic laws and institutions expected to tackle the problem of global inequality.
- v. Precedents for Piketty's focus on global inequality measured within rather than across states and for a global wealth tax, in contrast to the dominant model of development and aid-based strategies built on the differentiation of North and South.

We currently have 5 scholars involved in this panel representing Australia, Canada, UK, and USA. If successful, and if there is the space in the program for an enlarged panel, we would include another 3-4 panel members, with a preference for Early Career panelists based in, or working on Asia, Latin America and/or Africa.

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## I. Corresponding Session Organiser

Prof. Glenda Sluga (University of Sydney [Australia])

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## II. Co-Organiser(s)

1. Corresponding Organiser.
2. Prof. Francine McKenzie (University of Western Ontario [Canada])

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## III. Expected Participant(s)

1. same as correspondent.
2. Patricia Clavin (Oxford University [United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland])
3. Sunil Amrith (Birkbeck College, University of London [United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland])
4. David Engerman (Brandeis University [United States of America])
5. Francine McKenzie (University of Western Ontario [Canada])