

Call for Papers for the ESSHC Theory and Historiography Network

The ESSHC aims to bring together scholars interested in explaining historical phenomena using interdisciplinary approaches to the study of the past. The conference is characterized by a lively exchange in many small groups, rather than by formal plenary sessions. It is organized in a large number of networks that cover a certain topic (e.g. criminal justice, family, social inequality).

The Theory and Historiography network is interested in proposals for panels (consisting of three papers and a comment), roundtables (more oriented to discussion than the formal presentation of panels) and 'meet the author' sessions (where there is a pathbreaking publication of a monograph, not older than two years) on theoretical and historiographical topics.

Although reflection on a wide set of theoretical and historiographical issues are welcome, in 2025 we would like to encourage proposals in particular on the topic of 'Engaged History Writing'. In times of global crises there is an urgency to act on the knowledge that we have as scientists and scholars. Biodiversity loss and climate change, war, conflicts and polarization have turned many academics into activists. Many historians today are likewise engaged in addressing societal needs and concerns, not least by working on societies confronting a traumatic, violent or unwanted past, or by dealing with a growing political instrumentalization of history and an ongoing mobilization around the meanings and uses of the past. Engaged history work, in the sense of putting historical knowledge in the service of societal change, or even, of emancipatory politics, can mean many things; re-writing history on behalf of disadvantaged and repressed groups, engage in public contestations of history or critically contest populist memory governance, act as expert witness in international tribunals or as public intellectuals by actively resisting the demands of specialization. But engaged history writing also has to do with the politics and ethics of historical knowledge production, with academic commitments and epistemic responsibilities, with resisting public demands of useful pasts in the name of historical truth. Overall, we encourage submission of panels that deal with issues related to engaged history writing and the notions of activism and commitment broadly conceived, across time and geographical borders. We also encourage submissions that deal with the responsibilities of historians and with the intersecting roles of professional historians, public intellectuals and academic activists.

The European Social Science History Conference is organized by the International Institute of Social History.

Details can be found on the [website](#). To submit proposals, please use the Ex Ordo platform,

<https://esshc2025.exordo.com/>

The deadline for proposals is April 15, 2024.

Network chairs:

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