



CONSEIL INTERNATIONAL DE LA PHILOSOPHIE ET DES SCIENCES HUMAINES  
INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL FOR PHILOSOPHY AND HUMAN SCIENCES

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## INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE WORLD CONFERENCE ON THE RETHINKING OF THE ROLE AND PROSPECTS OF THE HUMANITIES IN THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY

The dawn of the 21<sup>st</sup> century arrived with a mixture of hope and anxiety. While the prospects for improvements in daily life are increasingly tangible, namely due to the advances of the digital era, concerns about cultural diversity, employment and security, continue to mount. Traditional responses, focused on short-term urgencies and the academic approaches of specific disciplines, do not cope with the critical needs that are perceived in different ways across the globe.

This is a reality that finds its roots, beyond recent crises, in major global changes that have accelerated in the last decades, as attested to by several scientific disciplines. Yet, the human sciences have been less proactive in integrating these global changes in society and the environment into their frames of reference. For this reason, humanistic perspectives are often absent from popular and media opinion, let alone policymakers--with regrettable consequences.

Yet the strength of the humanities lies in their capacity to articulate the relevance of creativity, literature, the expressive and performing arts, cultural diversity and long-term, historically informed reasoning, not least for resisting the forces of alienation, xenophobia or intolerance. Historical knowledge, critical thinking, imagination and nuanced analysis of human ideas and values provide essential understanding of the growing complexity of our globalizing world. It is precisely the human sciences that are so well positioned to foster the understanding that cultural diversity is a key driver of resilience and creative transformation, and that it allows for a more sustainable adaptation to the uncertainty that characterizes the future.

In this context, the CIPSH/ICPHS and its member organizations invite scholars and practitioners of the humanities on a worldwide scale to collaborate in organizing a **First World Conference on the Humanities** in 2017. CIPSH/ICPHS also invites scholars in all other scientific domains, UNESCO (with which there is an ongoing debate on the steps to follow), international research institutions, governmental science agencies, NGOs and all other institutions, to participate in this timely initiative.

CIPSH/ICPHS welcomes the offer of the City and the University of Liège to host this Conference in August 2017.

The main goal of this event will be to explore the ways how, throughout the diverse societies and regions of the world, the humanities contribute to cultural, social, economic and environmental development. The structure, program and sessions will be open to input and debate, namely through the website of CIPSH/ICPHS ([www.cipsh.net](http://www.cipsh.net)), before the final format of this landmark event will be agreed upon by the Council and UNESCO. Also, several regional and thematic preparatory conferences will take place leading up to the World Conference.

On January 18<sup>th</sup>, 1949, soon after UNESCO was created, the Council of Philosophy and Human Sciences was launched, having contributed in an appreciable way to the scientific and social



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achievements in the following decades. Nearly seven decades later, it is time for an open and critical debate on the type of research and outreach that are needed to strengthen both the daily and lasting impact of the human sciences.

Together with its member organizations and in close collaboration with UNESCO, CIPSH/ICPHS will welcome suggestions, proposals and declarations that may contribute to a process of intense intercultural and interdisciplinary exchange that will reinforce all branches of the humanities, for the benefit of human flourishing and survival.

Paris, the 30<sup>th</sup> January, 2015

Chao Gejin

President of the International Council of  
Philosophy and Human Sciences

Adama Samassekou

Designated President of the World Conference



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