

Migration and (re)Settlement: Furthering the iResearch Agenda

Organizers/Speakers

Chair: Dr. Jamie Johnston, OsloMet University, Oslo, Norway

Dr. Nadia Caidi, Faculty of Information, University of Toronto, Canada

Dr. Eeva-Liisa Eskola, Åbo Akademi University, Finland

Dr. Karen Fisher, iSchool, University of Washington, USA

Dr. Jannica Heinström, OsloMet University, Oslo, Norway

Dr. Gunilla Widén, Åbo Akademi University, Finland

Lightning Talk Speakers

Rachel Salzano, Edinburgh Napier University, Scotland

Hilda Ruokolainen & Maria Hokkinen, Åbo Akademi, Finland

Negin Dahya, University of Toronto, Canada

Kahina Le Louvier, Northumbria University, England

Tareq Alfeel, School Media and Adult Education Librarian, Sweden

Khadijah Saeed Khan, Åbo Akademi, Finland

Lisa Ndejuru, Concordia University, Canada

Salah A. Saleh, *Lost Memories* project, Sweden

Abstract

The field of migrant information behavior is rich and highly diverse. It is a body of literature that contributes to our understanding of the information environments and uses of migrants and refugees in various contexts. A deeper understanding of the information practices and the ICT uses at play during forced migration and (re)settlement provides evidence-based knowledge that can lead to more effective information provision. Yet, research into migrant populations and forced migration poses its own set of challenges, among them methodological and ethical aspects arising from the sensitivity of the issues, and an extremely vulnerable research population. This Virtual Interactive Session (VIS) aims to bring together researchers from the information fields, along with researchers in related disciplines and professionals working in the field to critically reflect on their experiences, engagement and challenges faced. The overarching aim is to move the research agenda toward a more participatory, migrant-centered approach.

Purpose and Intended Audience

The field of migrant information behavior is as rich as it is diverse. It is a body of literature that contributes to our understanding of the information environments and uses of migrants and refugees in a range of contexts (Caidi, Allard & Quirke 2012; Duncan & Caidi, 2018;

Fisher 2018; Gilhooly & Lee 2014; Johnston 2016, 2018, 2019; Lloyd & Wilkinson 2017; Newell, Gomez & Guajardo 2017; Oduntan & Ruthven 2019; Ruokolainen & Widén 2019; Sabie & Ahmed 2019; Traxler 2018). A deeper understanding of the information practices and the ICT uses at play during migration and (re)settlement provides evidence-based knowledge that can lead to more effective information provision. Yet, research into migrant populations and forced migration poses its own set of challenges, among them methodological and ethical aspects arising from the sensitivity of the issues and, all too often, extremely vulnerable research populations.

Studies focusing on the role of information in migrants' lives depend on novel articulations of what it means to research this population, the nature of the engagement, and the needed negotiations with a range of stakeholders. Current trends toward a migrant-centered approach (aiming at supporting migrants' well-being and priorities) call for migrants to be more than mere study objects but instead position them as active participants in the research process in ways that can increase their involvement in the community and participation in the society (capacity building). However, barriers and challenges such as linguistic competency, socio-cultural differences, life experiences, and differing priorities often complicate well-intended approaches (Clark-Kazak 2017).

Information researchers have developed various participatory and visual methods to tackle and overcome some of the challenges; however, this is an area in need of further exploration and development. This VIS will provide participants with an opportunity to share stories and engage in creative problem-solving related to developing participatory and interdisciplinary approaches for understanding the complexity of studying migration (especially as it relates to information practices and ICT use).

This VIS will build on the experiences and reflections of several researchers (both established and emerging) bringing together a variety of experiences, pedagogical approaches and personal insights to the issue. It will, moreover, include non-academics illustrating a range of perspectives and lived experiences. The VIS attendees will hear a series of lightning talks acting in effect as relevant mini-case studies. Session participants will have a chance to actively work through these, explore plausible scenarios, and collaboratively seek possible approaches. The VIS will conclude with the establishment of a research agenda. The session on the second day of the VIS will give attendees the opportunity to explore an emerging research methodology in depth.

Proposed activities Day 1 including agenda, ramp up and follow-through:

Sunday, March 28	Day 1 / Agenda
09:00 – 09:15	Welcome Jamie Johnston
09:15 – 10:30	<p>Session 1: <i>Current Challenges in Forced Migration Research: Capturing Narratives</i></p> <p>Lightning talks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rachel Salzano • Hilda Ruokolainen & Maria Hokkinen • Negin Dahya • Kahina Le Louvier <p>Session Moderator: Jannica Heinström</p>
10:45 – 12:15	<p>Session 2: <i>Paradigm Shift: Thinking Islam - Ethnography in the Arab World</i></p> <p>Lightning Talks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nadia Caidi • Tareq Alfeel • Khadijah Saeed Khan • Karen Fisher <p>Discussion Moderator: Eeva-Liisa Eskola</p>
12:15 – 13:00	Lunch
13:00 – 14:30	<p>Session 3: <i>Alternative and Emerging Research Paradigms</i></p> <p>Lightning Talks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lisa Ndejuru, performance and theatre as methodology • Jamie Johnston, DIALOG: connecting through words and literature • Salah A. Saleh, <i>Lost Memories</i> project <p>Session Moderator: Gunilla Widén</p>
15:00 – 16:00	<p>Session 4: <i>Establishing a Research Agenda</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working with Partners for Funding • Knowledge Dissemination <p>Session Moderator: Nadia Caidi</p>
16:00 -- 16:30	Wrap up Jamie Johnston

Tuesday, March 30	Day 2 / Agenda
09:00 - 11:00	<p><i>Performance and Theatre as Methodology</i></p> <p>Interactive session with Lisa Ndejuru</p> <p>Session Moderator: Karen Fisher</p>

Lightning Talk contributors will hold 5-7-minute presentations each. A shared document with all invited abstracts will be published open access on Zenodo ahead of the VIS. Afterwards, and with consent of the contributors, slides and notes of the meeting will also be added to the living document. VIS attendees on both days will be invited to join the MARiS Research Network for maintaining contact and further developing research collaborations related to migration and settlement. Please note: Time and date for Day 2 of the VIS are suggestions. This session can be scheduled in accordance with the events of the conference.

Relevance to the Conference/Significance to the Field:

The VIS addresses a current topic where it is particularly important to demonstrate solutions that can come from information sciences to solve some of the issues associated with migration, in particular forced migration. The iConference 2021 theme of *Diversity, Divergence, Dialogue* is also reflected in the topic of the VIS as information science can offer solutions that are built on trust and long-lasting relationship, and help promote the *inclusion* of migrants and refugees in the receiving countries on their own terms by engaging the respective populations in dialogue. We also hope to *inspire* young researchers in information science to dedicate parts of their research to finding solutions to societal issues related to migration and inclusion as well as *grow* our research community. The virtual format will allow for a more inclusive and insightful discussion, as a broader and more diverse group of researchers, practitioners, and community representatives will be able to attend, many of whom would not be able to attend in person.

Duration: We will need four 90-minute sessions on the first day of the workshop and one on the second day. The program proposed above for the workshop has been based on 90-minute sessions, with the first and the last sessions giving time for the welcome and wrap-up.

Virtual Technologies: Zoom will be used to facilitate the VIS.

Special Requirements: We are planning on inviting special guests to this VIS: some will be recent migrants/refugees and other service providers and/or policymakers. We would appreciate any special arrangements so that cost does not continue to be a barrier to participation (i.e., registration fee for non-academic attendees and possibly the community partner(s) who may not be able to defray the registration costs).

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