



## First Call for Abstracts and Registration

Social Justice and Human Rights of Older Persons in Africa  
Johannesburg Business School, South Africa  
28 – 29 May 2024

### Welcome Message from the Chair and Partners of the Symposium

This symposium is part of the research focus of the SARCHi Chair in Welfare and Social Development and is jointly hosted with key partners to contribute and advance social justice and human rights of older persons in contemporary Africa. The Centre for Social Development in Africa, University of Pretoria, Nelson Mandela University, University of Cape Town, The Association for The Aged and Ikamva Labantu welcome you to this two-day symposium which will give researchers, students, social work practitioners and policymakers the opportunity to share empirical evidence, experiences and insights regarding older persons and their contributions to enhancing a developmental social welfare agenda in South Africa and the continent.

The population of older persons is growing rapidly globally and by 2050 the number is anticipated to grow to about two billion. In Sub-Saharan Africa, South Africa has over 4.2 million persons aged 60 years and above. These unprecedented demographic shifts call for governments particularly in Africa, to prioritise the health, psychosocial and economic needs of older persons. The African Union Plan of Action on Ageing aligns with this commitment to protect and promote the rights of older persons so that they remain active and live a life with dignity. This is consonant with the United Nations' 17 Sustainable Development Goals that apply to the developmental needs of older persons.

In contemporary Africa, with a nexus of social and economic challenges that confront families, the indigenous social support systems are strained and dwindling. Older persons are at a high risk of neglect, financial, physical and emotional abuse, poverty, and violent crimes. A shift of consciousness is urgently needed to challenge negative stereotypes of older persons and ageing, and to acknowledge their valuable contribution in contemporary times.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development provides social workers with an opportunity to redefine their roles and ethical responsibilities pertaining to human rights and justice in respect of older persons in contemporary society.

The main theme of this symposium: Social Justice and Human Rights of Older Persons in Africa, and the critical sub-themes will provide an opportunity to engage in rich dialogue and debate around a range of issues, pertinent to the social work profession and other key partners in this field of service delivery.



Social work educators, social science researchers, students and practitioners in government and the nonprofit sector are welcome to submit abstracts on the following sub-themes:

### **The Care Economy / Aging in Place**

- Care challenges faced by older persons and their families.
- Caregivers as stakeholders in the older persons care team.
- Community-based services.

### **Education and Professional Development**

- Education and curricula for students in social service professions to deliver appropriate gerontological services.
- Continuing Professional Development for social service professionals.

### **Social Justice and Human Rights of Older Persons in Africa**

- Promoting human rights and social justice
- Ageism.
- Community and caregivers' understanding and support of older persons living with dementia.

### **Disasters / pandemics / conflicts and war / environmental risk factors**

- Economic challenges experienced by older persons.
- Elder abuse.

### **Resilience and agency of older persons**

- Entrepreneurial initiatives undertaken by older persons.
- Digitisation and Artificial Intelligence: Possibilities in enhancing older persons' resilience.
- Psycho-social challenges experienced by older persons (loneliness, anxiety, grief, loss of autonomy).

### **Submission Guidelines**

All submissions must be original work that has not be submitted elsewhere. An abstract must be between 150 to 200 words using the APA, 7th edition as referencing style, 1.5 spacing, font size 12 and Times New Roman. Abstracts must align with the main symposium theme or any one of the five sub-themes. Priority will be given to those abstracts that are informed by empirical research that address the aim of the symposium. All submitted abstracts will be reviewed by a panel of reviewers who comprise academics, social work practitioners and researchers in the field of social gerontology. Those whose abstracts are approved will be contacted using the provided e-mail addresses. Therefore, make sure that you include full name, affiliation, e-mail address and contact number at the bottom of the abstract. Individuals with accepted abstracts will be requested to prepare a full paper and a presentation that is prepared for the symposium. The subject line of the submission e-mail must read 'ABSTRACT FOR OLDER PERSONS SYMPOSIUM'.



Faculty of Humanities  
Social Justice and Human Rights of Older Persons in Africa



NELSON MANDELA  
UNIVERSITY

**Submission Deadline:**

All abstracts must be submitted by no later than 15 March 2024 to [msobantu@uj.ac.za](mailto:msobantu@uj.ac.za)

Registration fee: US\$50

Online attendance: US\$40

We look forward to welcoming you in Johannesburg on 28 and 29 May 2024.

This promises to be an experience of loads of stimulating debates, a chance to build relationships, broaden your networks with South African hospitality not to be missed!

**Prof. Tanusha Raniga (PhD)**

**Symposium Committee Chair**

**Symposium Secretariat**

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