

Workshop 'Community Interests in International Law: Theory, Adjudication and Human Rights'

11 June 2027, Nijmegen, The Netherlands

Call for Abstracts

Community interests have become one of the most consequential yet conceptually unsettled ideas in contemporary international law. In his 1994 lecture 'From Bilateralism to Community Interest in International Law', Bruno Simma argued that “there probably exists no other ‘community interest’ so far detached from individual State interests as that of enforcing human rights worldwide.” Three decades on, the concept has steadily gained attention in both scholarship and practice: Proceedings before the International Court of Justice concerning allegations of genocide based on *erga omnes* (*partes*) obligations, the advisory opinions on climate change, the establishment of the Special Tribunal for the Crime of Aggression against Ukraine, and the expansion of *jus cogens* by the IACtHR, all point to the growing recognition of interests that transcend bilateral relations and concern the international community as a whole.

And yet, despite this growing attention, the theoretical foundations and operationalization of norms protecting community interests remain underexplored. Who constitutes the ‘international community as a whole’, whose interests are at stake? Which interests qualify as sufficiently fundamental to transcend bilateral State relations? To what extent do international courts and tribunals differ in the way they conceptualize, interpret, and protect these interests? And what is the conceptual link to international human rights law?

The workshop organizers invite submissions examining how community interest norms are conceptualized, addressed by international courts and tribunals, and how the nexus between serious human rights violations and breaches of community interests norms can be assessed.

Submissions

We invite scholars and practitioners to submit an abstract of up to 500 words, together with a short biography of up to 150 words, to johanna.ritter@ru.nl and d.e.uribe@rug.nl with the subject line “CfA Community Interests Workshop.” We also encourage early-career scholars, including doctoral candidates, to submit an abstract.

The abstract submission deadline is **15th January 2027**. We aim to notify applicants of the outcome by 15th February 2027.

Workshop format

Accepted contributors will each give a presentation of approximately 10-15 minutes, followed by a moderated Q&A discussion. This is a discussion-oriented workshop, and we ask participants to attend for the full day so that everyone can engage with each other's work. The workshop is planned as an in-person event.

Selected papers may be considered for a special edition of a peer-reviewed international law journal.

Date and location

The workshop will take place in person at Radboud University, Nijmegen (Faculty of Law), Montessorilaan 10, 6525 HR Nijmegen, on 11 June 2027.

Contact

For any questions about the workshop or the submission process, please contact johanna.ritter@ru.nl and d.e.uribe@rug.nl.

Workshop Convenors

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Diego Uribe, PhD Candidate, University of Groningen

Sarah Thin, Assistant Professor, Radboud University

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