

Note on the ERNOP Conference 2021

ERNOP aims to organize its biennial research conference in Dublin on July 1-2, 2021. Currently, a call for proposals has been developed, including confirmed keynote speakers. The ERNOP board would like to express that it is looking forward to the conference and would very much like to see that the conference will take place next year in Dublin. We are very grateful for all effort by the hosting committee to organize the conference and continue the planning of the conference in Dublin. Also, we are very pleased to have the commitment from the keynote speakers, especially to our academic keynote speaker Beth Breeze.

Unfortunately, however, it remains uncertain how COVID-19 will influence the possibility to organize a conference where about 150 participants will meet and interact. This is caused by both uncertainty related to travel restrictions to travel into Ireland, as well as the risk that Covid-19 induces lockdown measures at the country of origin of the participants, as well as quarantine and the health situation of the participants. At the moment Ireland is coping well in terms of numbers of infections, but imposes quarantine measures of 14 days on all entering Ireland.

This creates a need to consider an alternative option to a face-to-face conference. The ERNOP board proposes to develop an online conference that enables the presenters to present their work and receive the feedback by the participants. Also, the board will carefully develop options that enable the participants to exchange informally.

The ERNOP board is however aware that an online conference requires an alternative infrastructure and organization. Also, the level of informal interaction will not be comparable with the interaction achieved by a regular conference. The Irish hosting committee has indicated that they feel not equipped to organize this alternative and would offer to host the conference in 2023 instead. Therefore, the board invites hereby ERNOP members to join as volunteer to host an online conference, in close collaboration with the ERNOP Executive Director. The board will also decide on consequences related to conference registration rates and decide on a deadline for a go or no-go related to the online conference.

Currently, presenters will be informed about the acceptance of their work on March 12, 2021. The board proposes to inform presenters about the location of the conference by April 2, 2021. The online hosting committee would be already in place by then, ready to kickstart the online event if required.