

Abstract Submission Deadline Extended to May 21st, 2018

The Global Society of Tigrean Scholars (GSTS)
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Quo Vadis Tigray? Building Knowledge-based Economy and Society in Tigray

Tigray Grand Conference- July 18th-22nd, 2018, Mekelle, Tigray, Ethiopia

Call for Abstract submissions

The Global Society of Tigrean Scholars (GSTS), in partnership with the Tigray-based higher education institutions (Universities), the Tigray National Regional State Science and Technology Bureau, and the Government of Tigray National Regional State, is organizing a grand conference entitled **Quo Vadis Tigray? Building Knowledge-based Economy and Society in Tigray**. The conference, the first of its kind and scope, serves as an enabling and inclusive platform designed to bring **decision/policy makers, academics, businesses, professionals, civil societies, media experts, and related stakeholders** together under the "Quad-Helix" framework to foster a collaborative dialogue on the development of the Tigray region and beyond. More specifically, the conference will provide opportunities for participants to discuss relevant topics, share their professional experiences, establish and/or strengthen collaborations (within and outside Ethiopia), and set priorities that would advance the region towards a knowledge-based sustainable economy and foster the development of dynamic society in Tigray in particular and Ethiopia in general. Additionally, a series of experience sharing and brain storming break-out sessions are planned to bring scientists and professionals together to generate innovative ideas that could potentially be applicable in the Tigray context.

Notice: This conference is expected to extend beyond the scope of a purely scientific and/or public conference in that, at the conclusion of the conference, concrete and practical recommendations will be identified and documented for further follow-up, engagement, and implementation. Hence, speakers are requested to prepare their papers in such a way that analyses and results are clearly linked to concrete recommendations. Speakers are also requested to make their presentations understandable to a wide range of audiences (i.e. the use of both technical and non-technical language).

In this regard, the GSTS is pleased to invite submissions of abstracts for the conference to be held in Mekelle, from July 18th - 22nd 2018.

The conference is organized under five thematic areas (however, work addressing additional themes is welcomed).

(1) Comparative and Absolute Advantages of Tigray: Identifying Key Development Opportunities and Challenges:

The sub-themes include: History and language matters; The geopolitical dynamics in the Horn of Africa and its implications on Tigray (Ethio-Eritrea border, the Red Sea coast, and the recent inter-ethnic relations in Ethiopia); Recent socioeconomic developments and challenges; Comparative/Competitive and absolute advantages of Tigray.

(2) Boosting Technological and Sectoral Capability in Tigray (Education, research, and innovation; Civil service capacity; Health care services, Tourism, Urbanization, Manufacturing/Investment, Mining, Ethical and Civic Responsibility).

The sub-themes include: Navigating educational policies, practices, and their contribution to the development endeavours of Tigray; Lessons from other countries and regions on education and health policies and services; Strengthening the STEM/STEAM of Tigray-based schools, colleges, and universities; The role of “Quad-helix” model in improving education and healthcare services and tackling pandemic-related challenges; Boosting research, innovation, and financing; the role of e-health and ICT.

(3) Boosting Enabling Technologies and Building Economic and Innovation Zones in Tigray (Emerging technologies; Industrial and agro-processing parks; Special economic zones, Knowledge hubs, Entrepreneurship).

The sub-themes include: Lessons from other countries on the effective application of new and emerging technologies for development (material science, energy technologies, nanotechnology, biotechnology, Information and communication technologies (ICTs), and data); Experiences and lessons in developing industrial and agro-processing parks; Facilitating industrialization and manufacturing capacity; Developing knowledge hubs including indigenous knowledge, science/technology parks, central research hubs/institutes; Smart cities and villages.

(4) Agricultural Transformation, Poverty reduction, Food Security, Youth Employment and Women Empowerment (Agricultural and rural transformation; Land restoration; Youth employment and migration; Women empowerment).

The sub-themes include: How to modernize the agricultural sector; Achieving food security; The state of agriculture in Tigray and how to speed up successful agricultural transformation; Enhancing integrated and knowledge based restoration of degraded landscapes; Exploring the policy options for promoting non-farm rural economic activities; The role of “Quad-helix” model in boosting agricultural productivity (e.g. through government and industry supported research); The creation of well-paying, formal sector, and productive employment opportunities to absorb the youth; Reducing youth migration; Strategies to foster women empowerment.

(5) Tapping into the Scholars and Diaspora Knowledge: Scholars and Diaspora Knowledge Networks, Engagement, and Connections.

The sub-themes include: Assessing global experiences, lessons learned and strategies to tap the potentialities of diaspora scholars and diaspora networks and their implications for effective networking; Designing enabling policies and reforms to tap the huge potential of Tigrean scholars and diaspora; Centring Tigrean scholars and diaspora to the development processes of Tigray through networking and joint forums; Engaging scholars and diaspora in the knowledge development and translation of gained skills (technology transfer) into the development endeavours of Tigray; Diaspora Tegraru and Investment, Making Tigray a centre of gravity and destination for intellectuals and entrepreneurs.

Submission guidelines:

1. Submit an abstract of no more than **250 words** and a maximum of **5 keywords**, or a paper consisting of no more than 8500 words. Identify the theme and sub-theme in which the submission best fits.
2. Identify clearly whether the submission is for oral or visual presentation.

Submission Deadlines:

1. Submission deadline **May 21, 2018**.
 2. A final decision on submissions will be communicated by **June 10, 2018**.
- Abstract or paper submissions have to be made both to: gstssubmit@hotmail.com and gsts.tigrayconferences@gmail.com and more detail information about the conference and GSTS as a whole can be found on the organization’s website: www.scholars4tigray.org.