

# A BETTER TOMORROW STARTS WITH BETTER WORK TODAY

IMPROVING WORK FOR  
POST-PANDEMIC WORKERS

---

**27-29/05/2023**

**ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF  
THE CANADIAN INDUSTRIAL  
RELATIONS ASSOCIATION**



## CALL FOR PAPERS

Industrial relations (IR) scholarship will play a pivotal role in resolving future work-related challenges and building a better post-pandemic world of work. Our **60th annual Canadian Industrial Relations Association (CIRA) conference** will examine IR's proposed solutions, with a particular emphasis on how work can be improved in a post-COVID era marked by economic uncertainty, high inflation, and rising worker discontent.

As we explore the future, the conference will also reflect on how sixty years of industrial relations scholarship and activism in Canada has contributed to improving government policymaking in the area of labour and employment, from increasing the performance of firms, to bettering the lives of working people.

The conference will be hosted by York University (Toronto) on the **27th, 28th, and 29th of May 2023**. Researchers from all fields (labour relations, human resource management, labour economics, organizational psychology, etc.) whose work addresses questions related to work and employment are invited to **submit one or more proposals for a paper, workshop, or symposium related to one of the four suggested themes listed below, or centered around a theme of their own choosing**.



# SUGGESTED THEMES



## **No. 01 — Labour Shortages and Essential Services**

There are significant labour shortages in the essential services sector, with fewer healthcare workers, critical infrastructure workers, and suppliers of critical goods like food and medicine. Supply is not only unable to keep up with demand, but other factors, including baby-boomer retirements, collective agreement disputes, declining workplace morale, and employee burnout are keeping workers away from the frontlines. We're also beginning to see the government directing provincial funds toward privatized services to make up part of the shortfall, impacting workers, their unions, and potentially the quality of essential services Canadians receive.



## **No. 02 — In-Person vs. Remote Work Arrangements**

Workers have grown accustomed to shorter commutes, as well as more independence, flexibility, and family time, all while completing the responsibilities of their job from the comfort of their own homes. Many employers, however, are eager return to the status quo of managing their employees (and their employees' productivity) in-person. The impact of one arrangement over another has implications for worker morale, office space management, and productivity, and after two years of working remotely, some workers think it's time to reassess our relationship to work and the merits of in-person workplaces.



## **No. 03 — Post-Pandemic Migrant Workers**

Early in the COVID-19 pandemic, migrant workers were particularly vulnerable, due to either being stranded without work, or working with very limited workplace protections. Two years later, our Federal Court says a 'moral debt' is owed to pandemic workers on the frontlines, especially those with pending applications for permanent residency; and, while some high-profile cases of deportation have been reversed, the granting of "status" to undocumented workers is moving all too slowly for countless others. We've also fallen short of guaranteeing all workers, regardless of status, equal labour rights and protections.



## **No. 04 — Wages and Inflation**

Economists say that wages are failing to keep up with inflation, and many low-income Canadians are making difficult decisions about where to allocate their resources -- feeding their families, paying their rent, filling prescription medications, and/or travelling to and from work -- an added strain on vulnerable populations (women, racialized workers, and recent immigrants to name a few) who are likely already earning less. At the same time, governments, banks and businesses argue, just as they did in the early 80s, that higher wages will fuel inflation, perpetuating a vicious cycle.

Our goal, within the context of this conference, is to rely on the historically interdisciplinary tradition of the industrial relations field, and encourage different intersecting perspectives and approaches, both academic and applied, within the sessions tied to the suggested themes. Paper, workshop or symposium proposals related to the interdisciplinary field of Industrial Relations are also welcome. The CIRA conference is a welcoming forum for researchers, practitioners, and public policymakers to exchange ideas and findings on all issues related to work and employment.

Interested persons are invited to submit their proposals, in either English or French. Interested parties may also submit workshop proposals (ex. 4 proposals tied to the same theme) or symposium proposals (two or more workshops on the same theme). All propositions will be subjected to peer-review, under the responsibility of the organizing committee.



## SUBMISSION DEADLINES

Submitted proposals should be sent as **500-word summaries** including the title, as well as the name and affiliation of all authors, to the organizing committee **by March 13, at the following address:** [cirhr.communications@utoronto.ca](mailto:cirhr.communications@utoronto.ca). Please indicate which themes the proposal is tied to (if any).

For more than 40 years, CIRA has given the Gérard Dion Award to a person or an organization who made a remarkable contribution to our field of study or the world of work, and we would like you to take part in the consultation process by suggesting candidates to be shortlisted. Suggestions should be made by at least two (2) CIRA members, and sent **no later than April 15** to the following address: [communications.cira@gmail.com](mailto:communications.cira@gmail.com)

Students wishing to apply to the Allen Ponak Best Student Paper Award should submit a full paper **before April 30** to: [communications.cira@gmail.com](mailto:communications.cira@gmail.com). Both French and English student papers are welcome.

Up to eight (8) **student travel scholarships** will be awarded based on the excellence of the candidacies received. Applications are due by **April 30**.

A Graduate Student Consortium is being organized and will be held on **May 27**.

### MARCH 13

CIRA Conference Proposals

### APRIL 15

Gérard Dion Award Nominations

### APRIL 30

Allen Ponak Best Student Paper Award Submissions  
Student Travel Scholarship Applications



# STUDENT TRAVEL SCHOLARSHIP

Up to **eight (8) student travel scholarships** will be awarded based on the excellence of the candidacies received. Selected recipients will receive up to **\$750 CDN** for their travel expenses.

Payment of the scholarship will be made after the conference upon presentation of receipts for expenses incurred, up to the amount awarded. Interested persons are invited to submit their proposals, in either English or French. Interested parties may also submit workshop proposals (ex. 4 proposals tied to the same theme) or symposium proposals (two or more workshops on the same theme). All propositions will be subjected to peer-review, under the responsibility of the organizing committee.

Applicants must be a current graduate student continuing studies as a full/part-time student in Fall 2022 and pursuing a master, a PhD or a post-doctorate in industrial relations or a related discipline. Priority will be given to current members of the Canadian Industrial Relations Association (Become a member at <https://www.cira-acri.ca>)

To apply, please send the following to [communications.cira@gmail.com](mailto:communications.cira@gmail.com) **by April 30:**

- Contact information
- Name of current program and educational institution (for students) OR date and educational institution of obtained doctorate
- Current copy of resume/CV
- (for students) Copy of current university transcripts
- A brief description of funding sources (other than the CIRA award) and other funding applications made or accepted
- An abstract in English, or French of the communication proposal submitted as first author to the 2023 CIRA Congress



Annual Conference of the Canadian  
Industrial Relations Association (CIRA)