

Participatory Action Research and the Future of IR

Friday, 20 June 2025 09:00 (1h 30m)

This panel examines how participatory action research (PAR) can address critical challenges in international studies by rethinking global power relations and re-envisioning the political dimensions of international relations (IR). As IR grapples with perpetual global crises and increasing calls to “undiscipline” the field, PAR offers a transformative methodological innovation that directly engages communities impacted by global policies. It grounds research in their experiences and agency and promotes a diverse, inclusive community that rethinks the boundaries of international studies.

The panel contributions highlight how participatory, collaborative research reshapes IR by challenging entrenched assumptions about citizenship, sovereignty, and transnational identities, decentering traditional Western-centric perspectives, and elevating the voices of non-state and marginalized actors often excluded from academic and policy discourse. Panelists also discuss how far PAR allows IR to democratize the research process and reflect a broader range of perspectives, emphasizing experiential knowledge and co-creation as pathways toward a more equitable and contextually responsive discipline.

In positioning PAR as a foundational approach for the next era of IR, this panel argues that PAR is innovative and essential for the discipline’s continued relevance and adaptability. We explore both the potential and limitations of PAR as a tool for advancing global scholarship, identifying the challenges that remain in incorporating these participatory approaches into IR and beyond.

Track Classification: Orphan Papers track