Institute for the Study of Human Rights

Year in Review
About us

Founded in 1978, the Institute for the Study of Human Rights (ISHR) at Columbia University brings together scholars, students, and activists to advance applied and critical perspectives on human rights.

ISHR hosts major education programs in Human Rights at Columbia University, including a popular undergraduate major for Columbia College and General Studies, an interdisciplinary M.A. program, and a summer school.

The Institute’s educational mission is enriched by applied and theoretical research programs focusing on a broad array of themes, a vibrant series of guest speakers, workshops, and conferences and the Human Rights Advocates Program (HRAP), which has been contributing to the intellectual life at Columbia University for nearly 35 years.

Many of the Institute’s initiatives are the product of collaborations between its various programs. Below is a summary of key activities and contributions of our programs and projects during the academic year 2022-23.
ISHR's New Executive Director

On July 1, 2022 ISHR welcomed Joseph R. Slaughter as its Executive Director. Professor Slaughter is an Associate Professor of English and Comparative Literature and a member of The Committee on Global Thought at Columbia University.

He specializes in postcolonial literatures (particularly from Latin America and Africa), international law, and socio-cultural histories of the Global South. His research and teaching focus on the social work of literature—the myriad ways in which literature intersects (formally, historically, ideologically, materially) with problems of social justice, human rights, intellectual property, and international law.

Professor Slaughter’s honors include a Guggenheim Fellowship, a Lenfest Distinguished Faculty Award, the Abigail R. Cohen Fellowship at the Institute for Ideas and Imagination (Paris), and a Public Voices Fellowship. His first book Human Rights, Inc.: The World Novel, Narrative Form, and International Law, which explores the cooperative narrative logics of international human rights law and the Bildungsroman genre of the novel, was awarded the 2008 René Wellek prize for comparative literature and cultural theory. He served seven years in the leadership of the American Comparative Literature Association, including his election as President in 2016. Slaughter has published many influential articles on literatures of the Global South, human rights, intellectual property, international law, and decolonization in a wide range of journals.

Slaughter was a founding co-editor of the interdisciplinary journal Humanity: An International Journal of Human Rights, Humanitarianism, and Development. He co-edited a volume of essays, The Global South Atlantic, that explores some of the many social, cultural, political, and material interactions across the oceanic space between Africa and Latin America that have made it historically (im)possible to imagine the South Atlantic as a cohesive region. He is currently completing two monographs: “New Word Orders: Intellectual Property, Piracy, and the Globalization of the Novel,” which considers the role of plagiarism and piracy in the creation of contemporary world literature and international IP regimes, as well the work that the novel might do to interrupt globalization and to resist monopoly privatization of cultural and intellectual resources; and “Behind Human Rights,” which examines the rise of human rights and development discourse in the period of political decolonization from the 1960s-80s from the perspective of Third World aspirations and approaches, considering especially the peculiar roles that colonial charter companies and transnational corporations played in the creation of international human rights law.
Columbia University has an exceptional international reputation earned through decades of innovative research by faculty in several academic departments, a commitment to the interdisciplinary study of human rights, and highly respected capacity-building programs of human rights professionals. ISHR is committed to promoting excellent education programs that draw on these strengths. As the focal point for the study of human rights at Columbia University, ISHR is directly responsible for several human rights education programs, including:

- Undergraduate Major & Concentration
- Masters of Arts
- Graduate Certificate
- Summer Program and Certification of Professional Achievement

ISHR students examine human rights from an interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary lens. They gain an in-depth understanding of the international human rights regime, critically examine key concepts, themes, and issues within the field, and develop the capacity to assess and respond to a wide range of emerging sociocultural, economic, political, and technological issues using a human rights lens.

Students gain specialized knowledge and develop the skills necessary to conduct substantive original research, analyze data, and engage in effective written and oral communication.

Just Ideas Initiative

In 2023, ISHR partnered with the Center for New Narratives in Philosophy on the Just Ideas Initiative, which brings together faculty with human rights graduate and undergraduate student interns to engage on equal terms with people in New York prisons. Interns act as assistant teachers in 4-week Philosophy and Literature courses taught in the Metropolitan Detention Center (MDC), a maximum security federal prison in Brooklyn. During the spring 2023 semester, six human rights students started their internships at Just Ideas, providing teaching and administrative support to the program.
Human Rights Studies M.A. Program

The Human Rights Studies M.A. is an interdisciplinary program at the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences. It boasts a reputation for academic excellence with a focus on the study of human rights theory and practice. Students take human rights courses offered by ISHR as well as other departments and schools at Columbia University.

The HRSMA attracts a diverse pool of domestic and international applicants. In September 2022, ISHR welcomed 47 incoming HRSMA students.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HRSMA Fall 2022 Incoming Class</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>47</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INCOMING STUDENTS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FULL TIME STUDENTS</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
New Instructor Highlight

In the Fall of 2022, ISHR welcomed Jackie Dugard as a Senior Lecturer in the discipline of Human Rights at ISHR and the Department of Political Science. With a background in law and social sciences - BA (Hons) & LLB (Wits); MPhil & Ph.D. (Cambridge); and LLM (Essex) - Jackie focuses on power and exclusion. She has published widely on socio-economic rights (especially the rights to housing, land, and water), property law, access to justice, the role of law and courts in social change, protest and social movements, and gender-based violence. She is currently part of a multi-country Research Council of Norway-funded project, “Pluriland”, which seeks to understand the impact on human security of enacting plural land rights in constitutions and law. Jackie is the leader of the workstream on Land and Housing for the UN-funded project, “Making Prevention a Reality: A Framework Approach”. Jackie is the lead co-editor (Jackie Dugard, Bruce Porter, Daniela Ikawa, and Lilian Chenwi) of Edward Elgar’s (2020) Research Handbook on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights as Human Rights. During Fall 2022, Jackie taught International Human Rights Law and Socio-Economic Rights. She also launched a new course on Climate Justice in the 2023 Spring semester.

Student Highlights

Ismini Drosoforidi, a student in the Human Rights Studies M.A. program, was selected to be the Columbia University representative at the 2023 Clinton Global Initiative cohort.

Tetiana (Tanya) Kotelnykova, a first-year student in the Human Rights Studies M.A. (HRSMA) Program and a recipient of Columbia University’s Scholarship for Displaced Students, launched a mentorship program for Ukrainian youth called “Mentor Ukraine.” Additionally, Tanya received the Davis Fellowship Award in 2023.

Brooke Helmick (HRSMA, Class of 2023) was the Audience Choice winner at the GSAS MA SynThesis Competition. During the event, Brooke presented her research on how the rise of extremists and hate organizations affect social wellness.
Back on campus

ISHR organized an event on September 29, 2022, at Elysian Fields to celebrate its vibrant community. Human Rights students, faculty, and staff gathered to mark the start of the academic year with welcome remarks by ISHR Executive Director, Joseph Slaughter. Attendees enjoyed refreshments and good conversation.

Education Event Highlights

The Education Program organizes many events every year to support its students and faculty socially and professionally, and to foster critical reflection and dialogue on human rights issues. These events engage the Columbia and broader human rights community and create opportunities for networking and collaboration.

In addition to the featured receptions, a select few event highlights from 2022-2023 include the Climate Justice Panel, Migrant Rights Film Screening, and Afghan Voices of Hope. For a full list of events and collaborations, please visit ISHR’s events page. The Human Rights Training series featured sessions on data privacy, measuring human rights metrics, and human rights skills and advocacy. This year, ISHR co-sponsored Human Right Educator’s USA Annual Training as Action Series which provides human rights practitioners with tools to bridge the gaps between personal and collective action on critical human rights issues, such as gun violence and youth action. ISHR launched a new Faculty Conversations Series, which aims to provide a space for collaborative discussions addressing issues related to the teaching of human rights, including best practices, challenges, and lessons learned, and a meaningful opportunity for further strengthening a robust community among our faculty. ISHR hosted its signature Internship Panel, Funding 411, Pizza with your Pros, and Destress Sesh, for professional development and departmental unity.
Della Maggio was selected by Columbia University’s Graduate School of Arts and Sciences to be one of the 2023 awardees of the Dr. Devon T. Wade Mentorship, Service, and Advocacy Award. This prize is presented annually to a Master’s or doctoral student in any Arts and Sciences discipline who most exemplifies a commitment to community-building and mentoring as demonstrated by the late Dr. Devon T. Wade.

Human Rights Graduate Group (HRGG) and Columbia University Undergraduate Students for Human Rights (CUSHR) Student Initiatives

- **War in Ukraine: Film Screening and Discussion** (February 2023). To commemorate the anniversary of the Russian full-scale invasion of Ukraine, the Human Rights Graduate Group (HRGG) hosted a screening of *Cyborgs: Heroes Never Die* followed by a Q&A with the film’s director, Akhtem Seitablaev. The event also included presentations and a discussion panel, with guests including Lili Bivings, a contributing editor at the Kyiv Independent and Tanya Kotelynka, an HRSMA student and founder of the mentorship program for young Ukrainians, “Mentor Ukraine.”
- **HRGG Fundraiser** (March 2023). HRSMA students created a fundraiser for those impacted by the earthquake in Syria and Turkey. The group sold baked goods on the steps of Low Library and raised over $500.
- In collaboration with the Sex Workers Project (SWP) of the Urban Justice Center, Columbia University Undergraduate Students for Human Rights (CUSHR) hosted a sex worker-led panel for a packed crowd of Columbia students in a dialogue on deep-seated societal stigma. (November 2022)
- **CUSHR collaborated with Columbia’s One for the World**, a movement of students fighting to end extreme poverty through the pledging of future salaries, discussing the human rights implications of charitable giving. (April 2023)
- CUSHR hosts bi-monthly general board meetings and facilitates dialogue between potential majors and established members.
HRSMA Alumni Mentorship Initiative

In 2022, ISHR launched the HRSMA Alumni Mentorship Initiative, a new program that pairs our alumni with current students, based on their shared research interests and career trajectories. Since the launch, ISHR has successfully paired 22 students with mentors. A few examples of organizations where alumni mentors are currently working are Global Fund for Women, Upwardly Global, UN Global Contact Network, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, and United Nations Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund.

Alumni Highlights

Lawrence Robinson graduated from the HRSMA program in October 2019. He recently published a chapter in the book *Transitional Justice in Tunisia: Innovations, Continuities, Challenges*. Lawrence adapted the research from his MA thesis to write his chapter titled *From the Streets*.

Julie Ciccolini graduated from the Human Rights Studies M.A. (HRSMA) program in 2018. She was selected for the 2022 Outstanding Recent Alumni Award. The Outstanding Recent Alumni Award honors individuals who have graduated within the past fifteen years and have excelled in the early stages of their careers. After graduating from HRSMA, Julie went on to become an inaugural member of the Digital Investigations Lab at *Human Rights Watch*, a first-of-its-kind initiative to apply emerging technology to bolster remote investigations into human rights abuses in over 90 countries. In 2020, Julie launched The Full Disclosure Project to help organizations across the country use my software to expose police misconduct in their states.

Sharon Song, a 2021 Human Rights M.A. graduate, published an article titled “Digital feminism: in the aftermath of #MeToo, what's next for workplace equity for women” in the *Journal of Human Rights*. The article is based on Sharon’s graduate thesis.

Susanne (Susy) Prochazka, a 2023 Human Rights Studies M.A. graduate, is currently serving as the Chief Legal Officer for the tech start-up *Sourceable*. This start-up empowers citizen journalists to tell their stories to the world from places of conflict and crisis. In particular, they focus on verifying data collected by citizen journalists in these places. Susy shared that they raised funds to support their journalists affected by the Kahramanmaras earthquakes.
Undergraduate Human Rights Program

The Undergraduate Human Rights Program consists of a Human Rights Major and a Concentration, offered through Columbia College and the School of General Studies. Students in the program enhance their knowledge and skills in human rights and explore their interests through coursework and extracurricular activities outside the classroom.

The program also works to strengthen and support the undergraduate human rights community on campus. During the Fall 2022 semester, a total of 90 students were enrolled in the Human Rights major and concentration.

Undergraduate Fall 2022 Class

MAJORS AT COLUMBIA COLLEGE
33

CONCENTRATORS AT COLUMBIA COLLEGE
9

CONCENTRATORS AT GENERAL STUDIES
3

MAJORS AT GENERAL STUDIES
45
**Student Highlights**

**Shatize Pope** is a student in the General Studies Undergraduate Program. Her research focus is finding the historical explanation for the practice of female genital mutilation, and how have these human rights violations impacted the African nations of Somalia and Kenya. She is a member of the Columbia Impact student group and leads the Peace Act Fund student group for the reproductive rights of women. Shatize also became a University Life Ambassador because she was excited to be a part of welcoming other students to Columbia.

**Claire Choi** is a Columbia College Undergraduate Human Rights Major student. Her research focus is children’s rights and is writing her senior thesis about disproportionate child welfare involvement among families of color in New York, and the implications for children’s education. Claire is a volunteer with a tutoring group on campus and is also involved with the undergraduate law review. She is currently a fellow with the Jailhouse Lawyers Manual at the Columbia Human Rights Law Review, and a research assistant at NYU Steinhardt and the Columbia Justice Lab.

**Alumni Highlights**

**Izzy Bohn** graduated in May 2023 as a Human Rights Major from the School of General Studies. For her senior thesis, Izzy decided to focus on why civil society protests in Argentina that draw on international human rights norms have had success in the legalization of abortion in spite of the Catholic Church’s influence. She is interested in the intersections between reproductive health, human rights law, and religious influence. During her time at Columbia, she interned with The Riders Alliance, a grassroots organization fighting for more reliable/accessible/affordable public transit in NYC, and had the opportunity to learn a lot about grassroots political organizing. She has since become really passionate about helping people understand how transit justice connects with so many issues like housing and environmental justice, abolition & carceral justice, and even gender justice. Izzy is currently working as a Paralegal at Cuti Hecker Wang LLP.
2023 Miller Prize Award Winners

The Miller Human Rights Award supports graduate and undergraduate human rights students who seek to deepen their experience through study abroad or volunteer work. The placement should provide substantive and thoughtful engagement, through a human rights lens, with communities experiencing socio-economic inequities, forms of discrimination, or other types of institutional or societal marginalization. Steve Miller is the Chief Financial Officer of Warby Parker and serves on the Board of Ubuntu Pathways. Steve graduated from Columbia College in 1995 with a degree in Political Science. While at Columbia, Steve spent time in Johannesburg, South Africa and helped raise over $500K in support of local communities. Steve’s volunteer experience had a lasting impact on his commitment to social justice initiatives and he remains actively engaged with civil society in the country.

Laura Giselle Romero received the 2023 Miller Prize Award for her work as a youth advocate and paralegal intern with the non-profit organization The Brave House. The mission of the Brave House is to support and uplift young immigrant women and gender-expansive youth, ages 16-24 who have been historically underserved and underrepresented, with a focus on individuals who are survivors of gender-based violence. It provides free legal support, community space, and holistic services, including mentorship, leadership training, one-on-one advocacy, wellness events, job and school assistance, support for new and expecting moms, and so much more. Laura is an Undergraduate student at Columbia College.

Angel Gilbert received the 2023 Miller Prize Award for her work with the organization Witness To Mass Incarceration. Angel is a rising second year student at Columbia College. Angel worked alongside the executive director and the rest of the journalist team to publicize the experiences of those behind bars, writing not only about incarcerated individuals but also about the parents, children, or friends that they leave behind. Angel's work is informed by her experience being placed in an inhumane child welfare system as her mother served time, and witnessing first-hand a system quick to disrupt secure placements but slow to provide rehabilitative care.

Madison Watkins received the 2023 Miller Prize Award for her internship at the Department of Child Protection and Permanency. She is a senior at the School of General Studies and a Human Rights major with a concentration on Education. Her internship at the Department of Child Protection and Permanency has given her first-hand experience of understanding the purpose of protecting children’s basic human rights as well as applying the knowledge she has learned at Columbia. Since being on campus she has learned invaluable skills in human rights applications and research. While being at Columbia, Madison has maintained full-time employment throughout each semester as an employee at Avenues NYC, a sober living facility in Chelsea, and a student worker at the Center for Career Education on campus.
**Student Awards and Prizes**

### 2022 Human Rights Research Award

**Akosua Akuoko**  
**Research Project:** Can Legislation Combat Race-based Hair Discrimination in New York City?

**Giulia Campos**  
**Research Project:** Designing an Early Warning System for Gender Academia in Latin America

**Stephanie Starzynski**  
**Research Project:** Ethno-populism and Scandals: Evidence from Hungary and Poland

### 2023 Human Rights Essay Contest

**Undergraduate Winners**  
**Megan Lunny** (Columbia College, Human Rights Major)  
*Reading the “Climate Refugee” into International Law*  
**Tatiana Gnuva** (Columbia College, Human Rights Major)  
*“Laïcité” as a Tool to Facilitate Discrimination*

**Graduate Winners**  
**Anna Savva** (Human Rights Studies M.A.)  
*The International Bill of Rights and the Implied Right to Water: Assessing Israel’s Role in the Occupied Palestinian Territory’s Water Crisis*  
**Morgan Sojourner Mooney-McCarthy** (Human Rights Studies M.A.)  
*Indivisibility of The Right to Life: An Argument for the Healthcare of Undocumented Farmworkers*

### 2023 Human Rights Thesis Competition

**Undergraduate Faculty Choice Winner**  
**Sedona Thomas,** Columbia College, Human Rights Major  
**Thesis:** The Fairness Fallacy: Northpointe and the COMPAS Recidivism Prediction Algorithm

**Graduate Faculty Choice Winner**  
**Shayna Lewis,** Human Rights Studies M.A.  
**Thesis:** “Do Not Speak for Us”: Darfuriian Perspectives on Transitional Justice In a Revolutionary Sudan

**Audience Choice Winner**  
**Anita Shenoi,** Human Rights Studies M.A.  
**Thesis:** An Exploration of Sedentarist Assumptions, the Refugee Experience in Cyprus, and Civil Society’s Valuable Role as a de facto “Ombudsman” of Enabling Human Rights Legislation

### 2023 Myra Kraft Prize Winners

**Myra Kraft Prizes for Superior Academic Achievement in the Study of Human Rights**  
**Alexandra Kirk,** Columbia College  
**Victoria Mueller,** Columbia College

**Myra Kraft Prize for Exceptional Practical Experience in Human Rights Advocacy**  
**Megan Lunny,** Columbia College, Nuclear Age Peace Foundation  
**Daya Benami Narasimhan,** Columbia College, International Rescue Committee

### Phi Beta Kappa Inductees

**Levin Guerra,** Columbia College  
**Alexandra Kirk,** Columbia College  
**Victoria Mueller,** Columbia College
Undergraduate Human Rights Departmental Honors

Haley Michelle Chung, Columbia College
Victor Gout, General Studies
Rubaab Mufaddal Poonawala, General Studies
Malaika Dawn Tayi, General Studies

Miller Human Rights Award

Annamaria Belevitch, Columbia College, Columbia University’s Center for Nuclear Studies in French Polynesia
Clara Harrington, General Studies, Calais Food Collective
Madison Berezovske Watkins, General Studies, Department of Child Protection and Permanency office of NJ
Angel Tawnette Gilbert, Columbia College, Witness to Incarceration
Laura Giselle Romero, Columbia College, The Brave House

End of Year Celebration

On Thursday, April 27, 2023, ISHR hosted a celebratory event for its graduating students. Faculty, staff, returning and graduating students attended the event and enjoyed an evening celebrating the accomplishments of the graduating class.

Faculty News

Dr. Jacqueline Dugard, Senior Lecturer in the discipline of Human Rights and Political Science, was selected to be one of three judges for the 2023 Christopher Moore Foundation prize for human rights writing. The other two juries were Geoffrey Robertson KC, human rights lawyer, author and Founding Head of Doughty Street Chambers, London and Dr. Roja Fazaeli, Professor of Islamic Civilisations, Fellow of Trinity College Dublin.

The Prize was established to provide funds to authors who, through their work, contribute to the universality of human rights. It is awarded annually, as chosen by a panel of judges whose own work focuses on human rights.

Christopher G Moore (Prize Founder) says: "This year, the jury members have established human rights careers displaying a wide range of knowledge, experience, and interest. Such a distinguished and capable jury continues the Foundation's commitment to engage global human rights leaders in the judging process."
Notable Faculty Publications

BOOKS
- Paisley Currah, Sex Is as Sex Does: Governing Transgender Identity. NYU Press, 2022.

CHAPTERS

ARTICLES
- Andrew J. Nathan, Li Anyou lun Zhongguo (Andrew J. Nathan on China) (New York: Bouden House)
Human Rights Advocates Program (HRAP)

The 2022–23 Human Rights Advocates Program (HRAP) marked the 34th iteration of the program. 356 advocates from 95 countries have participated in HRAP since 1989. The 2022–23 cohort included 10 advocates from as many countries working on issues including LGBTQI+ rights, the rule of law, Indigenous peoples’ rights, trauma, disability rights, youth development, and capacity building. Building upon lessons learned during the previous programs held during the pandemic, the 2022–23 cohort attended skill-based workshops on a weekly basis over the fall semester. They traveled to NYC in January to participate in courses and engage with the Columbia University community during the spring semester. Throughout the entire program, they networked with organizations and participated in speaking engagements and conferences both on- and off-campus. This cohort was able to travel to Washington, DC, for a series of networking meetings and presentations. Many of them also attended the UN Commission on the Status of Women and the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. To learn more about the 2022-23 HRAP, please visit [this site](#).
Outright International interviewed 2019 Advocate Wisdom Bebli about the anti-LGBTIQ bill launched in the Ghanaian parliament. Wisdom is the Executive Director of Solace Initiative an NGO working for the promotion and protection of LGBTQ+ people in Ghana.

One Young World awarded the 2022 Journalist of the Year Award to 2021–22 Advocate Daniel Villatoro of Guatemala.
2019 Advocate Nodjigoto Charbonnel and his organization Association Jeunesse pour la Paix et la Non-Violence (AJPNV) won the 2022 Rafto Prize. The Rafto Prize Award Statement in part says Nodjigoto and AJPNV were chosen for “their courageous struggle to abolish torture in Chad as well as internationally. In the context of authoritarianism, terrorism, war on terror and institutionalized violence, and at great personal risk, Charbonnel and his team assist survivors in rebuilding their lives after torture, and advocate the protection of human rights, and the prevention of torture and sexual violence by providing human rights education for youth and civil society.”

1996 Advocate Twesigye Jackson Kaguri was chosen to participate in the 2023 cohort of the Harvard Advanced Leadership Initiative.

As part of the Grupo de Trabajo de Agenda CEDAW in Costa Rica, 2021–22 Advocate Larissa Arroyo Navarrete recently coordinated and presented the platform’s shadow report at the 84th session of CEDAW in Geneva in February.
The Indigenous Peoples’ Rights Program promotes the exchange among academics and experts, both indigenous and non-indigenous, through the organization of international conferences and workshops on cutting edge indigenous issues that explore current and ongoing challenges pertaining to Indigenous Peoples’ rights and well-being. The program collaborates with relevant international organizations, academic institutions and indigenous and other civil society organizations to encourage interdisciplinary approaches to current issues in Indigenous Peoples’ studies.

**Highlights of 2022-23**

The Fundación Pueblos de Montaña of Bolivia, in cooperation with the Indigenous Peoples’ Rights Program of the Institute for the Study of Human Rights (ISHR), organized a “Seminar on Drafting Complaints and Using United Nations Procedures Against Human Rights Violations”. The Seminar took place via Zoom on May 14th and was addressed to Indigenous Authorities of Bolivia. More than 40 people participated.

The Massive Open Online Course on Indigenous Peoples’ Rights prepared by the Institute for the Study of Human Rights (ISHR) just completed more than two years of life (November 2020 to January 2023). The course was created by the Institute for the Study of Human Rights in collaboration with Indigenous experts from around the world as well as Columbia’s CTL (Center for Teaching and Learning) team. The Provost’s Office awarded ISHR funding to create the MOOC.

The 2023 edition of the Global School of Indigenous Women Leaders completed its program on May 5, 2023. It was the tenth edition of this unique program. The Indigenous Peoples’ Rights Program of the Institute for the Study of Human Rights has been cooperating with FIMI on this program since 2013 and organized a series of weekly seminars for Indigenous women from February to May 2023. The seminars provided a human rights curriculum and gave the opportunity to participants to explore a broad context of human rights topics and advocacy.

International Summer Program on Indigenous Peoples' Rights and Policy

The 2022 Program (3 to 21 October 2022) was successfully completed on October 21st. The Program is organized by Columbia’s Institute for the Study of Human Rights and co-sponsored by the Center for the Study of Ethnicity and Race. It enjoys the cosponsorship and collaboration of the University of British Columbia in Canada and the University of Auckland in Aotearoa/New Zealand.

Twenty-two participants from ten countries participated in this year’s Program, which took place in a remote format.

Additionally, the 2023 Program (22 May to 9 June 2023) was successfully completed on June 9th. Twenty-seven participants from fifteen countries and seventeen Indigenous nations participated in this year’s Program, which took place in a remote format.

This is an immersion program and participants were expected to devote about four hours daily to the Program. The course encourages team learning and synergy by creating a community atmosphere among participants. The online components consisted of mostly synchronous and some asynchronous lectures; discussions with lecturers; discussions among participants; participant panels; and a virtual platform for contacts among participants.

There were twenty-three lectures and workshops in a three-week period, including sessions with officials of a Native American Nation and sessions with UN officials. In addition, there were nine participants’ panels. The Program provides an overview and analysis of the major questions in Indigenous affairs today, as they have emerged globally in the last decades and as they have been put forward by the Indigenous Peoples’ movement, culminating in the adoption of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and efforts towards its implementation.
Event Highlights

ISHR organizes and co-sponsors multiple events every year. Some examples of these are events such as Alternative Migration Routes for LGBTQI+ Central Americans on Their Way to the USA, Internet Freedom in Russia: An Infrastructural Approach, and Advocating for Indigenous Children’s rights, using Indigenous models. For a full list of ISHR events please visit this page.

Winter Reception

On Monday, January 30, 2023, the Institute for the Study of Human Rights (ISHR) hosted a reception, welcoming the 34th cohort of the Human Rights Advocates Program. Columbia faculty, students, staff, and supporters welcomed the group. The cohort was comprised of 10 advocates already working on issues ranging from LGBTQI+ rights in Brazil, Ethiopia, and South Africa; Indigenous rights in Bolivia and Mexico; women’s rights in Haiti; citizenship in the Dominican Republic; anti-trafficking in Serbia; and the rule of law in the Republic of Georgia.