

Call for Papers

International Doctoral Symposium: Global Perspectives on Social Problems, Policy, and Practice

Hong Kong Baptist University
March 9 - 13, 2026

Internationally, globalized processes such as urbanization, economic liberalization, and migration have had significant impact on the kinds of social problems experienced locally and the kinds of responses that have been embraced to address them at national and local levels. While urbanization, migration, advances in technology, and shifts in the modes and distribution of economic production (for example, from manufacturing to service economies) have produced some social benefits, these changes have also led to a number of social problems and policy challenges across a range of social arenas. While economic liberalization and growth, for example, have fostered increases in individual wealth and an expanding middle class in some places, growing inequalities in wealth and income are also evident, along with resulting social disparities in health, education, access to opportunity, and political influence. In addition to the challenges experience by marginalized populations, these challenges also place significant burdens, and often new responsibilities, on social service systems and governance regimes, both regarding their efforts to alleviate the problem at hand and to spearhead efforts to design systems and strategies for prevention. These changes have also been accompanied by changing relationships among the state, market, and civil society actors. Each actor is not only asked to play a unique and shifting role but also may be increasingly involved in the design and implementation of social policies.

This doctoral symposium will provide the opportunity for selected doctoral students from seven universities—The University of Chicago, Hong Kong Baptist University, University of Michigan, Seoul National University, The University of British Columbia, Nanyang Technological University, and The University of Melbourne — to present their work and engage in scholarly exchange and networking with their counterparts around the world. We are particularly interested in papers that speak to one of five themes:

- Migration, displacement, and refugees
- Urban poverty, housing, and social and economic development
- Children, youth, and families
- Health and mental health
- Philanthropy and social innovation.

The doctoral symposium also aims to establish a sustained network for doctoral students, for which a series of additional online workshops will be organized, covering topics such as early scholarly career development and proposal writing.

Up to four doctoral students from each university will be selected based on the quality of the proposal and its fit with other submissions. The symposium will last for 5 days from 9

to 13 Mar 2026 (from Mon to Fri). It is expected that participants will arrive in Hong Kong on 8 Mar 2026 (Sun) and leave HK on 14 Mar 2026 (Sat). The symposium will include site visits to local communities experiencing, and organizations addressing, relevant contemporary social problems.

The cost of airfare and accommodation (6 nights) for students traveling to Hong Kong from Chicago, Detroit, Seoul, Vancouver, Singapore, and Melbourne will be covered, as will some organized group meals. Flight arrangements will be coordinated collectively, ensuring that you and your university peers arrive in and depart from Hong Kong together. The subsidy is limited to economy class tickets, with a maximum of HKD\$7,000 per student. Accommodation will consist of twin rooms shared by two students.

Interested doctoral students should provide a 300-500 word abstract of the paper they wish to submit. **The deadline for submission is 19 Dec 2025.** If you have any questions or require additional information, please contact Ms Jennifer Goh at jsmgoh@ntu.edu.sg.