The Economics of Social Sector Organizations Conference Call for Papers:

The fifth annual conference on the Economics of Social Sector Organizations is now calling for papers. The conference on October 16 – 17, 2020 will be held virtually and hosted by the Marshall Institute for Philanthropy and Social Entrepreneurship at the London School of Economics and Political Science and the Rustandy Center for Social Sector Innovation at the University of Chicago Booth School of Business.

The conference will feature theoretical and empirical presentations that explore the broad range of organizations addressing social issues, the roles they play in society, their performance, and the reasons for their existence. Additionally, in recognition of the 50th anniversary of Milton Friedman’s essay in the New York Times, *The Social Responsibility of Business Is to Increase Its Profits*, the conference will feature a special session discussing the social responsibility of corporations.

The set of organizations that are neither traditional profit-maximizing firms nor traditional wholly publicly-owned and controlled government agencies has been growing. In addition to philanthropy-supported nonprofit organizations, many nonprofits are sustained by revenue from the services they provide and ancillary profit-generating activities. Some mission-driven organizations choose to be for-profits, either as a traditional corporate legal structure or as a legal organization designed specifically for mission-driven for-profit organizations such as a benefit corporation in many US states. Some traditional corporations choose to invest substantially in corporate social responsibility, perhaps as a means to maximize financial returns, perhaps not. Governments participate in public-private partnerships and outsource activities to for-profit and nonprofit private organizations. Many of these organizations’ primary or only activity is providing government-funded services.

The institutions that finance these organizations are also evolving. The lines between traditional philanthropy and financial investment are blurring with the growth of impact investing funds – both concessionary funds that are willing to trade off financial returns for social impact and non-concessionary fund that are not. Some foundations and family offices are making program-related investments and managing their endowments with an eye on their social objectives. The institutions of philanthropy include venture philanthropy organizations that intermediate individual philanthropy and actively engage with the organizations they support. Financial institutions offer investor portfolios with negative screens that do not include companies engaged in specific harmful activities or positive screens that only include companies that meet specific beneficial criteria. Social impact bonds and other financial instruments aim to create novel ways to fund social innovation.

We seek empirical and theoretical papers that further our understanding of these organizations the roles they play in society, their performance, and the reasons for their existence.

We welcome submissions that explore the internal workings of social sector organizations (including organizational structures, management practices, incentives and human resource management, social and economic performance measurement, financing, and governance), the industrial organization of the social sector (including competition, productivity, scaling, and innovation); financial institutions of the social sector (including impact investing, philanthropy, and foundations); legal, regulatory and tax policy
for social sector organizations; the political economy of social sector institutions; corporate social responsibility; and how social preferences and decisions of consumers, investors, employees, managers, volunteers, and philanthropists affect social sector organizations, markets, and society.

We also welcome papers on the social responsibility of corporations for the special session on Milton Friedman’s New York Times 1970 Essay, *The Social Responsibility of Business is to Increase Its Profits*.

Please submit papers or extended abstracts by July 31, 2020 [here](#).

For questions email [Alissa.Bolz@chicagobooth.edu](mailto:Alissa.Bolz@chicagobooth.edu)

The scientific committee for the Economics of Social Sector Organizations Conference: Nava Ashraf (LSE), Marianne Bertrand (Booth), Robert Gertner (Booth), Maitreesh Ghatak (LSE), and Emir Kamenica (Booth).