

UK PONI

UK Project on Nuclear Issues

Call for Presentations: The UK PONI 2018 Annual Conference

7th June 2018

Royal United Services Institute
Whitehall, London

The UK PONI Annual Conference has established itself as the premier UK forum for developing new nuclear expertise from academia, industry, government, and the military. By bringing together emerging and established experts from across the nuclear field, this conference series promotes an informed and diverse dialogue on the most pertinent nuclear issues of the day.

We are now accepting proposals from UK PONI members for presentations at the 2018 Annual Conference, which will take place on 7th June at the Royal United Services Institute for Defence and Security Studies in London. The event will consist of panel presentations, keynote speeches, breakout sessions, and an evening dinner reception. This conference will focus on, but will not be limited to, the topics listed in the research agenda overleaf. For information and presentations from the 2017 Annual Conference please click [here](#).

UK PONI encourages presentation proposals from graduate students, emerging technical specialists, and early career professionals who will have the opportunity to: work with members of the UK PONI team to refine their ideas and research; present their work to a broad audience of nuclear experts; publish a short paper; and have the chance to be selected to present at US Strategic Command at Omaha as part of the US PONI Conference Series.

Presentation proposals should be no longer than 300 words and should include the following:

1. Your name, organisation/school affiliation, and position
2. The notional title of your presentation
3. A summary of your presentation, including its contextual background

Please send presentation proposals to ukponi@rusi.org by Friday 30th March. Please include 'Annual Conference Proposal' as the email subject. Please note the UK PONI Annual Conference is open to registered UK PONI members only. To register for UK PONI free of charge please visit the UK PONI website, located at www.rusi.org/ukponi.

Research Topics for the UK PONI 2018 Annual Conference

The following topics are meant to outline, in broad terms, the issues which the UK PONI 2018 Annual Conference hopes to cover. The list is not exhaustive, and all presentation proposals will be considered insofar as they relate to the below.

Non-proliferation and Disarmament

In 2017 the Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference process began with the first Preparatory Committee meeting, the text of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons was adopted by the UN, and the UN mandated a Group of Governmental Experts to discuss nuclear disarmament verification. As 2020 comes closer, there will be an increasing focus on exploring efforts to achieve consensus at the Review Conference. UK PONI welcomes presentations that explore the benefits and drawbacks of current non-proliferation and disarmament approaches, technical or political developments that will need to be addressed for future progress, or new ideas for initiatives that could be employed to strengthen non-proliferation and disarmament efforts.

Over the Horizon Nuclear Technologies

Developments in artificial intelligence, cyber and automation are changing the technological landscape. Innovative technologies in both the civil and military realms will be an important part of the future of the nuclear industry. From improving current processes and establishing new practices, to addressing a range of current challenges, technology will be vital. UK PONI would like to invite presentations that focus on long-term technological change in the nuclear field.

Regional Nuclear Issues

Regional nuclear issues continue to top international agendas: from persistent concerns about Russia's nuclear doctrine and modernization; to North Korea's continued progress with its nuclear and missile programmes; ongoing uncertainty about the longer-term future of and US commitment to the JCPOA; and growing nuclear arsenals in South Asia. Nuclear issues around the world present risk. UK PONI welcomes proposals that consider these regional issues, the challenges they present and options for a way forward.

Tools and Approaches for Nuclear Security

Nuclear security has reduced in prominence since the last Nuclear Security Summit in 2016. Yet keeping nuclear and other sensitive materials inside regulatory control remains an important global issue. UK PONI would like to solicit proposals on nuclear security in the broadest sense. Presentations could focus on the more traditional aspects of nuclear security, commonly referred to as 'guns, guards and gates', or they could consider more broadly the smuggling of sensitive materials, illicit networks used to evade UN resolutions and sanctions, or new initiatives and technologies that could be employed to combat these issues.

UK Nuclear Decision Making

Throughout its nuclear history, the UK has had to face important decisions about the future of its nuclear industry, both civil and military. Most recently this has included the parliamentary vote on the successor programme and the decision to go ahead with the construction of Hinkley Point C. 2018 also marks the 60th anniversary of the UK-US Mutual Defence Agreement. During this parliament the UK Government will make a decision on a new nuclear warhead, and will also be considering the next phase of civil nuclear new builds. UK PONI would welcome applications that consider the past, present and future of UK nuclear decision making. Proposals could address: key lessons learnt from past decisions; argue a position on a critical upcoming decision; or suggest new pathways for the UK nuclear sector.