



MSR
MANAGEMENT, SPIRITUALITY & RELIGION

MSR Newsletter March/April 2026

A Message from our Leadership Team

Dr. Payal Kumar, MSR Program Chair



We are thrilled to share that this year we received 82 scholarly papers, out of which 41 were accepted after rigorous peer review. We are grateful to the 59 reviewers and 10 associate editors who worked diligently on the required reviews. The submissions were fairly evenly divided between conceptual papers (28), qualitative papers (27) and quantitative papers (27).

The accepted papers fall into the following exciting themes:

- Religion/spirituality to guide workplace culture and ethics
- How hope, dignity, kindness and meaning shape the workplace
- Mindfulness and creating a thriving, resilient workplace
- Challenging the status quo
- Workplace spirituality
- Spiritual leadership
- Identity formation
- Divine inspiration and entrepreneurship

The paper presentations are to be held from Sunday 2nd August to Tuesday 4th August, and all are welcome to attend. Most of the MSR events will be held at the Loews Philadelphia Hotel, Philadelphia.

- 10 Symposia were also received (7 panel and 3 presenters), out of which 6 were accepted.
- 37 PDWs were received out of which 34 were accepted
- 9 posters were received, of which all were accepted.

I must thank Angela Chen, Associate Program Chair, for helping me in the coordination of the paper reviews and in identifying papers to be nominated on behalf of the division for MSR-specific awards, the Dexter Award and the Newman Award. Much gratitude also to Sharda Nandram, PDW Chair, for finalizing the PDWs with her team.

After completing all of these requirements, we are now looking forward to several exciting events, including the plenary on Saturday 1st from 9.30-11 am, with the theme Transforming management and business education a value based and spiritual approach.

On Sunday 2nd August from 11am to 1.30 pm we have curated a social event to honour Dr. Orneita Gray Burton, Professor of Management and Information Systems at Abilene Christian University, who passed away on October 5th, 2025, in Abilene, Texas. Orneita embodied scholarship, faith, and service to the MSR community, and in this commemorative gathering scholars will pay tribute to her legacy (<https://acu.edu/2025/10/13/acu-remembers-dr-orneita-burton/>). If you would like to share a reflection, story or photographs for inclusion in the tribute slideshow, please contact Dr. Sunny Jeong at jeongs@wittenberg.edu.

In MSR and friends on Sunday 5-7 pm we are thrilled to be joined by the Division Chairs from three DIGs who, keeping in tune with the AOM vision of fostering a community that transcends divisional boundaries, will join us to speak about the possibility of inter-division synergies. These include Penelope Muzanhenamo, Chair, Critical Management Studies Chair; Sujana Adapa, Chair, Gender & Diversity in Organizations; and Mairead Brady, Chair, MED.

On Monday 3rd at 6-7.3-pm there is the MSR business meeting led by the MSR Chair Tom Culham, in which we will look at the year gone by while planning for the year ahead. This will also give us an opportunity to present plaques for the winners of the best paper award, best symposium and best reviewers too. As is customary, this will be immediately followed by the MSR social (7.30-9 pm). Get ready for a lovely opportunity to greet and meet, over light refreshments (including ice-cream).

Also, for every morning of the conference at 7 am, meditation sessions will be conducted at a reflection room. These sessions will be facilitated by Gaetan Mourmant, Richard Peregoy and Sharda Nandram.

Thanking you for your continued support of our division.

Regards, Payal Kumar
MSR Program Chair

Current Trends in MSR Research



Spirituality in Disguise: Hidden Currents in the Age of AI Danny Sandra, PhD – IÉSEG School of Management, France

One thing is sure: the rise of AI in organizational life does not go unnoticed. Less visible are the questions it silently surfaces about authenticity, belonging, identity, purpose. Questions that point unmistakably to spirituality's domain. Yet in the organizations I work with, "spirituality" rarely announces itself. It operates in disguise: "consciousness-raising," "transformative learning," "well-being." Like AI, spirituality is surfacing. Unlike AI, it prefers not to be named, although it touches the root of what makes us human: the longing to feel united with something larger than ourselves.

Leaders, meanwhile, focus on how to best implement, govern and adopt AI within their organisations. However, AI, for all its knowledge and computing power, remains a mathematical model. It lacks the holistic view and intuitive sense that makes music more than notes, or a team more than roles. In entrainment terms, AI acts as an external pacer: it sets a rhythm that is able to pull people along. Being conscious of this invisible phenomenon is one thing; staying grounded and present is another. Being grounded helps us discern what feels right, what resonates with us as human beings

As with new technologies, we as researchers are invited to embrace innovative methods too. Microphenomenology offers rigorous access to the fine grain of lived experience, the pre-reflective moments that shape how we make sense of the world. Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA) allows us to trace complex causality across cases, honouring the messy, multi-causal nature of organizational life. Systemic constellations externalize relational patterns, making visible the hidden dynamics that surveys and interviews cannot reach. What unites these approaches is their capacity to reveal what matters most but typically remains unseen: what makes a piece of music not just correct, but alive. In my own work, I explore these intersections: entrainment dynamics in consciousness-raising experiences, systemic constellations for surfacing hidden tensions in human-AI teams, and dialogue with lineage carriers who use ceremony and rhythm to return people to themselves. All grounded in practice, all honouring embodied wisdom. For MSR, this is familiar territory. The questions organizations now ask were always ours.

Member Spotlight



Dr. Mehmet Yetkin

Independent Researcher and Ambassador for AOM's Management History Division LinkedIn

Dr. Yetkin is based in Istanbul, Turkey, and a very active member of several AOM divisions: MSR, Management History, Research Methods, and Organization and Management Theory. As an ambassador for the Management History division, he focuses on building multidisciplinary and cross-regional relationships, promotes Management History Division projects, and encourages the integration of new members into the community.

His research interests include organizational theory and qualitative methods that integrate Eastern and Western traditions, fostering relationships with scholars and practitioners who align with these viewpoints. Through the examination of the connections between corporate history and the future of work, he investigates how individuals and organizations understand transformation. He aims to examine the influence of historical transformations in work and organizational structures on contemporary context. His intention is to create frameworks that integrate history with future-oriented perspectives to interpret and anticipate the evolving significance of corporate life.

Recent Events @ MSR

- **February 18 and March 18 - MSR Monthly - Monthly virtual gathering, 4:00-5:00 pm BE**
Hosted by Danny Sandra, an opportunity to share updates, nurture research, foster collaboration, and strengthen the MSR Division Community.
- **February 25 - Emerging Voices in MSR: Insights from Five Years of Fetzer Scholars, 9:30 - 11:00 am ET**
Organized by the MSR Research Committee, co-hosted by Konstantin Weicht (Tzu Chi University, Taiwan) & Naida Culshaw (GEM Alpine Business School, France)

About the webinar:

This research webinar brings together five years of insights from the MSR Fetzer Scholarship Program. Between 2019 and 2023, the program supported 96 emerging scholars from 28 countries in bringing their research and spiritual commitments to the Academy of Management. Organized by the MSR Research Committee, the session will unveil findings from our five-year Impact Study and invite the community into a shared reflection on the future of MSR. Through brief Paired Lightning

Talks—featuring Fetzer Scholars in conversation with senior MSR mentors—we will reflect on how emerging voices have shaped the field, influenced the division’s leadership, and helped cultivate a scholarly and spiritual home for MSR research. Whether you are a past Fetzer Scholar, a long-time MSR member, or a newcomer curious about the community, you are warmly invited to join this lively, reflective gathering focused on connection, learning, and collective emergence.

Recording: <https://youtu.be/w2KWnke75ol?si=LyytcTtlQRsQ030F>

- **March 26- MSR Research Webinar series: Embracing an Indigen/ous/ist Paradigm: Research as an Interface Journey,,8:00–9:30pm GMT | 4:00–5:30pm ET**

Hosted by: Naida Culshaw & the MSR Research Committee (Tianyuan Yu, Naida Culshaw, Stacey Guenther, Konstantin Weicht, and Gaëtan Mourmant)

About the webinar:

What does it mean to do research — and to be a researcher — at the interface of Indigenous and institutional worlds? This interactive online gathering invites us into research as relational practice: grounded in accountability, reciprocity, ceremony, and intergenerational presencing. The conversation builds on the dialogue initiated in Ramya Venkateswaran’s 2025 MSR webinar, “Ways of Knowing in Indigenous Traditions Across the World,” and will open with a brief framing exchange between Ramya and Naida. We’ll then hear reflections from members of the Elders Circle (Ana Maria Peredo, Ella Henry and Joseph Galdstone) and Peer Circle (Stephanie Daher, Peter Musinguzi and Daysha Tonumaip’e’a) as they share lived experiences of “research at the interface” — that generative space of encounter (and sometimes friction) between what is legible to the academy and what is accountable to community.

Recording: <https://youtu.be/NyCMPQxtPvs?si=nC3Ppj15aZCWQQzk>

On the Horizon @ MSR

Do you have an MSR activity you want others to know about - please check out these handy instructions on how to [Add an Event to the MSR calendar](#) or [Create a Discussion post](#).

Events

- **April 14 - Giving Voice To Values Interactive Presentation 08:00 to 09:30 (PT)**

Hosted by MSR Teaching and Learning Committee

Details: Interactive presentation with small-group discussions

Url: <https://aom-org.zoom.us/j/99400897721?pwd=h4eJdrIqEogaCdZTEMz8SCDWn29FfJ.1>

Meeting ID: 994 0089 7721

Passcode: 983825

- **April 15 - MSR Monthly virtual gathering 4:00-5:00 pm BE**

Link: <https://zoom.us/j/95390517519>

Passcode: 795676

- **April 24 - Researching Psychedelic Experience: Promise, Pitfalls, and Possibilities for Management and Spirituality Scholarship**

11:00 - 12:30 am Eastern Time

Organized by the MSR Research Committee and co-hosted by Stacey Guenther (George Mason University, USA) and Mohammed Raei (Antioch University, Jordan)

Registration Link: [Link](#)

About the webinar:

This interactive webinar invites scholars of management and spirituality to explore the challenges and opportunities of researching psychedelic experience in contemporary settings. As interest grows in the intersections of leadership development, meaning-making, and altered states of consciousness, rigorous and reflective scholarship is increasingly needed. The session will include presentations by researchers studying psychedelic experience as well as a retreat leader of psychedelic-centered development who works with research partners. A small group activity will invite participants to generate ideas on how they would conduct research related to psychedelic experience. Participants will walk away with a better understanding of the promise and pitfalls found in this type of research and how they might engage in studying psychedelic experience if they are

interested. This webinar is designed to foster thoughtful dialogue, practical insight, and new collaborations at the frontier of management and spirituality research. The webinar is hosted by Stacey Guenther, PhD, and Mohammed Raei, PhD, who co-edited a book called *Leadership at the Spiritual Edge* (Routledge, 2024). They are both spiritual seekers interested in a wide variety of mystical experiences.

Speakers for the session:

Bennet Zelner, PhD, and Rachelle Sampson, PhD, both of University of Maryland (USA), and will be sharing their experiences of a recently completed study on psychedelic experience. Dmitrij Achelrod, PhD, is co-founder of the Evolute Institute in the Netherlands.

- **April 29 - The Sacred Quest for Oneness: a lifetime in search of ultimate answers, 09:00 to 10:30 (PT)**

Organized by Jerry Bieberman, Chris Laszlo and Ana Karina Smith Cain

Url: <https://aom-org.zoom.us/j/92656365853?pwd=UGDaxPPdbs7SRV3iGubIVlimWbLgZW.1>

Meeting ID: 926 5636 5853

Password: 152271

About the webinar:

Join renowned systems philosopher Ervin Laszlo for a powerful conversation on consciousness, cooperation, and the future of life on Earth. *The Sacred Quest*, the latest of his over 100 published books, is both a guide and an invitation: to embrace our interconnectedness, co-create a sustainable future, and step into the sacred task of becoming one with our living world. In *The Sacred Quest*, Ervin Laszlo presents a profound integration of science and spirituality. Discover how we can consciously participate in the evolutionary process and realize our connection to the greater whole.

Speaker for the session: Prof Erwin Laszlo~

Calls for Submission

Call for Presentation Proposals

- **2026 MSR Research Colloquium**, “The Mystical and Research”, to be held virtually
Organised by: MSR Research Committee (Tianyuan Yu, Naida Culshaw, Stacey Guenther, Konstantin Weicht, and Gaëtan Mourmant)

June 11–12, 2026 (a 24–36 hour global, around-the-clock gathering beginning at 10:00 a.m. ET).

Proposal deadline: April 25, 2026

Details: Sessions are envisioned to weave together three interwoven modes of inquiry — thinking, doing, and being. Presenters are invited to share not only their research, but also an experiential element that supports collective exploration. We welcome a range of session formats, including single- and multi-presenter sessions, panels, dialogues, and creative forms of inquiry, across three thematic areas: 1) mystical experience and spiritual awakening, 2) researching the mystical, and 3) spiritual transformation in academic life. We particularly welcome work that engages the creative tension between scholarly credibility and openness to what the mystical may ask of the researcher.

Full Call and submission details:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1SSZnL6Of5LkmxwNqtXeVbkQWHxFgeqTq/view>

Call for Submissions

- **Special Issue of the Journal of Management Spirituality and Religion:** “(Re)Claiming the Sacred Feminine in Management and Organizations”
Editors: Sheldene Simola (Trent University), Tianyuan Yu (Mount St. Vincent University), Ramya T. Venkateswaran (Indian Institute of Management)
Submission deadline: One page abstract- May 15, 2026; Full paper – January 15, 2027
Link: https://www.iamsr.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/09/2025-09-21_ReClaimingSacredFeminine_CFS_Web.pdf

- **Special Issue of the Journal of Management Spirituality and Religion:** “Broadening Management, Spirituality and **Religion Research:** Crosscutting Dialogue Across Disciplines”
Editors: Ekaterina Ivanova (HSE University Graduate School of Business) and Nicholas Burton (Northumbria University).
Submission deadline: September 30, 2026
Link: https://www.iamsr.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/12/JMSR-Call-Special_Issue_Reviews_Final.pdf
- **Special Issue of the Journal of Positive Psychology:** “Religion, Spirituality, and Human Flourishing: A Social Scientific Approach”
Editor: Victor Counted (Regent University)
Submission deadline: October 30, 2026
Link: https://think.taylorandfrancis.com/special_issues/religion-spirituality-and-human-flourishing-a-social-scientific-approach/
- **Special Issue of the Journal of the Journal of Management Spirituality and Religion :** “Holistic and Quantum-Inspired Education for Management, Spirituality, and Religion”
Editors: Kathryn Pavlovich (University of Waikato) and Stacie Chappell (University Canada West)
Submission deadline: October 31, 2026
Link:https://www.iamsr.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/02/2026-02-26_Call_for_Papers_QuantumEducation_FINAL.pdf

Call for conferences

- **Call for conference:** Sixteenth International Conference on Religion & Spirituality in Society, under the theme “Indigenous Spiritualities in Global Perspective” (Lima, Peru)
Submission deadline: May 22, 2026
Link: <https://religioninsociety.com/2026-conference/call-for-papers>

Call for awards

- **2026 MSR Promising Dissertation Proposal Awards:** The purpose of these awards is to honor and assist doctoral candidates working in the domain of Management, Spirituality, and Religion (MSR) to develop quality dissertations. Please contact the MSR Promising Dissertation Proposal Committee Chair for questions regarding qualifications or eligibility of your submission. Contact: Judi Neal Email judi@edgewalkers.org

Recent Publications of our MSR Members

Sharing our research is yet another way to connect with one another. This section is an opportunity to share our MSR scholarly work. These works were submitted to the CommTech team recently. If you have a recent publication or conference paper please submit it using [this form](#) and we will include it in a future issue.

Publications

- Kumar, P., & Agrawal, A. (2025). From Devotion to Development: Aligning Hindu Bhakti Practices to SDGs. *Journal of Management, Spirituality & Religion*, p 1-22
- Rocha, R. G., Burton, N., Sinnicks, M., & Black, K. (2026). Tradition and organizational identity in religious entrepreneurship. *Entrepreneurship & Regional Development*, 1–27. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08985626.2026.2623142>

Book Chapter

- Dewasiri, J., Kumar, P., Jayawardena, N., and Rathnasir, M. (2025). Introduction to entrepreneurship marketing in South Asia: Editors’ perspective. Eds Dewasiri, Kumar, Jayawardena & Rathnasir. *Shaping Entrepreneurial Marketing, A South Asian Perspective (Volume 1)*. Emerald

Publishers.

Dewasiri, N.J., Kumar, P & Jayaawardena. N.S. (2025) Shaping Entrepreneurial Marketing: A South Asian Perspective. (Volume 1). Emerald Publishers. ` DOI: 10.1108/9781837088522

MSR Social Media

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- YouTube: <https://msr.aom.org/youtube>
- Facebook: <https://msr.aom.org/facebook>
- LinkedIn: <https://msr.aom.org/linkedin>

We look forward to hearing from all our MSR members

If you would like to contribute to a future newsletter, please add your contribution in [this form](#).