



European Association for South Asian Studies

[www.easas.eu](http://www.easas.eu)

## *EASAS Newsletter February 2022*

Due to the pandemic and other uncertainties publication of this Newsletter has been delayed.

### **1. 26<sup>th</sup> European Conference on South Asian Studies (ECSAS) in Vienna, Austria, 26 – 29 July 2021**

*Conference report of the convenors, Martin Gaenzsle and Birgit Kellner*

The **26th European Conference on South Asian Studies** took place in Austria for the first time. The conference was scheduled for 29 July to 1<sup>st</sup> August 2020 but due to the Covid-pandemic had to be postponed to **26-29 July 2021**.

The conference was organised and hosted by the University of Vienna – the Center of Interdisciplinary Research and Documentation of Inner and South Asian Cultural History ([CIRDIS](#)), the Department of South Asian, Tibetan and Buddhist Studies ([ISTB](#)), and the Conference and Event Management – in close cooperation with the Institute for Cultural and Intellectual History of Asia ([IKGA](#)) at the Austrian Academy of Sciences. The 26th ECSAS took place as online event with the possibility to participate in a few selected hybrid panels at the University of Vienna Campus.

Against the background of the long tradition of South Asian Studies in Vienna, both at the University of Vienna and the Austrian Academy of Sciences, and the wide range of disciplines and interests covered at these two institutions, the motto of the ECSAS 2021 was: **“Reflecting on Disciplinary Boundaries”**.

**Convenor: Martin Gaenzsle, University of Vienna**

**Co-Convenor: Birgit Kellner, Austrian Academy of Sciences**

#### **Organising Committee**

Borayin Larios (ISTB, University of Vienna)  
Petra Latschenberger (CIRDIS, University of Vienna)  
Alexandra Scheuba (ISTB, University of Vienna)  
Jürgen Schörflinger (CIRDIS, University of Vienna)  
Jan Seifert (CIRDIS, University of Vienna)  
Judith Starecek (ISTB, University of Vienna)  
Verena Widorn (CIRDIS, University of Vienna)

#### **Academic Committee**

Karl Baier (Religionswissenschaften, University of Vienna)  
Johanna Buß (CIRDIS, University of Vienna)  
Alaka Chudal (ISTB, University of Vienna)  
Elisa Freschi (ISTB, University of Vienna; IKGA, Austrian Academy of Sciences)  
Eva Knoll (ISA, Austrian Academy of Sciences)  
Antje Linkenbach-Fuchs (Max-Weber-Kolleg, University of Erfurt)  
Klaus-Dieter Mathes (ISTB, University of Vienna)  
Karin Preisendanz (ISTB, University of Vienna)  
Florian Schwarz (Institute of Iranian Studies, Austrian Academy of Sciences)  
Danuta Stasik (EASAS President, University of Warsaw)  
Mélanie Vandenhelsken (CIRDIS, University of Vienna)

### **Volunteers (IT-Support for Online Event)**

Vitus Angermeier (ISTB, University of Vienna)  
Aleksandra Apic (CIRDIS, University of Vienna)  
Prem Chhetri (CIRDIS, University of Vienna)  
Christian Ferstl (ISTB, University of Vienna)  
Ge Ge (ISTB, University of Vienna)  
Domenik Haas (IKGA, Austrian Academy of Sciences)  
Ewa Lewandowska (ISTB, University of Vienna)  
Uwe Niebuhr (CIRDIS, University of Vienna)  
Thomas Kintaert (IKGA, Austrian Academy of Sciences)  
Areshpreet Wedech (ISTB, University of Vienna)

### **University of Vienna's Congress Management (IT, Venue and Payment Handling):**

Christian Leeb (& Team)  
Cornelia Peterka (& Team)  
Alexandra Wassipaul (& Team)

Homepage: <https://ecsas2021.univie.ac.at/>



The ECSAS 2021 Team and Danuta Stasik, President of EASAS, at the final hybrid meeting  
photo: Monika Browarczyk 2021

## ECSAS 2021 in Figures

### Call for Panels and Papers

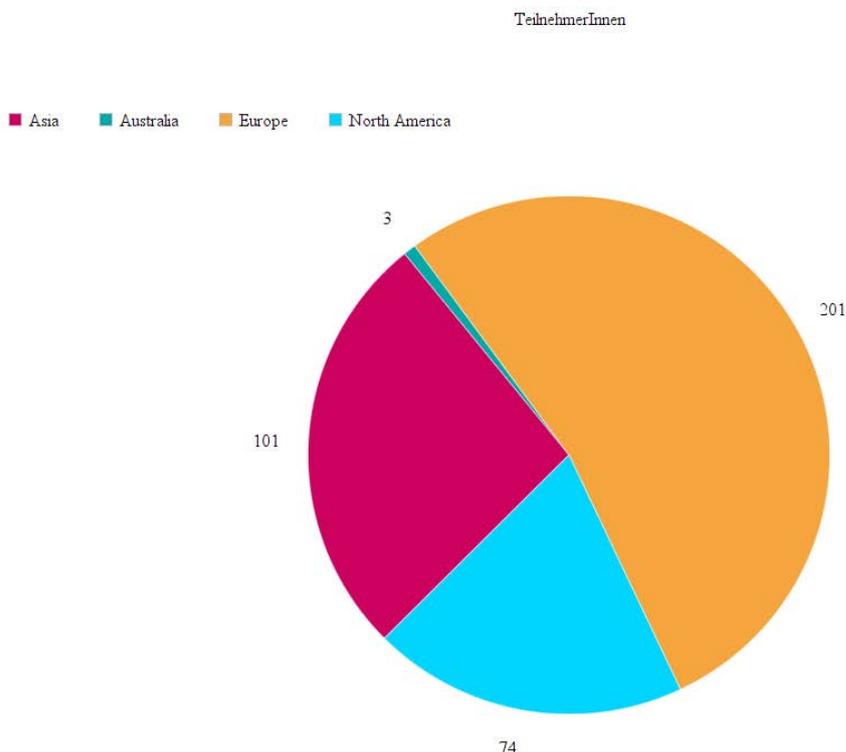
The call for panels took place between February and April 2019 and we received 97 panel proposals, from which 52 panels were selected through a reviewing process by the Academic Committee (on 24 June 2019).

The call for papers took place between September and November 2019 and we received 756 abstracts. The reviewing process of the paper proposals was entirely in the hands of the panel conveners, who selected till the end of December 2019 a total of almost 500 papers. Also, only participants who had a valid EASAS membership and paid their membership fee for at least 2 years (2018/2019 or 2019/2020) were accepted. Therefore, a total of 463 papers were accepted for ECSAS 2020. Unfortunately, due to the postponement of the conference by one year and the special circumstances of the Pandemic, this number has been reduced again until July 2021. Due to the postponement of the conference and the problems of travel and meeting restrictions, 9 panels also had to be canceled.

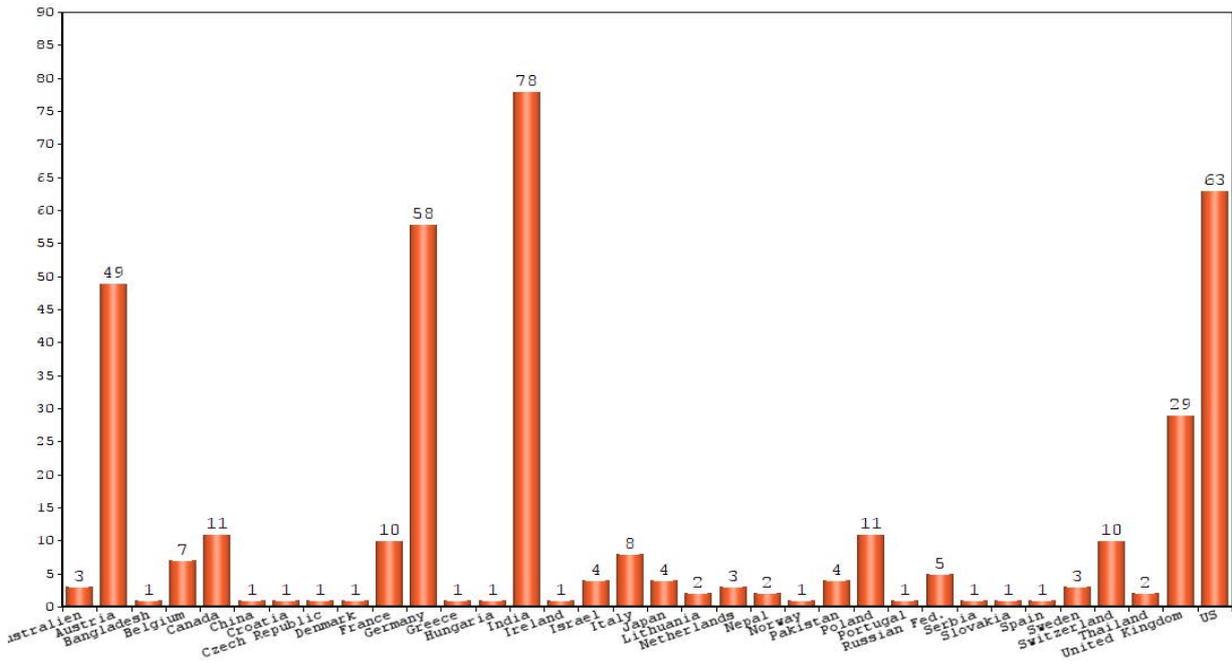
### Panel and Participants at the ECSAS 2021

**379 participants** from **34 different countries** around the world attended **43 panels** and **1 round table** (36 online, 8 hybrid/ on site) and presented **351 papers** with a wide range of topics from different disciplines such as anthropology, archaeology, architecture, art history, gender, literature, linguistic, medicine, modern South Asian studies, sociology, philology, philosophy, politics, etc.

**53 participants** from Europe and the US were welcomed **on-site** in Vienna and joined the **8 hybrid panels**.



Participants by country



## The Venue – Online and On-site

Due to the Covid-pandemic and based on feedback from the panel convenors and paper presenters, the Conveners and Organising Committee decided to host the ECSAS 2021 as an online event, but with the possibility for participants to take part in a few selected hybrid panels and join the conference on-site in Vienna – even though this was the most complex (and expensive) option.

The biggest challenges for the online event were on the one hand to guarantee **easy, low-threshold access** from all over the world and a smooth process, and on the other hand to consider the **different time zones** of the participants, which stretched from Australia, East Asia, South Asia and Europe to North America.

In order to take into account the different time zones of the participants, a large number of the panels were moved to the afternoon and the conference times were extended towards the evening. So, we had up to 13 slots at the same time, each slot calculated for 4 papers à 15 minutes presentation and 5 minutes questions.

All joint sessions and events were also scheduled for the afternoon or early evening.

See schedule: <https://ecsas2021.univie.ac.at/schedule/>

### On-Site Participation

The ECSAS 2021 took place at the big lecture hall in the beautiful historical surroundings of the University campus in the heart of Vienna.

Three lecture rooms were reserved for the panels that took place in a hybrid mode. All three rooms were equipped with the necessary IT-infrastructure, to enable not only the streaming of the presentations on site but also the vivid discussion with the on-site and online audience.

Also, the two keynote lectures, the opening ceremony and the final meeting, as well as the EASAS general meeting took place at the large lecture hall.

### Keynote lectures

Two highly esteemed colleagues had accepted our invitation to be **keynote speakers** and addressed on the one hand the motto of the ECSAS 2021 concerning the overcoming of disciplinary boundaries, and on the other hand the current pandemic situation in South Asia and its effect on policy and society.

**Monica Juneja (University of Heidelberg):** “Disciplinary Thresholds – Art History and Ecological Imaginaries”

<https://ecsas2021.univie.ac.at/events/keynote-1/>

**Shail Mayaram (Centre for the Study of Developing Societies, Delhi):** “The Nation as Lament: The Sars Corona in India and the Reshaping of the Social and the Political”

<https://ecsas2021.univie.ac.at/events/keynote-2/>

### Green Meeting

The ECSAS 2021 complied with the criteria of the Austrian Eco-label for Green Meetings/Events and was therefore certificated as a Green Meeting.

### Social Media

Photos from the virtual and on-site conference were posted on our Instagram account:

IG@ecsas2021

<https://www.instagram.com/ecsas2021/>

## Program

For more information on panel conveners, paper presenters and topics see:

<https://ecsas2021.univie.ac.at/panels/>

- 01 | Adaptations of South Asian Narratives Across Time and Space
- 02 | Adivasi Studies: Contours of a Field
- 03 | After Displacement: (Re)Settlements, People, Policies and Outcomes
- 04 | Art, Ritual, and Text at Shrines in South Asia: A Cross-Disciplinary and Diachronic Investigation of the Forms and Functions of Shrines
- 05 | Between the Mainland and the Deep Blue Sea: Transformation and Continuity in South Asian Islands and Littorals
- 06 | Beyond Domesticity. Shifting Sites of Women's Labour in Modern India
- 07 | Beyond Knowledge Transfer: Circulation of Intellectual Resources Between Europe and South Asia From Early 19th to Mid-20th Century
- 08 | Contemporary Anti-Caste Utopias: A Dalit Bahujan Discourse of Emancipatory Social Transformation
- 09 | Crossing Boundaries of British India: New Perspectives on Connected Histories of Princely States
- 10 | Cultural Ecology in the Literary Cultures of South Asia
- 11 | Cultural Flows in the Singalila Borderlands: Trans-Border Linkages in East-Nepal, Sikkim and Darjeeling
- 12 | Designing Water: Morphology, Ecology and Histories of Waterscapes in South Asia
- 13 | Dynamics of Female Agency in Religious Settings in India
- 15 | Fluid Boundaries in Asian Medical Traditions: Between Text and Practice
- 16 | Governing and Representing Gender and Sex(uality) in South Asia – (Re-)Negotiating Lakshman Rekha
- 18 | Interrogating Marginalities Across Disciplinary Boundaries: Perspectives From South Asia
- 19 | Kāmaśāstras/Kokaśāstras: An Interdisciplinary Corpus
- 20 | Leisure and Forms of Resistance to Labour in in Modern and Contemporary South Asian Literature
- 21 | Making of the Mountains: Trans-Disciplinary Approaches to the Himalayas
- 22 | Marks of Devotion: The Construction and Politics of Religious Identity Through External Signs
- 23 | Medical Professions in South Asia: Historical and Contemporary Analyses
- 24 | Muslim Social Formations: Bridging Discursive and Islamicate Perspectives
- 25 | Occult South Asia: Rethinking the History of Modern South Asian Religions and Spiritualities Through the Lens of Esotericism Research and Vice Versa
- 26 | On the Transmission of the Sanskritic Culture in the Colonial Period: Philology and Print in South Asia
- 27 | Pushtimarg, Past and Present: New Perspectives on a Hindu Sampradaya
- 28 | Right Wing Politics: Interdisciplinary Reflections on South Asia
- 29 | Sabarimala: Temple Politics and Temple Regulation

- 30 | Sanskrit Jurisprudence and Hermeneutics on How to Solve Legal Controversies
- 31 | Song, Dance, and (Con)Texts: Re-Examining Performance Traditions in Medieval and Early Modern South Asia.
- 32 | South Asia via Translation: Human Factor, Power Relations and Heterolingualism
- 34 | Subaltern Studies, a State of Play
- 35 | Talismanic Writing: Powerful Texts
- 37 | The Bhagavad Gita – Modern Interpretations, Cross-Cultural Perspectives
- 38 | The History of Emotions as a New Disciplinary Cross-Cultural Perspectives
- 39 | “Thus It Is Said...”: The Role of Scripture in Legitimising South Asian Sectarian Communities
- 40 | Urban India: Social, Spatial and Political Trajectories
- 42 | Vernacular Literary Magazines and the Shaping of Colonial and Postcolonial South Asia
- 43 | Vernacular Mahābhāratas in Text and Performance
- 44 | ‘Vernacular’ Theorisations of ‘Literature’ in Modern South Asia
- 45 | Vernacular Grammars
- 46 | Yātrā: Rethinking Pilgrimage in South Asia Through Art and Literature
- 47 | Rethinking Relationships Between Anthropology, History and Theology in South Asian Religious Studies
- 48 | Round Table: Contested Academic Spaces

### **Sponsors**

We thank all the institutions that generously sponsored and supported the ECSAS 2021 to make the conference a wonderful experience and successful event despite the difficult circumstances. Due to the financial support, we were able to offer **29 conference fee waivers** for young scholars.

#### **University of Vienna**

Faculty of Philological and Cultural Studies

Faculty of Historical and Cultural Studies

Center for Interdisciplinary Research and Documentation of Inner and South Asian Cultural History

Department of South Asian, Tibetan and Buddhist Studies

#### **Austrian Academy of Sciences**

Institute for the Cultural and Intellectual History of Asia

#### **Vienna Convention Bureau**

#### **European Association for South Asian Studies**

**We thank** the organizers, the volunteers, the congress managers, and the members of the advisory committee for the extremely hard and difficult work that went into the preparation and the smooth running of this conference!

## 2. Elections of Executive Board and Advisory Committee

During the 26<sup>th</sup> ECSAS, EASAS held its General Meeting in online format as well as the elections of the new Council (Executive Board and Advisory Committee) via internet with the software Election Runner.

The minutes of the general meeting, including the results of the elections, were shared with all EASAS members by email, sent out on 23 December 2021. After the set period, the minutes can be deemed approved (§5 Section 6 of the EASAS Constitution).

## 3. 27<sup>th</sup> European Conference on South Asian Studies (ECSAS) in Turin, Italy, in July 2023



27<sup>th</sup> European Conference on South Asian Studies

Turin, Italy 26 to 29 July 2023

### Call for Panels

The **27<sup>th</sup> European Conference on South Asian Studies (ECSAS)** will take place at the University of Turin, Italy, from **26 to 29 July 2023**. On behalf of the European Association for South Asian Studies (EASAS) and the Academic and Organising Committees we cordially invite you to submit panel proposals.

The conference is organized and hosted by the University of Turin – Department of Humanities, Department of Culture, Politics and Societies, Department of Law, Department of Foreign Languages, and Interdepartmental Centre “Istituto di Studi sull’Asia” (ISA). Turin is the cradle of the Italian Indological Studies that had a beginning in 1852, when a chair in Sanskrit Studies was established at the University, but fertile ground had already been laid by the tradition of teaching about the Near East, established at the University the year after its foundation in 1405. In the second part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the study of South Asia was renewed, combining social science-based methods and findings with those of classical Indology. South Asian Studies in Italy cover today a wide range of disciplines and interests, and extends across several institutions.

Thinking of the future, the motto of the Turin ECSAS conference will be “Building Sustainable Research Networks”. We particularly welcome panels aiming to build creative and productive research groups and promoting trans-, inter- or multidisciplinary approaches. We encourage the creation of research communities that promote connectedness between people, deepen the capacity for supportive collegiality, and support researchers of all levels.

The **panel submission** is open from **15 February until 15 May, 2022**. For more information, please go to the conference website: [ecsas2023turin.eu](https://ecsas2023turin.eu) (can be accessed from 15 February onwards).

All panel proposals must include the title of the panel, the name(s), affiliation(s) and the EASAS membership number of the convener(s), a contact e-mail, and a short and long abstract of the panel topic. Innovative elements of the panel should be particularly highlighted. Names of tentative paper contributors may be included (optional).

The short abstract must not exceed 300 characters, long abstracts must not exceed 1700 characters and should be text only. Please keep in mind that all panel proposals (and subsequent papers) must be in English.

**EASAS membership required.** Please note that all panel conveners must be EASAS members and have no outstanding membership fees at the time of submission (join here: <https://www.easas.eu/become-a-member/>; pay your overdue fees here: <https://dashboard.easas.eu/>). At least one of the conveners must be based at a European institution.

**One panel and paper per conference.** Due to time constraint within such a conference, colleagues are allowed to convene no more than one panel and present only one paper during the conference. This does not prevent potential participants from making several proposals, but in the case of multiple acceptances the convener and/or panelist will be asked to choose only one.

**All panels must have an open call.** ECSAS requires all accepted panels to be open to paper proposals through the website: proposed panels cannot be 'closed' to further papers from the outset.

All panel submissions will be evaluated by the conference's Academic Committee. Panel proposers will be notified of the outcome by July 2022.

If you have any general queries, please do not hesitate to contact: [info@ecsas2023turin.eu](mailto:info@ecsas2023turin.eu)

The abstracts of those panel proposals which have been selected will be published on the conference website in Autumn 2022.

The **Call for Papers** will be open from **15 November 2022 to 15 January 2023**— detailed info will be advertised on the ECSAS and EASAS websites. EASAS members can then submit paper proposals to the selected panels.

For the panels accepted by the Academic Committee, it is the responsibility of the panel convener(s) to:

- review the proposed papers in line with the conference guidelines and deadlines
- notify the Organising Committee of the acceptance or rejection of papers in a timely manner
- provide adequate feedback to be forwarded to authors
- plan the arrangement of papers and chairs in their panel in collaboration with the Organising Committee. No panel may run for more than four sessions of 90 minutes.

While it is recognized that the content of each panel depends on the papers selected and their overall quality, the Academic Committee asks all panel chairs to give due consideration to gender balance and diversity in their panel sessions.

Please note that in the case of similar or overlapping panel submissions, the Academic Committee may ask panel conveners to collaborate in leading consolidated panels to ensure the overall coherence of the conference.

We look forward to seeing you in Turin in 2023!

Alessandra Consolaro and Tommaso Bobbio (Conveners)

Danuta Stasik (EASAS President)

## 4. Council Meetings

Full meetings of the new Council of EASAS were held on 29 July 2021 and 28 January 2022 by video conferencing.

## 5. EASAS-SAMAJ collaboration

The editorial team in charge of special EASAS-SAMAJ issues currently has four members from the side of EASAS: Peter Birkelund Andersen, Monika Browarczyk, Alessandra Consolaro and Sanjukta Dasgupta. Due to the postponement of the 2020 ECSAS no joint EASAS/SAMAJ issue came out in 2021 or will be published in 2022. We are planning a call for papers for a new joint issue to be published in 2023, right before the next ECSAS. More information will be circulated and put on the website soon.

## 6. Call for proposals for EASAS PhD Workshop 2022/2023

The Call to Universities and Higher Education Institutions to host the 2022/2023 EASAS Doctoral Workshop is now open.

The workshop will give PhD students an opportunity to receive feedback on their theses from senior scholars and fellow PhD candidates who are also working on South Asian topics. In addition, it will create networks between PhD candidates working on South Asia and help them develop contacts with others. The doctoral workshop is envisaged as a two-day event for a maximum of 16 PhD candidates and 6 senior scholars based in Europe, to be held at a host European university.

The host university will organize the workshop and arrange board and lodging for students as well as the invited senior scholars. The selection of the host university will be made by the EASAS Council. The EASAS will financially assist with accommodation and board for students and senior scholars at the workshop with a sum up to € 3,000. Participants will have to make their own travel arrangements. In case a host university wants to organize a workshop as an online event, EASAS support funding will be capped at € 1,000. Please note that the EASAS membership is mandatory for all participants (join here: <https://www.easas.eu/become-a-member/>; pay your fees here: <https://dashboard.easas.eu/>).

Proposals must include:

- Willingness to hold the workshop in 2022 or 2023, specifying the period.
- Brief description of the institution.
- Brief description of the local steering committee for the doctoral workshop, whose members must be specialists in South Asia studies and members of EASAS. The workshop steering committee will plan and manage the workshop, select the student participants and the invited faculty members.
- Brief budget, listing costs for venue, accommodation, and board of participants.

Please send your proposals to [office@easas.eu](mailto:office@easas.eu) by **15 April 2022**. The EASAS Council will complete the selection process by 30 May 2022.

## 7. Call for proposals for EASAS Academic Workshop 2022/2023

EASAS resumes funding of academic workshops. The call is open now for the proposal of workshops to be held in 2022 or 2023. The workshop must involve more than two EU countries and preferably invite some scholars and post-docs based in South Asia. The workshop can be organized either as the basis for the preparation of papers for publication, or as an event to map out and develop new research projects. Proposals can also include comparative discussion of other parts of the world, as long as there is a strong focus on South Asia. EASAS can support workshops with an amount of up to € 3,000 for on-site events and up to € 1,000 for events planned in an online format.

If you are thinking of applying for support for a workshop, please note the following essential and desirable elements:

### Essential

- At least one of the workshop convenors must be based at a university or a research institute in a European country.
- All proposed workshop convenors must be members of EASAS at the time of submission of the application for funding and have no overdue membership fees (join here: <https://www.easas.eu/become-a-member/>; pay your fees here: <https://dashboard.easas.eu/>).
- At least one of the convenors must be affiliated to the hosting university or institution where the workshop will take place.
- Not more than half of the total award can be used for catering.
- Funding will take the form of reimbursement of payments made against receipts; EASAS cannot provide an up-front subsidy.
- Funds must be spent by the end of the calendar year 2023 and settled by the workshop organiser(s) with EASAS within two months after the event.

### Desirable

- Some scholars and post-docs to be invited to the workshop should be based in South Asia.
- Transdisciplinarity is encouraged.

### Proposals must include the following:

1. A title of no more than 15 words.
2. Names and locations of all convenors.
3. A brief description (no more than 500 words) of the academic justification for the workshop.
4. Likely dates and location of the workshop.
5. An estimate of the total number of presentations (including, where possible, the names of likely invitees) and the total number of those likely to attend.
6. A summary budget, with brief details of other funding likely to be applied for or already promised.
7. A brief statement (no more than 200 words) of the likely outcome of the workshop (publication, research proposal, creation of a network etc.)

The deadline for the submission of proposals is **15 April 2022**. The EASAS Council will complete the selection process by 30 May 2022.

Please submit proposals by email to [office@easas.eu](mailto:office@easas.eu)

The EASAS Board and Council can only repeat its wishes that you all may stay safe and well during these difficult times,

on behalf of the Council,

*Danuta Stasik, President*

*Martin Fuchs, Vice-President*

*Anna Sailer, Treasurer*