

Editorial Guidelines

SDC Abstract/Paper Submission

Speakers presenting at the Sustainable Development Conference (SDC) are invited to submit their papers for consideration for publication in the **SDC Anthology**. Submission of an abstract, presentation, or manuscript does not automatically guarantee acceptance for presentation at the Conference or inclusion in the Anthology.

SDPI reserves the right to accept, request revisions to, or decline a submission at any stage of the review and publication process.

Editorial Review and Selection

All submissions undergo a rigorous editorial and peer-review process. Abstracts and manuscripts are assessed for their relevance to the Conference theme, analytical quality, originality, evidence base, clarity, and overall contribution to policy and scholarly debate.

During the review process, submissions may be edited for substance, structure, language, style, and grammar by SDPI's referees and editorial team. Authors may also be requested to revise their abstracts and manuscripts in response to editorial or reviewer comments. Decisions of the editorial team regarding acceptance, revision, and inclusion in the SDC Anthology will be final.

All prospective contributors are expected to comply with the submission requirements and deadlines set out in this guideline.

Submission of Abstract

Submission Deadline: 15 July 2026

Prospective contributors are invited to submit abstracts for SDPI's Twenty-ninth Sustainable Development Conference (SDC), titled 'Rethinking Development in an Age of Disruption.'

Abstracts of 150-200 words should be submitted in MS Word format by 15 July 2026 to the SDC Unit: sdc@sdpi.org. Submissions may also be copied to the relevant panel organiser.

Details of panel titles, panel descriptions and organisers will be updated and made available at: <https://sdpi.org/sdconference/>

Originality and Use of AI

All abstracts will be screened using plagiarism detection software. Submissions containing unattributed material from other sources, or content generated substantially through AI rather than the contributor's own analysis, will not be accepted. Contributors are expected to demonstrate originality of thought and independent analysis.

The abstract should:

- Be directly relevant to the selected panel and linked with the overarching theme of the Twenty-ninth Sustainable Development Conference.
- Clearly state the title, research focus, objectives, data sources or methodology, and key or expected findings.
- Be written in narrative form, rather than as bullet points.
- Reflect the contributor's own analysis and argument.
- Clearly identify, at the top of the submission, the title of the panel for which the abstract is being submitted.
- Use British English spelling and conventions.
- Include the contributor's full name, institutional affiliation, a brief bio note of no more than 30 words, email address, postal address and telephone number.

Example of a Bio note: Dr Rubina Ahmad is Professor at the Department of Sociology, University of the Punjab, Lahore, Pakistan. Her research focuses on gender, social policy and development, and she has worked with UN and international organisations.

Shortlisting and Next Stage

Only contributors whose abstracts are shortlisted will be contacted regarding participation in the Conference and presentation of their papers.

Shortlisted contributors will be required to submit their draft paper and PowerPoint presentation by **15 August 2026**. Further instructions regarding paper submission, presentation format and the SDC Anthology will be communicated at that stage.

SDC Anthology and Publication Process

Each SDC Anthology is curated from selected papers presented at the respective Sustainable Development Conference. It is an internationally circulated publication that undergoes an extensive editorial and peer review process and, by tradition, is launched at the succeeding SDC.

Previous SDC Anthologies are available at: <https://sdpi.org/sdc-anthologies/publications>

Review and Publication Process

Manuscripts submitted for consideration for the SDC Anthology first undergo a plagiarism review. Submissions cleared at this stage proceed to a **single blind peer review process**.

Subject to a positive recommendation from the referee, the manuscript then moves through **author revisions, two rounds of editorial review, and the publisher's formal**

production requirements. The complete review and publication cycle may extend over approximately one year.

The quality and timely completion of this process depend considerably on the responsiveness of contributors to referee comments and editorial revisions. Contributors are expected to address requested changes carefully and within the stipulated timelines.

Throughout the process, manuscripts may be reviewed and edited for **substance, structure, clarity, language, referencing and grammar** by referees and the editors. Editorial and peer review decisions regarding revisions and suitability for publication will be considered final.

The SDC Unit coordinates the process and supports contributors from manuscript submission through to final publication in the SDC Anthology.

Submission or presentation of a paper at the Conference does not guarantee its inclusion in the Anthology. **SDPI reserves the right to accept, request further revisions to, or decline a manuscript at any stage of the review and publication process.**

Submission of Final Papers for the SDC Anthology

Submission Deadline: 1 December 2026

Following the Conference, contributors will be invited to submit a revised and final version of their paper for consideration for inclusion in the 29th SDC Anthology. The final manuscript should incorporate, where relevant, comments, questions and discussion arising from the paper's presentation at the Conference.

The manuscript should be concise and should not exceed 5,000 words, including an abstract of 150-200 words, tables, figures and references. As a general guide, the paper should be approximately 20 typed pages, using Times New Roman, 12-point font and 1.5 line spacing, and submitted in MS Word format.

Originality, Plagiarism and Use of Sources

All manuscripts will be screened using plagiarism detection software. **SDPI maintains zero tolerance for plagiarism and expects submissions to reflect the contributor's own analysis, argument and interpretation.**

All material drawn from other sources must be properly cited and referenced. The overall similarity index should remain within 19% inclusive of AI-generated text, with properly referenced material clearly distinguishable from unattributed text. Contributors are also expected to disclose and appropriately acknowledge the use of generative AI tools, where applicable.

Manuscripts should draw on recent data, evidence and relevant literature to strengthen the analysis and ensure its contemporary relevance.

Previously Published or Written Work

Original submissions are strongly encouraged. Previously published or otherwise circulated work may be considered for presentation at the SDC, subject to prior approval by the editorial team and full acknowledgement of the original source.

Where such material is protected by copyright, obtaining the necessary permissions for its presentation, reproduction or subsequent publication will remain the sole responsibility of the contributor.

Referencing Style

All papers should follow the Harvard referencing style consistently throughout the manuscript. A detailed referencing guide is available at:

<https://www.usq.edu.au/library/referencing/harvard-agps-referencing-guide>

Manuscript Format

Contributors should ensure that their manuscripts follow the format outlined below:

1. Title

The title of the paper should be concise, specific and clearly reflect the subject matter addressed. It should not be identical to the title of the panel in which the paper was presented.

Titles of tables and figures should also be concise and descriptive.

2. Abstract

The paper should begin with an abstract of **150-200 words**.

The abstract should:

- Relate clearly to the relevant panel theme and the overarching theme of the Twenty-ninth Sustainable Development Conference, *'Rethinking Development in an Age of Disruption.'*
- Clearly state the paper's objectives, data sources or methodology, and key findings.
- Be written in narrative form rather than as bullet points.

3. Sections and Subsections

Section and subsection headings should be clearly structured and consistently formatted.

- Section headings should be in **bold**.

- Numbering should not extend beyond three levels, for example: 3.2.1.
- Subsection headings should be aligned with the left margin.

4. Abbreviations, Glossary, Tables, Figures and Images

Where relevant, manuscripts should include a **list of abbreviations and acronyms and a Glossary of Key Terms**, particularly where terms from national or local languages are used. Such terms should be accompanied by an English translation and, where necessary, a brief explanation.

Tables, figures, maps, boxes and images should be used selectively and only where they add analytical value or help communicate information more effectively than text alone. They should be clearly designed, legible and sufficiently self-explanatory.

All data, tables, figures, maps or images reproduced or adapted from another source must be properly acknowledged and referenced.

A reference in the text to a table or figure reproduced from a published source should include the author, year and, where applicable, page number, for example: (Smith 2005, p. 33)

Where information is cited through a secondary source rather than from the original publication, this should be clearly indicated, for example: (United Nations 1975, cited in Smith 2005, p. 33)

All visual material should be of sufficient resolution and quality for publication. Where required by the final production format, contributors will be asked to provide figures in a form suitable for black-and-white reproduction.

Captions and Sources

Each table, figure, image, map or box should be numbered sequentially and carry a clear title or caption.

The **title/caption should appear above** the table, figure, image, map or box.

The **source should appear below**, in italics.

For example:

Table 1: Pakistan's Export Composition, 2025

[Table]

Source: Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (2026).

5. Footnotes and Endnotes

Footnotes may be used sparingly for brief explanatory or supplementary information. They should be inserted using the automatic numbering function in MS Word.

Footnotes should not be used as a substitute for in-text citations or for references that belong in the main text and reference list.

The contributor's brief bio note should appear on the first page and be marked with an asterisk (*).

Example of a Bio note: *Dr Rubina Ahmad is Professor at the Department of Sociology, University of the Punjab, Lahore, Pakistan. Her research focuses on gender, social policy and development, and she has worked with UN and international organisations.*

Endnotes should not be used.

6. Direct Quotations

Short quotations of approximately 30 words or fewer may be incorporated within the main text and should appear within single quotation marks, followed by the appropriate in-text citation. For example: 'Engineers are vital to the survival of the planet' (Stewart 1982, p. 6).

Longer quotations should be presented as block quotations, set apart from the main text and indented. Block quotations should not be enclosed in quotation marks and must include the appropriate citation and page number, where available.

7. Paraphrasing

Ideas, arguments, findings or information drawn from another author's work must be properly cited, even when expressed in the contributor's own words.

Quotation marks are not required for paraphrased material; however, an appropriate in-text citation to the original source is mandatory.

Presenting paraphrased material without acknowledging its source constitutes plagiarism and is not acceptable.

8. Acknowledgements

Where applicable, contributors may include a brief 'Acknowledgements' section at the end of the manuscript.

Acknowledgements should not exceed 30 words and may recognise individuals or institutions that provided substantive, technical, financial or other relevant support to the work.

9. List of Acronyms and Glossary of Terms

A complete list of acronyms and abbreviations used in the manuscript should be provided.

Terms, expressions, objects or nomenclature drawn from local languages or dialects should appear in *italics* when first introduced in the text. Their English translation and, where necessary, a brief explanation should be provided in the Glossary of Terms.

Where additional contextual explanation is required, this may also be provided in a footnote.

10. Syntax and Language

Manuscripts should be written in clear, concise and accessible language. Each paragraph should develop a coherent point or argument, and unnecessarily lengthy sentences should be avoided.

British English spelling and conventions should be used consistently throughout the manuscript.

As the SDC Anthology is intended for an international readership, monetary values given in local currency should, wherever relevant, also provide their approximate equivalent in US dollars (USD). The exchange rate or reference period used for conversion should be stated where necessary.

11. References

Accurate and consistent referencing is an essential requirement for publication in the SDC Anthology. Manuscripts approved through the peer-review process are published as part of an edited volume and must therefore conform to the prescribed referencing style.

The SDC Anthology and SDPI's English-language publications follow a referencing style adapted from the Harvard AGPS style of the University of Southern Queensland (UniSQ). The detailed guide is available at:

<https://www.unisq.edu.au/library/referencing/harvard-agps-referencing-guide>

Contributors should observe the following requirements:

- All material drawn from other sources, including ideas, arguments, statistics, quotations, definitions, terminology, tables, figures, maps and images, must be appropriately cited in the text and included in the reference list.
- The 'Reference List' should contain only sources cited in the manuscript.
- Sources consulted during the research but not cited directly in the manuscript may, where relevant, be listed separately under 'Bibliography.'

- References should be arranged alphabetically by the surname of the first author. The author's surname should be followed by the first name or initials and the year of publication, in accordance with Harvard AGPS conventions.
- Where no individual author is identified, the reference should be alphabetised by the name of the organisation responsible for the publication or, where appropriate, by title.
- Where an author has more than one publication in the same year, lower case letters should be added to the year to distinguish the entries, for example 2020a, 2020b.
- Electronic documents, online reports, e-books and other digital sources must also be properly referenced. Where an online document provides both an original publication date and a date of subsequent update, the most relevant date should be used in accordance with Harvard AGPS conventions.
- An author's own previously published work must be cited and referenced in the same manner as the work of any other author.
- URLs, publication dates, access details and other bibliographic information should be checked carefully before submission.

All manuscripts will be screened using plagiarism detection software. As a general screening benchmark, the overall similarity index, including AI-generated text, should not exceed 19%. However, each similarity report will be assessed qualitatively, and unattributed copying will not be acceptable irrespective of the percentage recorded. All matched material must be appropriately attributed. Compliance with a numerical similarity threshold does not, by itself, establish that a manuscript is free from plagiarism.

12. Categories of Submission

Depending on the nature and purpose of the contribution, papers may fall within one of the following categories:

a. Research Paper / Scholarly Article: A Research Paper or Scholarly Article presents original research, analysis or findings and contributes to an existing academic or policy debate. It should demonstrate a clear research question, appropriate methodology or analytical approach, engagement with relevant literature, evidence-based analysis and well-supported conclusions. Maximum length: 5,000 words.

b. Working Paper: A Working Paper presents preliminary or ongoing research intended to stimulate discussion, invite critical comment or develop an emerging argument. While it may represent work in progress, it should nevertheless present a coherent analytical framework and a clear contribution to the relevant debate. Maximum length: 5,000 words.

c. Policy Brief / Policy Paper: A Policy Brief or Policy Paper focuses on a clearly defined public-policy issue and translates evidence and analysis into practical policy implications and recommendations. It should be concise, accessible and oriented towards decision-makers and practitioners. Maximum length: 3,000 words.

d. Perspective / Argumentative Essay: A Perspective or Argumentative Essay advances a clearly defined position or interpretation on an issue of contemporary relevance. The argument should be supported by credible evidence, logical reasoning, relevant examples and appropriate engagement with existing scholarship or expert opinion. Maximum length: 3,000 words.

Submission and Correspondence

Final manuscripts for consideration for publication in the SDC Anthology should be submitted to: sdcsdipi.org

Ms Uzma T. Haroon

Director, Sustainable Development Conference (SDC)

Ms Tayyaba Hanif

Coordinator, Sustainable Development Conference (SDC)

For submissions to SDPI's HEC-recognised *Journal of Development Policy, Research & Practice (JoDPRP)*, please visit: <https://journals.sdpipk.org/index.php/JoDPRP>