



G20 INTERFAITH FORUM 2021 ANNOUNCED SEPTEMBER 12-14, 2021

While the COVID-19 pandemic continues to pose serious challenges around the globe, the roll-out of vaccinations has helped build assurance we can now announce the plans for this year's G20 Interfaith Forum to be held in Bologna, Italy from September 12-14, 2021.

There is a growing consensus that systematic interaction and cooperation between policy makers and religious institutions is a necessary step to effectively respond to current challenges facing people all around the world. The G20 Interfaith Forum offers an annual platform where networks of religiously linked and faith-inspired actors engage on global agendas, within the broad framework of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the G20 host country's agenda.

In addition to the culminating event of this year's G20 Interfaith Forum process, we anticipate that a number of preparatory sessions will be held. In order to provide milestones along the path to this year's Bologna event, we plan among other things to hold webinars or other preparatory discussions and updates on the 12th of each month.

We are pleased to announce that the key partners organizing this year's event are the G20 Interfaith Forum (IF20) and the Fondazione per le scienze religiose (Fscire). Background on these organizations is provided below, and more information is available on their respective websites (www.g20interfaith.org and www.fscire.it.) Please watch the key partners' websites and future newsletters for further information on Forum events.

About G20 Interfaith Forum

Background

The G20 Interfaith Forum (IF20) offers an annual platform where a network of religiously-linked institutions and initiatives engage on global agendas (primarily and including the Sustainable Development Goals or SDGs). The annual G20 Summits are a critical time and place where priority global issues are considered. The G20 process has evolved since it was established in 2008, with various platforms (ministerial meetings, engagement groups) that allow different sectors and communities to present ideas and recommendations to global leaders. Our goal is to contribute meaningful insight and recommendations that respond to and help shape the G20, and thus global policy agendas.

The G20 Interfaith Forum builds on the vital roles that religious institutions and beliefs play in world affairs, reflecting their rich diversity of institutions, ideas, and values. These include interfaith and intercultural organizations, religious leaders, scholars, development and humanitarian entities, and business and civil society actors.

Beginning in Australia in 2014, the G20 Interfaith Forum has convened annually in the G20 host country. The Forums have considered wide-ranging agendas, including economic models and systems, the environment, women, families, children, work, humanitarian aid, health, education, freedom of religion or belief, global security, governance, human rights, and the rule of law. The agenda for each Forum is framed taking into account the annual G20 priorities (outlined each year by the host government), together with topics that the various networks of religious actors recommend that the G20 leaders address. The forum met in [Australia](#) in 2014, [Turkey](#) in 2015, [China](#) in 2016, [Germany](#) in 2017, [Argentina](#) in 2018, [Japan](#) in 2019, and [Saudi Arabia](#) in 2020.

Our Mission

The G20 Interfaith Forum (IF20) advocates for global solutions by collaborating with religious thought leaders and political representatives.

Global recognition is increasing for the vital roles faith and religion play in promoting peaceful and harmonious relationships within and between nations. Few examples are widely recognized, however, of the positive contributions faith and religion make to social wellbeing and to policies that impact national and international communities. The G20 Interfaith Forum is an annual event where such contributions can be shared, highlighted, and advanced.

The Forum features both international opinion leaders—including scholars, lawyers, and politicians—and global interfaith activists for three days of discussion and interfaith dialogue. In showcasing the broad, global impact of various faith traditions and philosophies from around the world, the Forum fills important gaps in the discussions of the G20 Summits. Social cohesion is strengthened between political representatives and religious thought leaders, and new opportunities are provided for relationship-building among all participants.

Objectives of the G20 Interfaith Forum include:

1. Exploring the links between economic development and religious freedom through informed, scholarly discussion.
2. Facilitating constructive dialogue between societal leaders in faith, government, business, media, education and other social institutions on how interfaith resources can enhance social, economic, and cultural policies and programs for the wellbeing of all.

3. *Fostering communication channels between different faiths and sharing ideas, experiences, and “best practices” in building peace and harmony.*

4. *Discovering and affirming common values, virtues, and principles among diverse faith and philosophic traditions*

A Network of Networks

The G20 Interfaith Forum has consistently sought to build and draw on an inclusive network of networks of public, religious, humanitarian, and academic institutions engaged in a variety of ways in promoting interactions of religious voices, religious studies, and religious communities with the public sector in formulating and implementing global policy initiatives. For some indication of the range of institutions that have been involved in such initiatives, see

<https://www.g20interfaith.org/historical-support/>.

Working Groups

The G20 Interfaith Forum organizes its work through a series of Working Groups which focus on areas of recurring relevance to G20 policy priorities. In particular, these standing Working Groups organize research, analysis, and Forum activities that relate to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and other matters of recurring concern. In any given year, additional task force groups may be set up to address issues of particular concern in light of the G20 host country’s priorities or in response to other critical emerging issues. The following standing Working Groups have been established (with sub-focus areas noted in several cases):

**Reducing Poverty and Inequality
(includes job creation and zero hunger)
Religion, Health, and Wellbeing (includes
COVID-19 responses)**

Education (includes religious literacy)

Gender Equality (includes equal pay issues and trafficking/slavery)

Religion and the Environment

Religion, Technology, Innovation, Infrastructure, and Media

**Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions
(includes sacred sites, corruption, rule of law, freedom of religion or belief, peace building and diplomacy)**

**Refugees, Displacement, and Migration
Disaster Preparedness and Relief,
Humanitarian Aid**

Children and Youth

In addition, an [Anti-Racism Initiative](#) has been established to examine how responding to the challenges of overt and systemic racism can be addressed across the entire spectrum of issues being addressed by the G20 Interfaith Forum. More information on the various Working Groups is available [here](#).

Outputs of the G20 Interfaith Forum

Each year, the G20 Interfaith Forum develops policy briefs that are designed to provide substantive input benefiting from insights of a range of religious communities designed to be of assistance to those in official policymaking roles. Recent policy briefs are available [here](#). In addition, each year’s Forum develops prioritized concrete recommendations for those engaged in the G20 process—recommendations that are designed to be delivered to G20 Summit leaders, but have broader relevance to policymaking at the level of public bodies operating at the international, regional, and national levels and to those concerned with global policy issues in religious, interreligious, and academic settings. Recent recommendation documents are available [here](#).

About Foundation for Religious Studies

History

The Foundation for Religious Studies / *Fondazione per le scienze religiose (Fscire)* is a research institute specializing in the History of Christianity and its relationship with other religions. It was established in 1953—first as a library, then as a research institute—and in 1990 was formally recognized as a foundation by the President of the Italian Republic.

As a private foundation, independent from churches and universities, *Fscire* participates in and promotes cooperation with international research centers and networks. Some of the core research accomplishments of the institute (such as *The History of the Vatican II*; *The Decrees of the Councils of all Churches* editorial; *The Diaries of Angelo Giuseppe Roncalli, Pope John XXIII* editorial; and *The Dictionary of Religious Historical Knowledge of the Twentieth Century*) were made possible by consolidated collaborations, which have become the means for training generations of scholars. This tradition of collaboration and training is maintained through many ongoing projects, like the research currently being conducted on *The History of the Desire for Christian Unity*.

Thanks to *Fscire*'s leading position and strategic ability to offer a unique set of research sources, in 2014 the Italian Government enlisted *Fscire* as an official National Research Infrastructure, spearheading historical religious studies.

The daily work of the foundation is carried on under the guidance of the Secretary General, Professor Alberto Melloni, who acts in accordance with the Board of Directors, presided over by Professor Alessandro Pajno, and under the supervision of the international Scientific Committee of *Fscire*.

Research

Fscire's research pipelines cover many topics, specifically ecumenism; religious illiteracy and religious pluralism; the decrees of all councils and synods of all churches (*Conciliarum Œcumenicorum Generalium Decreta, COGD*); the history and doctrines of Islam; and digital humanities.

The most important pillars of the foundation's research activity are its two libraries:

The Giuseppe Dossetti Library in Bologna, which was founded in 1953, offers scholars a wealth of over 1,000,000 volumes and 2,300 periodicals that cover the entire breadth of religious sciences from a historical, exegetical, and theological point of view. In 1997, the library was named after Giuseppe Dossetti (1913-1996), who instituted and designed its catalogue.

The Giorgio La Pira Library in Palermo specializes in the history and doctrines of the Islamic faith. It was established in October 2018 with the aim of representing all of Islam's linguistic, doctrinal, and cultural varieties. The library, which was dedicated to Giorgio La Pira (1904-1977), a Sicilian scholar and political leader who played a key role in the peace movement throughout his life and career, holds 180,000 volumes.

Fscire also manages a large archive containing materials collected over the years by researchers active in the Foundation, along with donations and acquisitions from private individuals. The archive includes numerous collections linked to some of the prominent personalities who animated the history of the Roman Catholic Church in the Twentieth century (Giuseppe Dossetti, Giacomo Lercaro, Lorenzo Milani, Angelo Giuseppe Roncalli/Pope John XXIII, etc.).

One of the most remarkable collections held in the archive is the one dedicated to the Second Vatican Council, which contains a large set of documents relating to the conciliar sessions, the documents and statements produced by the Council, and personal papers of the Council periti.

Teaching and Education

Due to an agreement with the Italian Ministry of Education, University and Research, and as part of the European Network of Higher Education Institutions for Religious Studies, Fscire provides educational services through the Alberigo European School for Advanced Religious Studies. The school offers scholarships for four-year specialization (equivalent to a PhD) in the two branches of religious history, exegesis and theology, and fills its positions periodically through competitive application.

The programs offered by Fscire also include a Master in Religious Pluralism and Historical Studies addressed at practitioners, teachers and graduate students; training courses for school teachers; and research seminars, which are organized as training activities in the context of the Alberigo European School for Advanced Religious Studies, but are open to external researchers and scholars.

Positions for one and two-years scholarships are also available annually for postdoctoral research activities, addressing young people of all nationalities who want to collaborate with Fscire's established research pipelines or inaugurate new ones.

Editorial Activity

The editorial activity which derives from and supports the research carried on at Fscire can be found in the journals *Cristianesimo nella Storia* and *Quaderni di Storia Religiosa Medievale*, and in several book series (*Il Mulino*, *Brill*, *Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht*), which are published in various languages for an international audience.

Fscire also supports the publication of the journal *Common Knowledge*, published by Duke University Press.

News, events and updates on the main activities of Fscire (libraries, research projects, training programs, editorial news and much more) can be found in the magazine *IN DIEM*, which is issued periodically.

Networks and Infrastructures

Fscire is the initiator of the European Academy of Religion (EuARE), a research platform launched in 2016 under the high patronage of the European Parliament, which offers an exchange platform to scholars, universities, centers, research infrastructures, scientific journals, and publishers coming from Europe and the surrounding regions.

Moreover, Fscire is the Project Coordinator of RelReS (Research Infrastructure on Religious Studies, Call INFRAIA H2020-2017) a starting community which is funded by the EU Framework Programme Horizon 2020, and the Team Leader of RESILIENCE (Religious studies infrastructure: tools, experts, connections, and centers., Call INFRADEV H2020 2018-2020), an interdisciplinary research infrastructure for all religious studies that utilizes its high-performance platform to supply evolving tools and big data to Religious Studies scholars.

Other Activities

Fscire also hosts the UNESCO Chair in Religious Pluralism and Peace of the University of Bologna, which contributes to the dialogue between cultures and faith communities through the formation of research projects, in the belief that peace for future generations can be constructed through historical research and confronting the truth. The Chair holder is Prof. Dr. Alberto Melloni.