

THE BRIDGE

NEWSLETTER OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIAL CAPITAL ASSOCIATION

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Dear Esteemed Members and Colleagues

Welcome to the latest edition of *The Bridge – Newsletter of the International Social Capital Association*. As we embark on this journey of knowledge exchange and scholarly discourse, we are delighted to bring you a curated collection of insights, updates, and accomplishments that reflect the vibrant spirit of our community.

As always, we'd love to hear from you and get your input on our future plans. Your support fuels our mission to create a platform where ideas and connections flourish.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

BUILDING BRIDGES OF SOCIAL CAPITAL ACROSS CHILE

This month, I am travelling across Chile for an extended tour focused on advancing the global field of research and practice around social capital. Over several weeks, our journey will take us through six regions of the country: from the coastal dynamism of Valparaíso to the industrial and academic centres of Concepción, the southern cultural heart of Puerto Varas, the remote and resilient landscapes of Aysén, and finally to the capital, Santiago. Across these regions, I will take part in 12 major activities, including public lectures, panel discussions, conferences, and meetings with universities, community organisations, industry leaders, and policymakers.

This initiative has been made possible through the outstanding leadership of Professor Carlos Vignolo Friz and Álvaro Contreras Barrios, whose expertise, vision, and deep local networks have opened doors across Chilean society. Their commitment reflects the very spirit of social capital, relationships of trust, reciprocity, and shared purpose that make ambitious collaboration possible. I am deeply grateful for their partnership and for the generosity of the many institutions and individuals who have hosted our visits.

The response has been extraordinary, with large and diverse audiences of students, scholars, civic leaders, and professionals eager to explore the relational foundations of development. The enthusiasm and curiosity I've encountered confirm that the concept of social capital resonates deeply in Chile. It is seen not merely as an academic idea but as a practical framework for strengthening democracy, fostering inclusion, and supporting transformation in a rapidly changing society.

Chile provides a particularly meaningful setting for these discussions. Its history of civic mobilisation, social reform, and democratic transformation has shaped distinctive patterns of trust, networks, and collective action. At the same time, persistent inequalities, environmental pressures, and the need for institutional renewal highlight the importance of investing in social capital as a public good. The conversations here remind me that while the concept of social capital is universal, its expressions are always shaped by local context, by culture, history, and lived experience.

This journey aligns closely with the mission of the International Social Capital Association (ISCA): to advance the global conversation on social capital by linking theory and practice across contexts. Although this trip is not an official ISCA program, it reflects the spirit of collaboration and learning that underpins everything we do as a





community. It demonstrates how the ideas we discuss within ISCA can travel across borders and find new resonance in diverse cultural settings.

What has been most inspiring is the spirit of generosity that underlies every interaction. People have welcomed open discussion, critical reflection, and collaboration, qualities that make genuine knowledge exchange possible. In many ways, this is what building a global field of social capital research and practice looks like: connecting people who are curious, thoughtful, and committed to strengthening the relational foundations of society.

Initiatives like this journey across Chile are vital because they bring people together across disciplines, cultures, and contexts to explore how connection itself can be cultivated as a shared resource. They remind us that building the global field of social capital research and practice is about more than advancing theory; it is about strengthening the broader ecosystem of human connection that underpins thriving societies.

Tristan Claridge
 President, International Social Capital Association

REPORT FROM OUR AGM

HELD SEPTEMBER 10, 2025

Our fourth AGM was a great opportunity to engage with members, celebrate our successes, and outline the future direction of the association. The following resolutions were passed:

Membership fees: Unchanged

Date of next AGM: Wednesday, September 9, 2026

Dates for the next four board meetings: September 22, 2025; February 1, 2026; May 3, 2026; August 2, 2026

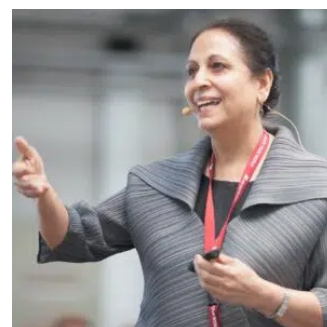
Financial statement to March 31, 2025: Accepted. You can see the statement [HERE](#).

Annual report to March 31, 2025: Accepted. You can read the report [HERE](#).

In addition, Tristan Claridge was re-elected as President unanimously for another term. We also elected Jennifer R. Bishop and Geeta Mehta as new Directors.

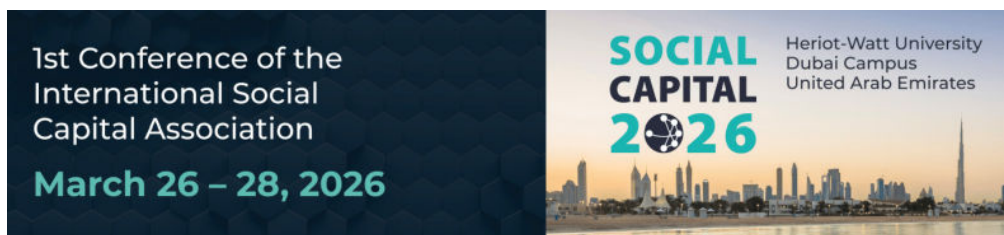


Jennifer R. Bishop



Geeta Mehta

2026 ISCA CONFERENCE



We invite you to register [HERE](#) to attend, in person or online, ISCA's first international conference on Social Capital in Dubai from March 25-28, 2026. You can join us via submitted presentations and posters, workshops, learning opportunities, and social activities and events.

You will not want to miss our star keynote speakers include the following:

Robert D. Putnam, Professor of Public Policy at Harvard University

Raj Chetty, Professor of Economics at Harvard University

Beate Völker, Professor of Sociology at Utrecht University

Please also spread the word around to your own networks. We've prepared a collection of ready-to-use materials — sample posts, graphics, and resources — that you can share in emails, newsletters, and on social media:

[PROMOTIONAL MATERIAL](#)

We are also actively seeking sponsors to support the conference. Sponsorship is crucial for keeping the event inclusive and accessible — especially for participants from underrepresented regions. If you know of organisations, institutions, or individuals who might be interested, please share our sponsorship prospectus with them:

[SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES](#)

Your voice and connections can make a real difference. Every share, repost, introduction, or personal message of encouragement helps us attract more submissions, build partnerships, and strengthen momentum toward what we hope will be a landmark gathering for our field.



Robert D. Putnam

Professor of Public Policy at
Harvard University



Raj Chetty

Professor of Economics at
Harvard University



Beate Völker

Professor of Sociology at
Utrecht University

MEMBER HIGHLIGHT

THIS MONTH, WE SAT DOWN TO TALK WITH CARLOS VIGNOLO

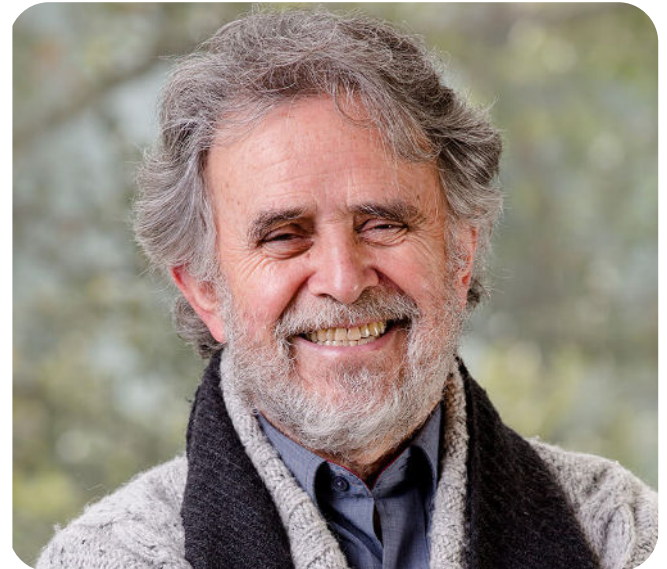
For our Member Spotlight section, we speak with Professor Carlos Vignolo, an academic for over 50 years at the Industrial Engineering Department of the Universidad de Chile. His work has applied an engineering and biological lens to the challenge of building trust and collaboration.

PROFESSOR VIGNOLO, YOUR PROFILE IS UNCOMMON. YOU'RE AN ENGINEER WHO HAS DEDICATED MUCH OF YOUR CAREER TO STUDYING AND BUILDING SOCIAL CAPITAL. HOW DO YOU CONNECT THESE TWO SEEMINGLY DIFFERENT WORLDS?

Carlos Vignolo: The connection is more natural than it appears. During my 50+ years at the Universidad de Chile, I have always seen engineering not just as the art of building bridges or machines, but as the discipline of designing solutions to complex problems. And the most complex problem we face in our organizations and societies is distrust. My training pushed me to go beyond diagnosis and ask: can we design social “technologies” to cultivate collaboration? My approach has always been one of action-research: going into the field and applying models to see if they work.

THE BIOLOGIST HUMBERTO MATURANA WAS A KEY INFLUENCE ON YOUR WORK. HOW DID HIS THINKING CHANGE YOUR VIEW OF SOCIAL CAPITAL?

Carlos Vignolo: Meeting Humberto was a turning point. He provided the scientific foundation for something I intuited: that everything human is built in conversation. Maturana’s “Biology of Knowing” and “Biology of Conversation” allowed me to understand that relationships are not static, but a dynamic phenomenon that emerges from the quality of our interactions. From there, I proposed a model where the key variable for building social capital is not the networks themselves, but



rather the self-awareness of individuals and the community. Only when a group is aware of its own emotions, narratives, and behavioral patterns can it begin to have the high-quality conversations that are the real foundation for building trust and collective action.

YOU HAVE APPLIED THESE IDEAS IN LARGE-SCALE PROJECTS, FROM PUBLIC HEALTH TO REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT. COULD YOU GIVE US A PRACTICAL EXAMPLE?

Carlos Vignolo: Certainly. For example, in the “Coloquios de Líderes” (Leadership Colloquiums) we designed in the Aysén Region, the objective was exactly that: to create a protected space to have a type of conversation that doesn’t happen day-to-day. It wasn’t about debating, but about conversing to co-construct a shared vision. It was a designed intervention, a “sociotechnology,” to raise the quality of conversation and, with it, the collective awareness of the region’s key actors. Similarly, in leadership training in Bío Bío or in the public health system interventions, the focus was always the same: to give people tools to better manage their moods, their conversations, and consequently, their relationships. The premise is simple: if we improve the quality of conversations, we strengthen social capital.

RECENT WEBINARS

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AS INFRASTRUCTURE: DESIGNING CULTURES THAT SCALE SOCIAL CAPITAL

Graham Hall, OD & Talent Strategy Leader, Rhythm Strategic Consulting
<https://youtu.be/7KVJyLwp0cA>

UNDERSTANDING THE NUANCES OF (DIS-)CONNECTEDNESS OF MIGRANT ENTREPRENEURS WITHIN ENTREPRENEURIAL ECOSYSTEMS

Dr Alexandra David, Senior Researcher, Westphalian University, Institute for Work & Technology
<https://youtu.be/TbtbgQqySZY>

SOCIAL CAPITAL AND ITS INFLUENCES ON CAREER ASPIRATIONS AND ATTAINMENT

Dr Rob Schnieders, Vice President, Strategic Initiatives and Chief of Staff, Fairfield University
<https://youtu.be/8-kU9WsdIGI>

LEADING WITH SOCIAL WEALTH: RELATIONAL DESIGN FOR THE FUTURE OF WORK

Shelley Doyle, Social Wealth Strategist, The Communitiverse
<https://youtu.be/BBnZu2dH-lg>

SOCIAL CAPITAL IN THE AGE OF AI: DOES CURRENT PEDAGOGY HELP STUDENTS BUILD REAL CONNECTIONS?

Sidney Peimer, Lecturer, Red & Yellow Creative School of Business
<https://youtu.be/V72GuIGmUw4>

DYNAMICS OF SOCIAL INTERACTION IN TECHNOLOGY ADOPTION: SOCIAL CAPITAL VERSUS SOCIAL LEARNING

Dr Haluk Gedikoglu, Associate Professor of Agricultural Economics, Konya Food & Agriculture University
<https://youtu.be/dNO54PVbqSU>

GBENOPO AS AN EXPRESSION OF SOCIAL CAPITAL IN BADAGRY'S OGU MUSICAL CULTURE

Dr Joseph Kunnuji, Senior Lecturer in African Music, University of the Free State, Bloemfontein, South Africa
<https://youtu.be/xBZ1rpaEII8>

OUT OF A CRISIS COMES RESILIENCE: COMMUNITY SCHOOLS POTENTIAL TO GENERATE SOCIAL CAPITAL

Dr Jessica Shiller, Director of the Maryland Center for Community Schools, Towson University
<https://youtu.be/E-xgTGnBP1E>

SOCIAL CAPITAL IN ACTION: A BLUEPRINT FROM PETALUMA'S CIVIC EXPERIMENTS

John Crowley, Executive Director, Aquas Community Foundation
<https://youtu.be/jOafgfZuTZs>

BUILDING SOCIAL CAPITAL THROUGH MENTORING PROGRAMMES AT THE GOA SCHOOL IN INDIA

Jonathan Burton, Advisor to The Goa School and Madhuri Dass Woudenberg, Founder-Director of The Goa School
<https://youtu.be/fICWScw7cE8>

UNVEILING TRENDS IN SOCIAL CAPITAL RESEARCH: A BIBLIOMETRIC AND SYSTEMATIC REVIEW APPROACH

Buddhini Amarathunga, Senior Lecturer, Department of Business Management, Faculty of Business Studies and Finance, Wayamba University of Sri Lanka
<https://youtu.be/WcUl0SBI6yw>

TOWARD A UNIFIED FRAMEWORK FOR SOCIAL CAPITAL: WHAT IS IT, HOW DOES IT WORK, AND WHY DOES IT MATTER?

Tristan Claridge, Director of the Institute for Social Capital and President of the International Social Capital Association
<https://youtu.be/2Kq8VVy146U>



OTHER NEWS AND EVENTS

Some events being hosted by our network partners are below:

CREATING THE DESIGN RULEBOOK FOR SOCIAL CAPITAL

You can join this important and timely conversation with RSA Fellow Eric Sandelands online on Friday, October 24 from 8 - 9am EDT. Click [HERE](#)

FOUNDATION FOR SOCIAL CONNECTION (F4SC)

is hosting their Social Connection conference from October 28-30 in Atlanta Georgia. More about it and sign up information is [HERE](#).

STORYTELLING

on Nov. 20: Storytelling is central to how we understand ourselves and our world. In this session, Christabel Nsiah-Buadi FRSA and Esther Armah will delve into storytelling's role in healing and systemic change. Click [HERE](#)

LOCALITY'S ANNUAL CONVENTION

brings together people who believe in the power of community. This year, this convention will be held at Liverpool from November 12-13. More information is available at <https://locality.org.uk/events/locality-convention>

WEAVE: THE SOCIAL FABRIC PROJECT

at the Aspen Institute is a finalist for The Anthem Awards. More information is [HERE](#).

[LEADING ON OPPORTUNITY](#)

just recently released a Case Study on "[How to Build a Mobility Movement](#)" that may be of interest to ISCA members.

More events related to Social Capital are updated on this site you may want to book mark: <https://sites.google.com/rsaus.org/bfm2024/events/upcoming>

ISCA WEBINAR SERIES

Our webinar series has been running since April 2020 with presentations by prominent scholars and practitioners including Prof Robert Putnam, Prof Eric Uslaner, Prof Lindon Robison, Prof Daniel Aldrich and many more.

Our webinar series provides a platform for people to share their research or their practical applications of social capital with an international audience.

Click here to submit a [proposal to present](#).

Visit the ISCA events page to [register for upcoming webinars](#).

UPCOMING WEBINARS

October 30

@ 11:00 am & 9:00 pm EDT

SOCIAL CAPITAL RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS

On Zoom: A workshop discussing the research process with a focus on social capital research.

[Sign up HERE](#)

November 11

@ 4:00 pm - 5:30 pm EST

TOWARD A UNIFIED CONCEPTUALIZATION OF SOCIAL CAPITAL

On Zoom: While social capital is among the most broadly used concepts in social science, authors vary widely in their conceptualizations of social capital. Come and add to your own understanding and research.

[Sign up HERE](#)

November 26

@ 6:00 pm - 7:30 pm AEDT

THE MONETARY VALUE OF SOCIAL CAPITAL IN POST-DISASTER CONTEXTS: EVIDENCE FROM AUSTRALIA

On Zoom. This presentation will explore the critical role of social capital in enhancing disaster resilience in Australia, with a focus on bushfires..

[Sign up HERE](#)



GET INVOLVED

SHARE YOUR WISDOM: Be a webinar presenter and share your expertise with a global audience, igniting discussions that shape the future.

LEAD THE WAY: Consider board service to guide our vision, shaping our path towards a brighter tomorrow.

UNLOCK KNOWLEDGE: Sign up for membership and access a wealth of resources, connections and opportunities.

CONNECT AND COLLABORATE: Engage in our vibrant Mighty Networks platform, where ideas converge, and relationships flourish.

READY TO ENGAGE, CONTRIBUTE AND INSPIRE? Contact us at [this link](#), and let's take this impactful journey together.

ARE YOU READY TO BE A CATALYST FOR CHANGE AND CONTRIBUTE TO A THRIVING COMMUNITY? THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIAL CAPITAL ASSOCIATION INVITES YOU TO BECOME AN INTEGRAL PART OF OUR MISSION THROUGH VOLUNTEERING AND PARTICIPATION.

GET INVOLVED WITH OUR SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS

Visit the ISCA events page for Interest Group schedules and access.

WWW.INTSOCIALCAPITAL.ORG/EVENTS/

DISASTER RESILIENCE WITH JEFF DONALDSON

Join this exciting new interest group and meet people with shared interests. [join our community](#).

SOCIAL CAPITAL PARADIGM WITH TRISTAN CLARIDGE

Contribute to the work on definition, theory, and conceptual approaches in this interest group. [visit or join our community](#).

RESEARCH DESIGN AND MENTORING WITH BEVERLY SLOAN

Attend the ongoing workshop series exploring research design and methodologies for social capital. [view details and register](#).

SOCIAL CAPITAL MEASUREMENT WITH EUNICE PARK

Work together to improve the measurement of social capital and help develop resources for measurement. [view details and join](#)

SHARE YOUR WORK

Are you using social capital theory in your research, public-facing writing or practice? Please submit information about your work so we can share it on our website. Listings will not include the full text, but links to text or downloads can be included.

STAY IN TOUCH

We would love to hear from you and answer any questions you have about ISCA. ISCA board members can be contacted through the Governance page.