

ANNOUNCING THE 69TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF THE INSTITUTE ON RELIGION IN AN AGE OF SCIENCE

Habitability for Your Cosmic Future: Astro Anthropology Meets AstroEthics

June 23.30, 2024 on Star Island, NH

Astrobiology, astronomy, and planetary science—investigating Earth and local planets as well as planets orbiting other stars—invite us to consider life in cosmic context. This conference will weave together diverse interdisciplinary threads from the natural and social sciences and the humanities to consider the place and purpose of humanity in a context in which Earth might not be our only home and in which we may not be alone. Our plenary speakers (leading scientists, religionists, and ethicists) will draw on cutting-edge thinking in astrobiology, including emerging thought on “habitability,” and astrophilosophy and astrotheology to consider many questions, including:

How would expanding humanity into outer space affect culture, arts, and many other aspects of human civilization? What impact would contact with alien life, or even alien civilizations, have on human religions? Are ancient doctrines deep enough to grapple with the mind-boggling vastness of space? Would our biology and anthropology apply to alien life? What does it mean to be “alive”? Would aliens be “intelligent” and “spiritual” in ways we could relate to? Can we develop a concrete astroethics: moral principles in planetary perspective? Would our familiar moral anthropologies need to become astroanthropologies to engage new kinds of beings? Would earth-sourced colonists—to Mars and beyond—be so changed as to become alien? Would our ethics need to become “astroethics” to prepare people for planetary journeys? How might religion help and hinder the process? What are the implications of “commercial” space exploration? We invite all to engage in creative spiritual and moral speculation on a fast approaching future and fundamental issues that we confront in the present. Confirmed Plenary Speakers:

Dr. Andrew M. Davis, program director for “<https://ctr4process.org/>” the Center for Process Studies at “<https://cst.edu/>” Claremont School of Theology, author of *Metaphysics of Exo-Life: Toward a Constructive Process Cosmotheology* (2023).

Dr. Lucas Mix, author and manager Equipping Leadership in an Age of Science, and in 2021 NASA/Library of Congress Blumberg Chair in Astrobiology.

CALL FOR PAPERS

Dr. Jennifer Wiseman, planetary scientist at NASA and former director of the AAAS Dialogue on Science, Ethics and Religion.

Dr. Ted Peters, Distinguished Research Professor of Systematic Theology and Ethics, Graduate Theological Union.

Conference Program Co-Chairs: Ted Peters and Maynard Moore

Proposals for short academic papers on the announced Conference topic or on other facets of interactions between science and religion are invited: deadline December 22, 2023. We suggest that you check the IRAS website for the proposal format. If you see this announcement beyond the deadline, please approach Conference Co-Chair Maynard Moore at “emaynard8@yahoo.com” to see whether there is still an opening for a proposal. For more Conference information, bookmark the website www.iras.org.