

Coordination and commitment : How is ESJP organized?

An invitation to understand ESJP better....

ESJP has been around for almost 20 years and in that time has moved through many different struggles and turbulent times, as well as different ways of seeing problems, framing them, working together to understand them and move towards better alternatives. ESJP was born in Canada, grew up in England, the US and Australia and spread its roots into Colombia, Brazil, Puerto Rico, Denmark and beyond.

Usually when we meet in person at the annual conference, we have time to update, reset and share our histories, welcome newcomers to our network and explore what we mean by social justice and peace together. This period has been unsettling for many reasons, and we have been dealing with fragmented online conversations and communications. Many new members joined us at the 2018 USD conference and since then we have welcomed many on discord (online platform). Many have not yet encountered an ESJP conference, some have not met any of us in person, so it can be confusing to understand what ESJP is all about.

How is ESJP structured?

Well, the first thing to know is that it isn't – by design. In the very first conference in 2004 we labeled ourselves *counter hegemonic* and also *organic*. Since then, we have grown organically – like rhizomes – never quite knowing where our underground roots will surface. We are constantly reassessing ourselves against our commitments. ESJP is a loosely joined network of justice-inspired people, a support network, a movement and a liminal space to question the status quo and to consider new alternatives. But we are not a membership organization. There are no fees. There are no structures or systems. And there is a lot of love.

The first place to go is our 'About' page which shares information about our commitments <https://esjp.org/about-esjp/our-commitments>

These are our foundations – our key working principles - and we constantly refer back to these to guide us.

You can also see who is currently on our committee. The committee consists of:

- Founding members
- The secretary
- Elected members

The Founding members (4) are present to maintain the value system of ESJP and uphold the commitments over the years.

The secretary - currently Leon Santen, is always a remarkably selfless individual who supports us by sharing, building and creating our network through our emails, discord, heartspace and website.

Elected members (4) There are no terms of reference or times of service, there are no performance metrics. Invitations come when we have a space and when we feel we are missing a particular voice. Self or peer nominations come when anyone is passionate enough about our values to offer their support. Anyone wishing to join the committee must have always attended at least one ESJP conference. A vote will be held where needed.

Resources

Our website shares information about past and upcoming conferences, our journal, and how to connect with us <https://esjp.org/connect-with-us>. Browsing some of the conferences will show you the diversity of locations and styles (retreats to formal conferences to online Open Space gatherings).

We are in the process of rebuilding our resource page – and would love to hear from you if you have anything you would like to share which fit with our commitments. You can share short term notices like meetings or webinars through discord, or email us to include in our regular messages. If you are hosting or would like to share information about larger events, conferences, courses, books, podcasts, videos or other things, please do consider adding these to our database ([share your resources over here](#)). We will review all offerings to assess their match with our commitments and if appropriate add them to our new resource pages.

Transdisciplinary, intersectional, intergenerational community

Those who consider themselves part of the ESJP family hail from diverse places and spaces. We are engineers, and we are social scientists, educators, environmentalists, and more. We are community members, and academics, students and professionals of every kind. We have all experienced different kinds of injustices. And we are all oppressors.

And just like a family: we have our Elders, who have lived through decades of separatism, injustice, protest, war and resistance; we have the next generation - born in the midst of the environmental movement and the rise of neoliberalism; and we have our youngest members, who never knew a life without the internet or capitalism-on-steroids, and who are dealing with climate chaos, pandemics, war and a rising awareness of the oppressive systems that laid the foundations of our privilege. Each of us has so much to share and give.

Communication across differences is never easy. Language changes, understandings shift, meanings vary. The only way for us to learn together is to share our wisdom and our ignorance, our confusion and our humility. We welcome everyone willing to move into this space of love and learning, to share knowledge and experiences and most of all develop the ability to listen to others.

Caroline Baillie & Leon Santen,
on behalf of the
[ESJP Coordinating Committee](#)

January 12, 2024