

**Call for Papers for Inaugural Conference:  
Im/migrant Well-Being: A Nexus for Research and Policy**

**Hosted by:** The Im/Migrant Well-Being Scholar Collaborative (IWSC)

**Conference Organizers:** Elizabeth Aranda, University of South Florida – Immigrant Well-Being Research Center; and Elizabeth Vaquera, The George Washington University – Cisneros Hispanic Leadership Institute.

**Dates and Location:** February 17-18, 2023, St. Petersburg, Florida – Hilton

**Theme:** Immigration is not just a legal process, nor is it a finite process that ends upon an im/migrant's arrival in a new place or country. It shapes the daily lives of im/migrants and their families, as well as the communities in which they settle. And yet, despite this profound and long-lasting impact, policy discussions on immigration too often focus solely on its large-scale economic dimensions, sometimes overlooking the central questions about the lived experiences of im/migrants, such as: How do immigrants navigate physical space? How do they understand themselves and their place in their new and old communities? How do they access services covering basic needs? Especially in a renewed wave of heightened surveillance, policing, detention, and xenophobic political attacks on im/migrants and their families, generating empirical work that promotes the humanity of im/migrants and the realities of their lived experiences is crucial for developing impactful social policies and interventions. Moreover, while academic research exists on the lives and needs of im/migrants, there can be a disconnect among scholars from different disciplines, as well as between the academy and the policy-making world.

The Conference on Im/Migrant Well-Being seeks to bridge these gaps by bringing together scholars from diverse disciplinary and biographical backgrounds, and community partners to critically realize the potential of engaged scholarship through a focus on im/migrant well-being. Organizations such as the CDC, NIH, and UN conceive well-being as encompassing social, emotional, relational, economic, psychological, and physical aspects, and as a critical concept for both creating public policies and analyzing their impact. Im/migrant well-being thus serves as a nexus for research from the humanities, applied sciences and social sciences, as well as the work of community organizations. Well-being as a global mission explicitly addresses the needs of peoples excluded in contemporary empirical and policy-making approaches. This conference aims to attract a broad and interdisciplinary audience of scholars on immigration, minoritized groups and identities, intersectionality, public policy and public administration, public health and health sciences, media studies, political sociology, and social movements, among others.

Given the relevance of this topic for policy, the overall goal of this conference is to not only provide a venue for scholarship on im/migrants and their well-being, but also to provide attendees with the tools to translate that work for greater impact outside the academy. Conference participants will contribute to constructing more interdisciplinary frameworks for studying the lived experiences of im/migrants, while also learning from experts and participating in workshops on how to communicate their work for diverse audiences. As the conference seeks to bring together diverse perspectives, potential research topics related to im/migrant well-being

at the individual, familial or community-level and how they relate to practices, programs, or policies, could include, but are not limited to the following intersecting areas:

- Social well-being, such as studies of social activities, work, or access to social resources
- Relational well-being, such as studies of families, friendships, or support networks
- Emotional well-being, such as studies of life dis/satisfaction, emotions, or resilience
- Psychological well-being, including studies of identity, safety, mental health, or uncertainty
- Physical well-being, such as studies of stress, dietary and activity habits, or access to medical interventions
- Economic well-being that centers im/migrants themselves and/or their families, such as access to legal representation, health, food, and housing
- The intersections of some or all of these forms of well-being as they relate to state violence, such as im/migrant detainment, forced expulsion, and raids.

Additionally, the Cisneros Hispanic Leadership Institute at The George Washington University has committed resources to sponsor a panel specifically on the well-being of Latinx & Caribbean im/migrants in the United States. Submissions under this theme may follow the research areas suggested above, but should explicitly focus on or address the experiences and needs of Latinx & Caribbean im/migrants.

**Conference Objectives:**

1. To connect academic researchers from varying disciplines and career levels whose scholarship shares a common potential for improving im/migrant lives in a continuing network with resources and systems to support their work.
2. To bridge the gap between policy/legal discussions on immigration and academic research by building the translational skillset of scholars and increasing the visibility of scholarship that centers im/migrant experiences.
3. To identify areas of future research and partnership among scholars and with relevant community partners and organizations.

**Outcomes:** All Conference attendees will participate in workshops on how to translate academic work for public audiences. Additionally, the Im/migrant Well-Being Scholar Collaborative will identify a select group of presenters whose work is particularly well-suited for policy change. This cohort of scholars will be sponsored by the Collaborative to continue working with policy specialists and to present their work to lawmakers and relevant stakeholders at a summit in Washington, DC later in the year.

**Deadlines:** Please submit an extended abstract (up to 2000 words, including references) of your paper in which you identify a research question, theoretical framework, data source and methodology, as well as present the preliminary findings of your study and policy implications by September 30, 2022. The submission form can be found at:

<https://secure.cas.usf.edu/other/csmiwb/abstract.aspx>. Contributors should note that this call is open and competitive. Additionally, submissions must be based on original and unpublished material. Graduate students seeking to submit their work should include a letter of recommendation from their advisor. Authors will be notified of our decision no later than

October 31, 2022. Complete papers will be due December 15, 2022. The Collaborative will pay for one hotel room per selected paper at the Hilton in St. Petersburg during the dates of the conference: February 17 – 18, (arriving the 16<sup>th</sup>), 2023. Breakfast and lunch will be provided on both days of the conference. Questions should be directed to the organizers via email at [cas-iwrc@usf.edu](mailto:cas-iwrc@usf.edu).