

AfSMAC 2026 – CALL FOR PAPERS

The 2nd African Social Marketing Association Conference,
Cairo, Egypt, November 10–12, 2026

BEHAVIOUR CHANGE FOR SUSTAINABLE SOCIAL IMPACT: INTEGRATING POLICY, COMMUNITY, AND INDIVIDUAL ACTION



About the African Social Marketing Association

The African Social Marketing Association (AfSMA) is a growing community of professionals and academics across the continent who are enthusiastic and passionate about social marketing and about leveraging social marketing techniques to address the numerous social challenges facing Africa and Africans. The AfSMA has a focused agenda of bringing together social marketing (SM), and social and behaviour change (SBM) practitioners, academics, researchers, and policy makers, including macro stakeholders such as governments, NGOs, multilateral organizations, and donors. The association seeks to help build capacity and nurture the social marketing space in Africa creating an output which would be a sustainable cadre of expertise to support the scale of more effective social marketing programs and interventions on the continent. The AfSMA is a registered International Society affiliated with the International Social Marketing Association (iSMA), which provides AfSMA members with the benefits of a global network of stakeholders in the social marketing space.

Explaining Social Marketing

Social marketing seeks to develop and integrate marketing concepts with other approaches to influence behaviours that benefit individuals and communities for the greater social good. Social marketing practice is guided by ethical principles. It seeks to integrate research, best practice, theory, audience, and partnership insight, to inform the delivery of competition sensitive and segmented social change programmes that are effective, efficient, equitable and sustainable. (Consensus definition by the boards of the International Social Marketing Association [iSMA], European Social Marketing Association [ESMA], and Australian Association of Social Marketing [AASM]. According to the joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS)¹, social marketing has become increasingly popular among governments and donors as a way of addressing serious health issues in developing countries. In Africa, social marketing techniques have been used in addressing a wide range of challenges from key health-related issues such as family planning, HIV/AIDS, general pandemic prevention protocols, and uptake of vaccines and nutrition to environmental and resource conservation, civil engagement, and gender-based violence. One of the earliest applications of Social Marketing (SM) worldwide, was Contraceptive SM that formed part of family planning programmes, which started in Egypt in 1978², just a few years after the discipline of SM came into existence in 1971³.

The African Social Marketing Association Conference (AfSMAC 2026)

The African Social Marketing Association Conference (AfSMAC 2026) is organized by the African Social Marketing Association (AfSMA), a regional affiliate of the long established International Social Marketing Association (iSMA) and our partners at FUSE. The conference will be hosted in collaboration with Onsi Sawiris School of Business at The American University in Cairo, Egypt from November 10-12, 2026. The conference takes place every two years and is a celebration of positive behaviour change and effective work tackling major African health, environmental, and social issues.

1 UNAIDS, https://www.unaids.org/sites/default/files/media_asset/social_marketing_en_1.pdf

2 Chester, L. A. (1986). *Contraceptive Social Marketing*. <https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/729301468913741347/pdf/Contraceptive-social-marketing.pdf>

3 Kotler, P., & Zaltman, G. (1971). Social marketing: an approach to planned social change. *Journal of Marketing*.



As the second event of its kind in Africa, it aims to bring together over one hundred academics, practitioners, and social policy makers from across the continent, and from around the world to consider how social marketing, social enterprise, innovation and behaviour change practice more broadly, can help solve the big social, health, economic, security, and environmental challenges we all face. The conference will consist of a half-day of training workshops followed by a two-day conference. The conference will present double-blind peer reviewed research, case studies, projects, discussions, panels, and interactive sessions from leading experts in social marketing, behaviour and social change, public health, health communication, environmental sustainability, and a wide range of other disciplines which further positive social and behaviour change.

For more information: <https://wsmconference.com/cairo-2026/call-for-abstracts>

The programme will include training workshops, double-blind peer-reviewed presentations, interactive sessions, and networking opportunities for researchers, practitioners, and stakeholders.

Proposal Space Abstract Submission Link – <https://proposalspace.com/calls/d/1885>

Submission Formats

Submissions from NGOs, government agencies, academic staff, students, the not-for-profit sector, social enterprises, and the for-profit sector are welcome under any of the following five submission types:

- Research / evaluation submissions – 20-minute presentation
- Intervention / case study submissions – 20-minute presentation
- Interactive session / workshop submissions – 45-minute session
- Poster submissions – A1 poster display space

Conference Tracks and Descriptions

The conference welcomes papers across the following ten (10) tracks.

Conference Track	Description / Focus
<i>Mainstreaming social marketing: policy, systems, and advocacy</i>	<p>Policy-driven and systemic approaches to embed social marketing principles into governance, health, environment, and community programmes. Includes work on policy integration, national and regional strategies, and advocacy campaigns.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy frameworks for embedding social marketing across sectors • National behaviour change strategies • Advocacy campaigns that integrate multi-sector stakeholder engagement
<i>Building resilience amidst funding cuts</i>	<p>Approaches to sustaining impactful social marketing programmes in resource-constrained environments. Focus on innovation, partnerships, and scaling approaches to maintain or grow impact despite reduced budgets.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resource optimisation and cost-effective programme design • Leveraging private sector and for-profit organizations' support • Community-led initiatives filling service gaps
<i>Health and Well-being</i>	<p>Non-communicable and communicable disease research, implementation, and evaluation. Action at policy, strategy and operational programme delivery levels using Social Marketing, Social and Behaviour Change Communications (SBCC) or other behaviour change tools.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disease prevention and treatment (HIV/AIDS, Malaria, vaccination, maternal health) • Nutrition and physical activity programmes • Mental health promotion and stigma reduction • Substance misuse prevention and harm reduction • Pandemic preparedness and lessons learned
<i>Global climate change, environmental protection, overconsumption, and sustainability</i>	<p>Research and programme implementation addressing environmental and consumption challenges. Includes sustainable production/consumption, ecological protection, and links to health using social marketing.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable farming and fishing initiatives • Resource conservation campaigns • Species protection programmes • Behaviour change to reduce overconsumption
<i>Social marketing for Corporate Social Responsibility and brand purpose</i>	<p>Exploring the intersection of corporate responsibility, brand purpose, and social marketing. Includes case studies and research on businesses driving positive social and behaviour change.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporate sustainability campaigns • Cause-related marketing partnerships • Business-led behaviour change initiatives

<p><i>Combating mis- and disinformation</i></p>	<p>Strategies for addressing false or misleading information that undermines positive social programmes. Includes digital literacy, media regulation, and safeguarding using social marketing.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Campaigns to improve information literacy • Reducing cyberbullying • Countering misinformation on health or climate issues
<p><i>Promoting equity and equality</i></p>	<p>Strategies to increase equity and equality in terms of gender, age, race, disability, nationality and geography. Includes work addressing poverty, rural development, and anti-discrimination.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reducing rural–urban disparities • Access to education and health care services • Anti-xenophobia and anti-racism campaigns
<p><i>Learning from Africa on advancing theory, methods, measurement, and evaluation for impact</i></p>	<p>Showcasing African innovation and leadership in advancing theory, methods, and evaluation in social marketing.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Innovation and new theories • Systems thinking approaches • Critical social marketing analyses • Evaluation frameworks developed in African contexts
<p><i>Interdisciplinary and cross-sector action to influence behaviour for social good, encourage community engagement and well-being</i></p>	<p>Cross-disciplinary and cross-sector partnerships to address complex social and behavioural issues, promote community engagement, and foster sustainable interventions.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community empowerment projects • Multi-stakeholder partnership management • Skills integration across sectors
<p><i>Digital, technological and Artificial Intelligence: Implications for Behaviour Change</i></p>	<p>Exploring the effects of digital platforms, emerging technologies, and AI on social behaviour and behaviour change programmes.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AI in health communication • Digital community engagement platforms • Technology-driven monitoring and evaluation

Networking Opportunities

The conference provides delegates with opportunities to connect with ‘their tribe’. Researchers, practitioners, and stakeholders within specific social marketing and behaviour change areas can network, establish collaborative projects, share knowledge and experiences, and connect with potential funders.

Post-conference Publishing Opportunities

All submissions will undergo rigorous double-blind peer review by experts in social marketing and behaviour change. Abstracts of accepted submissions will be published in the conference proceedings with an ISBN number. Selected papers will be invited for publication in a special issue of a leading journal. An accredited journal is being secured for AfSMAC2026 special issue for papers which meet the journal requirements. To stay updated, [visit the conference website](#).

Contacts

africa@wsmconference.com

PROPOSAL SPACE SUBMISSION GUIDANCE

The sections below provide an overview of what you will require to complete your submission to AfSMAC 2026.

To learn more about how to use Proposal Space and how to obtain your free account please visit the main Proposal Space website here - <https://proposalspace.com/>

For further information about the event or for any queries you may have about submitting an abstract please contact the team at africa@wsmconference.com

UNIVERSAL FIELDS FOR ALL SUBMISSIONS

The submission portal will require input for each of the items below for every abstract submission.

- **Abstract Title**
- **Proposed Conference Track** (see above)
- **Submission Type** – authors will be asked to confirm if their session is a...
 - Practice / Case Study Abstract
 - Research / Academic Abstract
 - **PRACTICE OR RESEARCH QUESTIONS WILL THEN BE PROVIDED DEPENDING ON YOUR SELECTED SUBMISSION TYPE.**
- Selection of your preferred **presentation format** (see above)
- **Keywords** – you will be able to enter up to 6 keywords that best describe your abstract
- Provide two or three **learner objectives** for your session

Supporting Documents

Each submission can be supported by the inclusion of uploaded assets such as campaign examples, data tables or other items. Supporting assets must be uploaded in JPG, PNG, Word or PDF formats. Video assets are not permitted.

Poster Authors – if you do already have an example of your poster, please upload this as a supporting asset. This is not mandatory for poster authors but can be helpful during the review process.

Programme Listing

If your work is accepted, we will require a listing for the conference programme. Please provide a summary of what people can expect from your session / why people should decide to attend this session.

Contact Information

The next section asks for more contact details for you, the Corresponding Author, and following your information, it asks for the same contact details for your Co-Authors.

- Full Name
- Organization/Institution name and address
- Job Title
- Department
- Email (for secondary authors use only their email, so we can contact them directly if needed)
- Phone (for secondary authors use only, their own phone number, so we can contact them directly if needed)

Additional Opportunities for Your Submission

As part of your abstract submission, please indicate your willingness to participate in the following opportunities. These options help extend the impact of your work beyond the conference.

- *I am willing for my paper to be considered for a Global Social Marketing Award and consent to being contacted regarding this opportunity (Y/N)*
- *I am willing for my paper to be included in the iSMA Global Case Study Portal and consent to being contacted regarding this opportunity (Y/N)*
- *I am willing for my paper to be submitted to one of WSMC's partnering journals for review and potential publication and consent to being contacted regarding this opportunity (Y/N)*

Understandings

- Acknowledge that registration fees and travel/hotel costs are your responsibility.
- Acknowledge the restrictions on presenting multiple sessions (more than two)
- Copyright acknowledgement

RESEARCH / ACADEMIC SUBMISSION QUESTIONS

Abstract

Enter your abstract, 500-word limit.

Each of the following sections allows up to 350 words further explanation in addition to your abstract.

Introduction

The introduction should clearly present the research problem or question, providing the context and rationale for the study. It should highlight the significance of the research and outline the objectives.

Theoretical Framework

Please provide a comprehensive review of the relevant literature, defining key concepts and theories that underpin the research. It should also position the study within the broader field of knowledge, identifying gaps that the research seeks to address.

Methodology

The methodology section must describe in detail the research design, data collection methods, and analysis techniques used in the study.

Results

This section presents the findings of the study in a clear and concise manner. It should include tables, figures, and any other relevant data representations.

Discussion

This section should highlight the implications of the findings, any limitations of the study, and potential directions for future research.

PRACTICE / CASE STUDY SUBMISSION QUESTIONS

Abstract

Enter your abstract, 500-word limit.

Each of the following sections allows up to 150 words further explanation in addition to your abstract.

Background & purpose: problem statement, location/geography of program

This section should clearly outline the issue your case study addresses. Define the problem or challenge being tackled, its relevance to the community or audience involved, and any contextual factors (social, economic, cultural, etc.) that shaped the programme. Be sure to specify the geographic scope or setting (local, national, regional, or international) and provide background information necessary to understand why this case is important.

Awareness, Experience, Knowledge or Behavioural focus

Describe the specific behaviour(s), attitudes, knowledge levels, experiences, or awareness you aimed to influence through this project. Clarify the desired change and its relevance to the population or context. This section should make it clear whether the focus was on individual actions, community behaviours, or institutional practices, and how these connect to broader social marketing goals.

Study Design, Methods, and Approaches

Explain the design of your intervention or campaign, including key activities, partners involved, and the rationale for choosing these approaches. Describe any formative research, segmentation, co-creation, or pilot testing undertaken. Outline the tools, techniques, or social marketing strategies used to engage the target audience and influence change, such as media campaigns, training, environmental design, or policy advocacy.

Results – Outcomes/Impact

This section presents the findings of the study in a clear and concise manner. It should include tables, figures, and any other relevant data representations.

Discussion/Implications for Social Marketing and Behaviour Change as a Field

This section should highlight the implications of the findings, any limitations of the study, and potential directions for future research.