CREATING AND SUSTAINING COLLECTIVE ACTIVISM through Science Education Research
The Program Chair invites NARST members and others to participate in the 2019 NARST Annual International Conference and to contribute to the 2019 conference by submitting program proposals.

Theme: Creating and Sustaining Collective Activism through Science Education Research

The work we undertake in science education often unfolds in similar ways. We identify a problem, gather around us a group—usually quite small—of committed individuals to tackle these problems, and share the results through publications and presentations at conferences such as those provided by scholarly organizations such as NARST. This highly focused problem-solving work is important, and always will be. However, we find ourselves in a world where work of a different kind also is needed. Today we are faced with a host of challenges which will have significant, long-lasting and, in many cases, irreversible effects. Among these are: global warming, the consequences of which are ever more apparent; declining scientific understanding of events and processes in the natural world; the lack of significant transfer of what is learned from research to policies that could significantly improve human and environmental health and well-being; and the lack of access so many young people and adults across the globe have to science learning opportunities which could provide the tools to improve their lives. To address challenges such as these, we need to send clear and collectively generated messages informed by relevant research which can provide the basis for extended and reasoned conversation that rises above the din often created by charged and uninformed debate. Only this kind of conversation can lead to more informed public engagement and to decisions which result in more productive change.

The 2019 conference, with its theme of collective activism, sets two major challenges before the NARST community. The first is to find new ways to introduce or elevate the presence of activist elements within the work that we do. The second is to consider how our research might become more powerful through engaging others—including those who have traditionally resided outside the community of mainstream science education researchers—in its design, enactment and dissemination. This is a critical time for us as scholars and as members of the NARST community. We must ensure that the work that we do in science education has a deep, powerful and lasting impact on the health, well-being and future of our communities, our countries, and our world.

The 2019 conference provides us as individual researchers and as a scholarly collective with the opportunity to learn from each other about both existing and potential models of powerful and empowering work resulting from collaborations which are responsive, substantial, long-lasting and out-reaching. Above all, we should use this conference as an opportunity to first, learn about what we are doing and what we could do to push the boundaries of our field; and second, learn about how collaborative research could lead each and every stakeholder to use what is learned to protect and enhance our lives within our communities, both locally and globally. We are excited about the learning that will take place at our 2019 conference as well as the action plans that will develop as a result and hope that you will consider contributing to these conversation by submitting proposals for papers, interactive sessions, posters and/or workshops aligned with the conference theme. Looking forward to seeing you in Baltimore!

Conference Chair: Gail Richmond, NARST President

The Program Chair or designate MUST receive your program proposals for the 2019 Annual International Conference by August 15, 2018. This deadline allows sufficient time for processing, reviewing, and evaluating the many submitted proposals in a fair manner. By early July 2019, the call for program proposals will appear on the NARST website.