

Call for Applications

SAHJ Special Issue Workshop

Broadening Conceptions of the Political: Rethinking Women's Histories in South Africa

21 – 22 August 2025

We warmly invite applications from young researchers and early career scholars for participation in an in-person workshop to be held on **21–22 August 2025 at the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg, South Africa.**

This workshop seeks to reimagine how we understand political agency by centring women's experiences in 20th-century South African struggles. By interrogating the diverse modes of resistance and emancipatory praxes of women – from organised activism to everyday defiance – we aim to challenge androcentric narratives and reshape dominant historiographies of political life in Southern Africa.

The workshop is funded by the *South African Historical Journal* (SAHJ) in collaboration with the South African Historical Society (SAHS), and forms part of their initiative to foster innovative, collaborative historical scholarship in the region. The workshop will support participants in developing their papers for inclusion in a **special issue of the South African Historical Journal**, guest edited by the workshop convenors.

Submissions should engage with one or more of the following themes:

- **Redefining the Political:** Exploring how women's lived experiences challenge androcentric definitions of politics and expand understandings of political participation and spaces of struggle.
- **Women in Popular Movements:** Examining women's roles in trade unions, shack dwellers movements, and rural resistance struggles.
- **Forms of Resistance:** Investigating the diverse tactics employed by women, from organised protests and boycotts to everyday acts of defiance.

- **Organisational Practices:** Analysing how women shaped the strategies, structures, and practices of political organisations.
- **Land, Commons, and Social Reproduction:** Considering women's struggles over land and commons as central to collective social reproduction and democratic self-governance.
- **Contemporary Movements and Activism:** Drawing connections between historical examples of women's resistance and current political and social movements.

Eligibility

This workshop is primarily aimed at **emerging scholars**, including post-MA researchers and practitioners, **doctoral candidates, postdoctoral fellows**, and **early-career researchers**, whose opportunities for cohort-building and intellectual exchange were significantly disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic. We are particularly interested in bringing together a new generation of scholars working on questions of gender, politics, and resistance in Southern Africa, who are eager to place their work in dialogue with each other as well as with the established historiography.

While the workshop focuses on creating a space for **cohort development and scholarly exchange among early-career researchers**, we also **welcome applications from more experienced scholars** whose research meaningfully contributes to the themes of the workshop. In such cases, we ask that applicants reflect on how their participation might **constructively support the workshop's goals of mentorship, collaboration, and intellectual renewal** in the field of women's political histories in the region.

Key Details

Workshop Dates: Thursday 21 and Friday 22 August 2025.

Location: University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. We strongly encourage in-person attendance to foster deeper scholarly engagement and networking, however where possible we will try to make allowances for hybrid participation.

Format & Activities: This intensive two-day workshop will focus on workshopping full-length research articles through in-depth feedback and generative discussion. The format is designed to foster both rigorous academic critique and creative collaboration.

Pre-Workshop Preparation: Participants will be expected to submit full draft papers by **Wednesday, 16 July 2025.**

Post-Workshop Support: Following the workshop, organisers will continue to support authors with detailed feedback and editorial assistance as they prepare their final papers for submission to the *South African Historical Journal*.

Application Process

Please submit the following by **Friday 16 May, 2025:**

- A completed **google application form** [here](#)
- A short **CV** (max. 2 pages)
- A **synopsis** of your proposed paper (max. 500 words)

Submit supporting documents to:

rethinkingwomenshistories@gmail.com

Successful applicants will be notified by **the end of May 2025.**

Workshop Convenors:

Dr Tara Weinberg (University of the Witwatersrand); Dr Camalita Naicker (University of Cape Town); Dr Sarah Bruchhausen (University of Johannesburg)