

Call for Papers
The Twelfth Winton M. Blount Postal History Symposium
December 8-9, 2022
Smithsonian National Postal Museum
Washington, DC

THEME: Political Systems, Postal Administrations, and the Mail

Sponsored by
American Philatelic Society, American Philatelic Research Library,
and the Smithsonian National Postal Museum

In countries around the world, postal administrations and their missions, practices, and regulations serve as reflections and agents of state goals and ideals. Like the administrations, be they privatized, quasi or fully governmental, these ideals and goals can vary widely. In all cases, they shape the relationship that citizens, subjects, or residents have to the mail and the post office, including their expectations and decisions on how and when to use them. By sending and receiving mail or by using other offered services, individuals participate in communities or networks - familial, commercial, social, or other. Moreover, the acts of using and engaging - even the potential for these - with postal services may simultaneously reinforce and challenge the postal administration and its political foundations.

Possible themes involving the interaction and influence of the state, postal administrations, and the public include:

Regime change and its impact on postal services
Politics and economic systems determining governmental, quasi-governmental, and privatized structures
Postal regulation and legislation as relate to postal users
Postal contracting and subsidies
Relationship of politics to employment with the postal administrations and industries
Privacy, surveillance, censorship of mail
Innovation, adoption, adaptation, and removal of non-mail postal services
Representations of political ideas on stamps
Advertising and propaganda covers
Postal regulations, laws, and the public
Mail as a tool or site of formal and informal community development and/or political activism
Letter-writing campaigns and correspondence circles

Deadlines for proposals:

Deadline extended: One-page proposal and CV due May 16, 2022. In addition to a one-page proposal stating the question/s to be answered, the basic argument, and an overview of the source base, each individual should submit a one-page curriculum vitae that includes contact information (e-mail, phone, address) to smithsu@si.edu.

Notification of acceptance will be mailed on or about May 25, 2022. Although we are planning to hold the event in person, sessions will be streamed for viewing from home and slide shows and abstracts will be available online after the event. Ideally, presenters will be able to attend the event in person to enrich the discussion during and between sessions.

Papers due by October 15, 2022. Accepted proposals must result in previously unpublished papers of 5000-6000 words, including bibliographic material and citations. Event organizers are hoping presenters will consider the symposium an opportunity to receive feedback on their papers and are willing to facilitate the placement of publications in postal history and philatelic journals.

For more information and updates regarding the 2022 Postal History Symposium please see the Symposia and Lecture page on the National Postal Museum's website at <https://postalmuseum.si.edu/symposia-and-lectures>.

