

Call for Participation

Democratic Memories. Democratic Futures: Bring Your Voice to the Round Table!



Revolutionale
International Round
Table Conference 2026

Leipzig
8–10 October
2026

IRT26: Democratic Memories. Democratic Futures

Would you like to contribute your experiences and be part of a conversation about our shared democratic future? Are you looking for an opportunity to share your vision with others and connect beyond your regional contexts?

For the fifth time, the Foundation of the Peaceful Revolution, along with its partners, invites human rights defenders, NGO representatives, and academics – from Europe and around the world – to Leipzig for the biennial **Democracy and Human Rights Conference Revolutionale – International Round Table Conference 2026 (IRT26)**.

The IRT26 offers a **platform and a safe space** for dialogue on shared values, the discussion of current and structural issues, and strategies for action. Participants from Europe and beyond are welcome, including individuals and organizations working in exile.

Under this year's theme, »Democratic Memories. Democratic Futures«, the conference explores the conditions and practices of democratic coexistence. Building on the experiences of peaceful revolutions and civil resistance – and marking the **40th anniversary of the Chernobyl disaster** – we examine how environmental, political, and societal transformations intersect.

The program highlights both the consequences of authoritarian governance and the transnational impact of collective action, creating space to reflect on past experiences and current realities.

We invite participants to reflect on how democratic memories, whether personal or collective, can inspire present engagement, strengthen human rights-based approaches, and contribute to more inclusive, participatory, and sustainable futures. **Democracy is continuously shaped by those who practice and defend it.**

Our Round Tables

- 1 40 years of Chernobyl – nuclear energy and authoritarianism today
- 2 The memory of the many – democratisation movements and their view of history
- 3 Democratizing Memory: The Case of Armenia
- 4 From Solidarity to Civil Society: Lessons from 1980 and 1989 for today
- 5 Queer Futures
- 6 Press and Media freedom in times of Disinformation and Authoritarianism

The IRT26 program will be complemented by keynote lectures, exhibitions, artistic interventions and public events. There will also be open space for participants to develop their own ideas. Please note that the program is subject to change.

The conference language is English.

Your Application

If you are interested in participating, please send us a document answering the following three questions (max. 800 characters per question):

- Why do you want to take part at IRT26?
- Which ideas, projects, or questions from your work would you like to share?
- What does the motto »Democratic Memories. Democratic Futures« mean to you?

Please also include a short CV, a brief description of your home organization (if applicable), and indicate which two Round Tables interest you the most.

Applications should be submitted by 15 July to internationalroundtable@revolutionale.de

What we offer

First of all: there is no participation fee. Depending on our funding, we aim to reimburse accommodation and travel expenses for participants who are not able to cover travel costs through their organization/institution. The reimbursement limit for travel costs will probably amount up to 100 Euros for participants from Germany and up to 300 Euros for participants from abroad.

Background

On October 9, 1989, the Peaceful Revolution in the GDR saw its decisive moment: Seventy thousand people demonstrated in Leipzig for change: »For an open country with free people«. They followed the call of independent environmental, peace and human rights groups, who had already been committed to freedom and democracy for years despite state repression. Every year on October 9, Germany and Leipzig commemorate this moment. Since 2017, the Foundation of the Peaceful Revolution has accompanied this commemoration every two years with the REVOLUTIONALE International Round Table conference. Its objective is to turn the memory of the Peaceful Revolution into support for those who today stand up for democracy and human rights, for open societies with free people.

Partners and Sponsors of the IRT26

Saxon State Ministry for Social Affairs, Health and Cohesion / Kolegium Europy Wschodniej /
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(GWZO) / Professur Kultur- und Länderstudien Ostmitteleuropas, TU Chemnitz / European
Center for Press and Media Freedom (ECPMF)

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