

## ***Call for Papers***

### ***First Soillse Residential Conference***

#### **MAINTAINING AND REVITALISING MINORITY LANGUAGES IN THEIR 'HEARTLANDS'**

**31 August - 3 September 2011**

Sabhal Mòr Ostaig UHI  
Sleat, Isle of Skye, Scotland

**Deadline to submit your abstract:** 25 June 2011

**Deadline for registration:** 31 July 2011

**Further information:**

[fios@soillse.ac.uk](mailto:fios@soillse.ac.uk) or visit [www.soillse.ac.uk](http://www.soillse.ac.uk)

**Registration at:**

[www.smo.uhi.ac.uk/colabhairt-soillse](http://www.smo.uhi.ac.uk/colabhairt-soillse)

## **MAINTAINING AND REVITALISING MINORITY LANGUAGES IN THEIR 'HEARTLANDS'**

[www.soillse.ac.uk](http://www.soillse.ac.uk)



**the National Research Network  
for the Maintenance and  
Revitalisation of Gaelic**

## ***First Soillse Residential Conference – Call for Papers***

Gaelic is traditionally associated with the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, but ever since UK census data has been collected on Gaelic, the language has generally weakened in this large geographic area. Among the key issues are weaknesses in intergenerational transmission, increasing English dominance in a greater range of linguistic domains, significant inward migration of non-Gaelic speakers, population loss (especially of young people), vulnerable local economies which are heavily dependent on traditional economic activities (including agriculture and fishing), and, until recently, a generally unresponsive policy and public administrative context. While each minoritised language differs in important respects, the Gaelic experience is not an uncommon one.

The first Soillse conference will explore two themes: First, we hope to **explore the problems and challenges faced by Gaelic and other minoritised languages in their ‘heartlands’**—the areas with which they have been most used in social and community life—in order to understand better the nature of the challenges and the extent to which these are the result of broader national and international forces, as well as local ones.

Second, we hope to **explore the various policy initiatives which have been instituted not only in Scotland but in other jurisdictions to address the problems and challenges faced by Gaelic and other minoritised languages in their ‘heartlands’**, in order to understand better the sorts of interventions which have, and which have not, worked so well.

As a result, we welcome proposals for papers on any aspect of the foregoing two themes. Presenters may, for example, wish to present a case study of a particular minoritised language or a particular minoritised language community/district in a ‘heartland’ area, a set of policy interventions or a particular intervention, or any combination of the foregoing. The only requirement is that presentations are related to at least one of the two themes.

### ***Keynote Speakers***

- Dr Patrick Carlin, School of Welsh, Cardiff University
- Dr Conchúr Ó Giollagáin, Acadamh na hOllscolaíochta Gaeilge, NUI Galway
- Dr Gillian Munro, Sabhal Mór Ostaig UHI
- Paula Kasares, Public University of Navarra, Member, Parliament of Navarre
- Prof. Robert Dunbar, Sabhal Mór Ostaig UHI

### ***Also participating***

- Prof. Durk Gorter, University of the Basque Country
- Prof. Colin Williams, University of Cardiff

### ***Submitting an abstract***

We would welcome submissions of proposals for papers (abstracts) of not more than 350 words in length, in Scottish Gaelic or in English, by no later than **25 June 2011** to Iain Caimbeul, Soillse’s Senior Project Manager ([iain.caimbeul@soillse.ac.uk](mailto:iain.caimbeul@soillse.ac.uk)). Abstracts should include the presenter’s name and institutional affiliation, if any, a very brief biography (not more than a further 100 words), and a contact e-mail address. It is expected that information on acceptance of proposals will be communicated by **2 July 2011**.

Enquiries may be directed to Mr Caimbeul or to Professor Robert Dunbar, Soillse’s Director ([sm01rd@uhi.ac.uk](mailto:sm01rd@uhi.ac.uk)). Further information, including information on registration, travel and accommodation, will be available on the Soillse website, [www.soillse.ac.uk](http://www.soillse.ac.uk).

## ***Participation costs***

Participation in the Soillse research conference over the three days (31 August – 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2011) is subject to a fee to cover accommodation, administration and catering expenses, including the conference dinner on the evening of 1<sup>st</sup> September, 2011. The details of the conference packages available and registration for the conference is available at: [www.smo.uhi.ac.uk/colabhairt-soillse](http://www.smo.uhi.ac.uk/colabhairt-soillse)

## ***Bursaries***

A limited number of bursaries funded by **Soillse** are available to assist with travel expenses of community groups wishing to attend the conference. Financial support must be requested at the time of the abstract's submission or anyhow before 25 June 2011. **In order to obtain the bursary you will need to be a member of a community organisation that is involved in any aspect that supports the revitalisation and maintenance of the Gaelic language and culture.** Only one person per community organisation will be eligible for financial support. Further information is available from: [iain.caimbeul@soillse.ac.uk](mailto:iain.caimbeul@soillse.ac.uk).

## ***Aims of the Soillse***

Soillse has been established in recognition of the strategic requirement to provide a much enhanced research capacity to inform public policy towards the maintenance and revitalisation of Gaelic language and culture.

Soillse is a 5-year, £5.29 million research project involving the University of the Highlands and Islands (with Sabhal Mòr Ostaig, UHI's Gaelic college in Skye, and Lews Castle College, in Lewis participating), as well as the Universities of Aberdeen, Edinburgh and Glasgow, and funded by the Scottish Funding Council, Bòrd na Gàidhlig (the language planning body created under the Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act 2005) and Highlands and Islands Enterprise.

Soillse aims to pool research capacity to develop and establish:

- An international-quality research capability that will support, inform and influence policy at national and local levels in the effort to maintain and revitalise the Gaelic language in Scotland and beyond; and
- A powerful research network across the participating Scottish Higher Education Institutions, linking national researchers with expertise and interest in contemporary Gaelic language matters, with international minority language research institutions.

Soillse has three primary research themes: Gaelic as a family and community language; Gaelic in education; and Assessment of Policies directed towards the revitalisation of Gaelic. Each of the themes rests upon two transversal themes of: Gaelic identity and self-confidence; and Gaelic language use.