Session V
How has the study of emerging adulthood advanced since 2000, and where does it need to go?

Lead Speaker
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Abstract
I present some ideas about the future of the field of emerging adulthood. First, I explain my reasons for coining “emerging adulthood,” focusing on the vast changes that have taken place in the nature of the 18-25 age period over the past century. Next, I propose some new areas of inquiry for the years to come. These include exploring the next developmental stage beyond emerging adulthood, young adulthood, which I suggest is distinguished by role immersion. I also advocate greater exploration of the many paths through emerging adulthood. Within countries, variations by social class and ethnicity are notable. Between countries, there are many potential variations in the experience of emerging adulthood in Europe and Asia. Perhaps most compelling of all in the decades to come will be to examine the birth of emerging adulthood in developing countries, as those countries move increasingly toward the demographic patterns that have led to a new life stage of emerging adulthood in OECD countries: longer and more widespread education and later ages of entering marriage and parenthood.