The Roots conferences were designed originally to explore the European theoretical foundations of gestalt therapy. Prior to Roots III, the first Roots conference took place in Paris in 2003. That was followed by Roots II in Antwerp in 2005. Roots III took place in Rome, and the city of Rome proved a compelling attraction, if not a competition to the conference itself. Chairpersons for the conference were Seán Gaffney and Edwin Nevis. Conference hosts were Anna Ravenna and Paolo Quattrini, of the Gestalt Institute of Florence and Rome.

The format of the Roots conferences is small group, which offers more time to consider and discuss the issues presented. The presentations are short, followed by questions and discussion, and that provides for rich exploration of the issues. The theme of the Roots III conference was “Social Change: Gestalt Perspectives and Practices.” This theme was selected in response to the enthusiasm for the topic and the ensuing discussion at Roots II in Antwerp.