

The background of the entire image is a white surface covered with various lowercase letters (a, b, c, d, e, f, g, h, i, j, k, l, m, n, o, p, q, r, s, t, u, v, w, x, y, z) drawn in a simple, hand-drawn style. Some letters are larger and more prominent, while others are smaller and scattered. A hand is visible on the right side, holding a black pen and pointing it towards the letters. The word 'nawe' is written in a large, blue, sans-serif font at the top of the image.

nawe

Writing Worlds

**Online Conference
13-14 November 2026**

National Association of Writers in Education

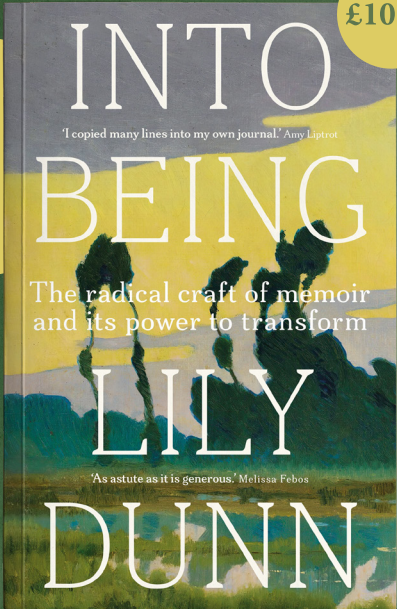


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'the sort of friend you never outgrow'
HILARY MANTEL

INTO BEING
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'I copied many lines into my own journal.' Amy Liptrot

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DAY ONE PROGRAMME: FRIDAY 13 NOVEMBER 2026

	Room 1	Room 2	Room 3
09:00	Welcome and introduce by NAWÉ Co-chairs Dr Jane Moss and Dr Jocelyn Page plus keynote speaker Professor Julia Bell, Birkbeck University		
10:00	Writing and Wellbeing	Life-Writing and History	WORKSHOP: Screenwriting in adult education
11:30	The Business of Writing	Telling the Stories of Life and Place	WORKSHOP: The Practice of Attention
13:00	LUNCH AND NAWÉ BAR FOR HIGHER AND FURTHER EDUCATION	LUNCH AND NAWÉ BAR WORKSHOP Ruth Moore: The Great Big Map of NAWÉ 2026	LUNCH AND NAWÉ BAR WORKSHOP Liz Cashdan: The Thought Forest
13:30	THE BIG CONVERSATION: AI: The Human Element		
14:30	Haunted Worlds	Safety in Numbers	WORKSHOP: Exploring Europeana's Cultural Heritage Collections
16:00		Genre-writing	WORKSHOP: Grant Writing as a creative and developmental process
17:30	Member Meet Up		
18:00	Close		

DAY TWO PROGRAMME: SATURDAY 14 NOVEMBER 2026

	Room 1	Room 2	Room 3
09:00	Welcome and introduction by NAWE Co-chairs Dr Jane Moss and Dr Jocelyn Page plus keynote speaker Burhan Sönmez, President, International PEN		
10:00	Translation and Multilingualism	Artificial Intelligence	WORKSHOP: Writing Other Worlds
11:30	Challenging Topics and Techniques	Writing Techniques: Looking Outside of Literature	WORKSHOP: Telling the Untold
13:00	LUNCH AND NAWE BAR FOR HIGHER AND FURTHER EDUCATION	LUNCH AND NAWE BAR FOR WRITING COMMUNITIES, PROJECTS AND GROUPS	LUNCH AND NAWE BAR
13:30	THE BIG CONVERSATION: Why Writing Matters Hosted by Dr Karina Lickorish Quinn		
14:30	Alternative Approaches in HE	A New Formula for Writing?	WORKSHOP: Writing the River and the Bog
16:00	Self-Care and Space-Making	Culture and Psychology in Creative Writing	WORKSHOP: Memoir Writing: A Practical Guide
17:30	Member Meet Up and Plenary		
18:00	Close		

FRIDAY 13 NOVEMBER 2026

**OPENING SPEAKER: PROFESSOR JULIA BELL
ON RADICAL ATTENTION AND THE WORKSHOP**

09:00-10:00 Room 1



Professor Julia Bell

We have come to talk about attention as something under threat - captured, extracted, monetised, and now automated. But before it is any of those things, attention is a practice: a way of turning toward a text, and toward another person, with enough patience to let them become real to us. Simone Weil called attention the rarest and purest form of generosity.

This keynote makes the case that the creative writing workshop is where this generosity is taught - and that to think and write alongside one another, attentively, is itself a form of care.

Drawing on the argument of *Radical Attention* and *Between the Lines*, I want to reclaim attention as a positive discipline rather than a defensive one - not merely what we are losing to the machines, but something we actively make in a room together. As generative AI offers to write for us, and to read for us, it makes a quiet promise: that attention is a cost to be optimised away.

The workshop makes the opposite wager. It is not a soft or supplementary space but a piece of democratic infrastructure: one of the few places left where we practise reading one another slowly and hold each other's half-formed work with the patience it needs to grow.

In a moment when so much conspires to make our attention shallow and transactional, I want to ask what it means to treat the attentive room as something worth defending - and worth building.

Julia Bell is Professor of New Writing at Birkbeck, University of London, where she has taught creative writing for nearly thirty years. She is the author of Radical Attention (Peninsula Press, 2020; reissued 2026 with a new introduction by Grace Blakeley), an essay on the politics of attention that draws on the work of Simone Weil, and most recently Between the Lines (Simon & Schuster, 2026).

Her earlier books include the novel Massive and Hymnal (Parthian, 2024), a memoir in verse and a Welsh Book of the Month. Her essay "In Praise of Bad Writing" appears in the anthology Too Little / Too Hard. She writes the Substack Between the Lines and delivered her Birkbeck inaugural lecture, "On Radical Attention," in 2026.

FRIDAY PRESENTATIONS AND WORKSHOPS

WRITING AND WELLBEING

10:00-11:30 Room 1

Helen Stockton, **Gale Burns**, Kate Potts, **Mark Rickenbach**



L-R: Helen Stockton, Gale Burns, Kate Potts, Mark Rickenbach

Writing for Wellbeing in the World of Palliative Care **Helen Stockton**

My PhD, completing December 2026, explores the lived experience of participants in UK hospice outpatient writing for wellbeing groups. The use of writing within the palliative care world is under-researched, and hospice outpatient writing groups are uncommon.

My research uses a hermeneutic, phenomenological approach to reveal the experience of using writing to connect with others and the past, for expression and communication, and for self-exploration. This research has two phases, a first, self-exploratory pre-immersion, and a second of semi-structured interviews capturing the views of participants from hospice writing for wellbeing groups. My presentation will communicate these findings.

Helen Stockton is a freelance writer, creative writing tutor and writing for wellbeing facilitator with a background in Further Education. She is the author of four books, including a guide on teaching creative writing, and is a PhD student in the department of Health and Medicine at Lancaster University.

Writing the Climate Crisis: Emotional Resilience and Creative Practice **Gale Burns**

In an apparently collapsing society, how can we best equip ourselves and our students to handle the challenges we face and enable us to make - and value - our contribution as creative writers? This workshop for all types of writers will look at the nature of the climate crisis and demonstrate the effective use of listening structures to help us develop our thoughts, feelings and creative responses. Using examples from English language poetry and analysis by competition judges and poets, we will explore, and start, a range of fresh writing responses.

Gale Burns is a recent EACWP teacher and poet with two international awards. He's been a writer in residence at Kingston University and collaborated with Oxford and Dusseldorf universities.

Gale is also a psychotherapist, a member of Poets for the Planet and a consultant to Greenpeace UK on climate distress.

Craft, Care, and Continuity: Designing an Online Poetry Workshop Community **Kate Potts**

In January 2026 I launched *Poetical Workshop*, a craft-focused online poetry community designed to make high-quality feedback and sustained artistic development more

accessible. This presentation explores the challenges and possibilities of building meaningful online learning communities for writers, including those balancing work, caring responsibilities, rural isolation, or limited access to traditional creative communities.

Drawing on my experiences of online teaching, member feedback, and ongoing experimentation, I will examine how digital pedagogy can foster social learning and creative risk-taking, and how online workshops might recreate — and reimagine — the collaborative dynamics of the face-to-face poetry workshop.

Dr Kate Potts is a poet, life writer, mentor, editor and creative writing teacher with over 20 years' experience of supporting writers. Her most recent collection is Pretenders (Bloodaxe), a multi-voice work exploring imposter feelings. Feral (Bloodaxe 2018) was a Poetry Book Society recommendation. She lives in Stroud, Gloucestershire.

Education using stories within stories **Mark Rickenbach**

The theme for this session is “Education using stories within stories”. The world we are exploring is education about healthcare, including with your own GP.

This involves a look at the structure and content of three books. *Unthinkable* by Helen Thomson, *Healthcare Heroes* by Mark Rickenbach (speaker) and *A Fortunate Woman* by Polly Morland. It is the human story behind the message that interests readers most.

In these books we see the author's story wrapped around the health carer's story and the story of patients. Underpinned by an educational message for both the readers and healthcare professionals.

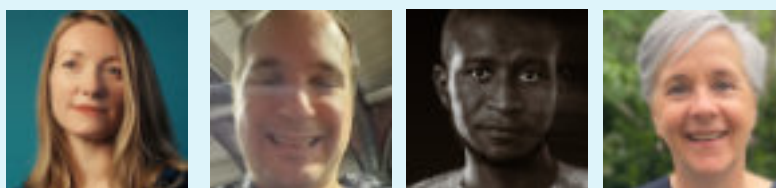
Mark Rickenbach has been a general practitioner and medical educator for thirty years. His PhD on improving education for those in healthcare, led to a national training survey for medical education.

His website www.docrick.co.uk gives three-point tips on consultation skills, and appraisal. Sixty medical and non-medical publications include poetry contributions.

LIFE-WRITING AND HISTORY

10:00-11:30 Room 2

Zoë Brigley, Edwin Stockdale, Saddiq Dzukogi and Dr Olufunke Ogundimu, Leonie Martin



L-R: Zoë Brigley, Edwin Stockdale, Saddiq Dzukogi, Leonie Martin

On Caitlin Thomas and the Biographical Poem **Zoë Brigley**

My presentation explores Caitlin Thomas through the lens of the biographical poem, asking how poetry might recover lives that have often been distorted, sensationalised or reduced by literary history.

Drawing on my creative-critical work around Caitlin's memoirs, letters and later life in Italy, I examine the relationship between embodiment, ecology, memory and narrative.

The talk considers how biographical poetry can move beyond simple reconstruction to inhabit uncertainty, fragmentation and emotional intensity. I will also discuss the ethical and imaginative challenges of writing through another woman's life, particularly one so frequently overshadowed by the mythology surrounding Caitlin Thomas and Dylan Thomas.

Zoë Brigley is a Welsh/American poet, writer and editor based between Wales and Ohio. She teaches at Ohio State University and is Poetry Editor at Seren Books and Editor of Poetry Wales. Her creative-critical work explores ecology, gender, memory and Welsh literary histories, including ongoing research on Caitlin Thomas.

Life Writing, Queer History and Landscape: Creating New Poetry About William II Edwin Stockdale

This project aims to create the first poetry collection that re-interprets the Anglo-Norman medieval monarch William II (1060-1100) as an LGBTQ icon. I will explore William's homosexuality by writing an original book of poems based on his life and the landscapes associated with him. William, also known as Rufus, has long been the topic of debate concerning his sexuality because he is the only male monarch not to have married or fathered any children. If some existing biographies of Rufus leave his sexuality unexplored, poetry's ability to re-interpret the past through creatively engaging with ambiguities and lacunae offers innovative possibilities.

Edwin Stockdale was the first person to gain a PhD in Creative Writing (Poetry) from Leeds Trinity University, where he now works as a Visiting Lecturer in Creative Writing. His debut full collection, Winter Wolf, written with funds from Arts Council England, was published by Red Squirrel in March 2026.

Writing in Proximity to History Saddiq Dzukogi & Dr Olufunke Ogundimu

A poet and a fiction writer will examine how literature sits beside and responds to history. They will show how oral testimony, archival absences, and embodied memory shape hybrid forms – lyric sequences, fragmented narratives, performative testimonies – that challenge linear historiography. Drawing on their own practices, they will argue literary approaches that contest, supplement, and reimagine historical narratives while honoring source communities. This panel addresses questions about how literature proximate to history reshapes ethics, and form – vital for writers, teachers, seeking alternatives to linear historiography. It responds to need for models that work with oral testimony, archival gaps, and communal memory.

Mystical Bodies: Re-Storying Illness in an Age of Spectacle Leonie Martin

This presentation showcases my ongoing Creative Writing PhD at the University of Sheffield, which develops an innovative approach to 'the illness narrative', integrating pedagogy, critical theory and creative practice. *Inequilibrium* is a three-part hybrid novel, framed by a critical introduction and conclusion. This imaginative re-telling of the lives of two celebrated women (Lidwina of Schiedam [1380-1433] and Jacqueline du Pre [1945-1987]) draws on hagiography, biography and memoir to inform the first two parts. The third part draws on the researcher's own personal data / creative practice to inform a speculative 'illness narrative' which exposes a world lacking any authoritative vision of wellness.

Leonie Martin holds a BA (Hons) in English Literature with Creative Writing from the Open University and an MA in English (Creative Writing) from the University of Sheffield. Her work has been published in print and online media. Alongside her PhD she is developing a creative practice of oral storytelling.

WORKSHOP: SCREENWRITING IN ADULT EDUCATION A WORKSHOP TO GIVE A TASTE OF MY COURSES AT LEWS DEPOT INDEPENDENT CINEMA

Julie Everton

10:00-11:30 Room 3



Julie Everton

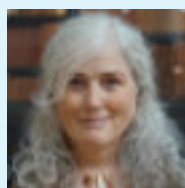
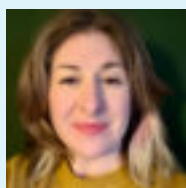
I will focus the workshop on one key aspect of screenwriting - telling a story visually to engage an audience. My course combines discussion, writing and feedback and this workshop will give a taste of my approach.

Julie Everton is a practicing screenwriter who has written for stage and TV. She trained as a script editor in Denmark and has worked as a script editor on short films and features. She is senior lecturer at University of Brighton.

THE BUSINESS OF WRITING

11:30-13:00 Room 1

Katie Da Cunha Lewin, **Vicky Adams**, ingrid e johnson



L-R: Katie Da Cunha Lewin, Vicky Adams, ingrid e johnson

Becoming Professional: Creative Writing Pedagogy and the Career of the Writer Katie da Cunha Lewin

At this moment in time, there have never been more ways to be a learn to be writer, whether BA, MA, short course, or online workshop. But how does the training writers receive in these spaces engage with the idea of 'professionalism'?

And why should this matter? I'll explore these ideas, suggesting that to be a professional writer in the 21st century is a complex and in some ways contradictory issue.

Katie da Cunha Lewin is a writer and academic. Her writing has been featured widely, and her first book, The Writer's Room, was published in the UK and North America.

She was, until last year, a lecturer in English Literature at Coventry University.

Non-Extractive Employment: Emerging Writer Development as a Two-Way Process Dr Vicky Adams

Writers across all forms and genres rely increasingly heavily on income from events, commissions, teaching and facilitations. This can lead to a focus in their working lives on instrumental use of creative writing, or extractive employment where they are working

towards the development of other's creative practice, with no space to develop their own. Space Chariot is a pilot project taking creative writing by children and young people into space, funded by ACE and the AHRC. Here it is used as a case study on how small changes can make paid employment a two-way developmental process.

Dr Vicky Adams is a StoryArcs Senior Story Fellow, Teaching Fellow at the University of Edinburgh and writer-in-residence with Space Chariot. Her practice-led research focuses on what writers need to thrive in the turbulent landscapes of the 21st Century.

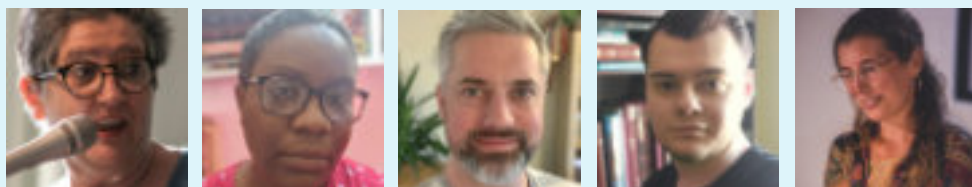
Writing Outside Clinical Frameworks: Narrative and Community in RECASAS **ingrid e johnson**

This reflects on the development of RECASAS, a Berlin-based nonprofit initiative exploring reading, writing, and storytelling as community practices outside clinical frameworks. RECASAS creates spaces for people struggling with something and not wanting to stay alone with it, using language, imagination, and shared reflection as forms of connection and creative self-expression. Drawing from facilitation experience, the presentation explores how writing can offer space to reflect on experiences, discover new perspectives, and participate in community through language and storytelling.

ingrid e johnson is a writer, poet, and storyteller and the founder of RECASAS, a Berlin-based nonprofit initiative exploring reading, writing, and storytelling as community practices outside clinical frameworks. Drawing from her own experiences with psychiatry, her work focuses on creating safer spaces for creative self-expression, shared reflection, and community.

TELLING THE STORIES OF LIFE AND PLACE **11:30-13:00 Room 2**

Mel Perry and Zoe Quick, **Chikodili Emelumadu**, Ben Mellor, **Pawel Kuziemski**, Dr Elena Traina



L-R: Mel Perry, Chikodili Emelumadu, Ben Mellor, Pawel Kuziemski, Elena Traina

Essaying Place - How Space Becomes Place for Students of Architecture **Mel Perry and Zoë Quick**

This discusses a 'site-writing' (Rendell 2010) workshop held annually for architecture Masters students at the Centre for Alternative Technology (CAT). Through a series of gathering and writing activities, students are invited to respond in a range of registers and forms – with, to, as, in, around and between, a place on site, an artefact from the CAT archive, and their own 'felt' experience of place.

This raises students' practical awareness of the relevance of affect, embodied experience, memory and cultural heritage to architectural writing and practice. We discuss how this may hold relevance for other disciplines and settings.

Mel Perry is a poet and therapeutic writing facilitator from Wales. She is also Chair of Lapidus International. Her approach aims to develop writers and use writing to develop people. Mel's third poetry collection, exploring the influence of her maternal grandmother, will be published by Broken Sleep Books in 2026.

Zoë Quick is an architect, artist and educator who works between radical folk, craft and writing practices to nurture social and environmental resilience with and in places. She currently teaches on the Masters in Sustainable Architecture at the Centre for Alternative Technology, alongside practice-led PhD research at UCL.

Land Ho: Free-Writing as a Technique for Mapping the Many Worlds of an African Diasporic Memoir
Chikodili Emelumadu

I intend to explore the concept of free-writing as a technique for navigating the multicultural worlds of a diasporic African memoir, including the juxtaposition that is middle-class poverty, married singlehood and the cultural heritage of compatibilism versus outright free will. I will show how this process alleviates the pressure of chronology and remembrance from having to exist in several countries and between eras and cultures, and results in thematically coherent work.

Chikodili Emelumadu is a PhD researcher of Creative Writing at Lancaster University.

She is the author of the novel Dazzling (2023), and has essays in Of This Our Country (2021), Writing the Uncanny (2021), Experimental Writing: A Writer's Guide and Anthology (2024) and the Royal Literary Fund's Writer's Mosaic series.

'Unnecessarily Beautiful Spaces for Young Minds on Fire': Physical Environment, Flow and the Creative Writing Workshop
Ben Mellor

How do the physical worlds in which we ask participants to write affect their ability to become absorbed in imaginative worlds of their own making? Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi's flow theory has shaped creative education thinking, but the sensory qualities of the spaces in which writing takes place are less often considered.

Drawing on Dave Eggers' 826 Valencia project and its UK counterparts, as well as research on place, creativity and adolescent brain development, this reports on informal experiments in the workshop environment during a Manchester school residency, asking: to what extent can the space itself facilitate flow?

Ben Mellor is a socially-engaged creative facilitator, writer, performer and project manager with over twenty years of experience in arts, education and community settings.

He holds a Postgraduate Certificate in Teaching Creative Writing from the University of Cambridge (Distinction, 2025) and is a Writer in Residence with First Story.

Game of Mirror
Paweł Kuziemski

During my PhD research, I began developing the idea of the 'Game of Mirror'. It is an approach to narration in which the author shows additional, often subtle information about the narrated world through 'the reflection of the unreliable narration'. I

would like to show the audience the mirror and how a narrated world looks through it. I believe that such a perspective on the narration might help in understanding the narration and its connection to the narrated reality, and in showing world-building from a new, unusual perspective.

Paweł Kuziemski is a PhD student in creative writing at the University of Lincoln. He specialises in narratology, especially in conflicted, unreliable perspectives.

His work has been published in a poetry journal, The Reg Ogre Review and Same Strange World: An Anthology of Contemporary Voices.

Historias del Taller / Stories from the Workshop: Ibero-American Narratives on Teaching Creative Writing
Dr Elena Traina

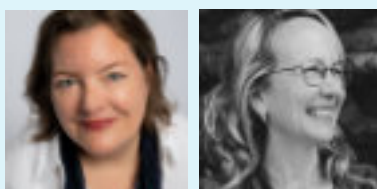
Drawing on interviews with 64 tutors of CW across 14 universities in Spain, Portugal, Puerto Rico, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Brazil and Argentina, this paper examines how tutors narrate their practice, interpreted through the lens of a threshold methodology which applies narrative aspects – POV, intertextuality and place – to the pedagogy of CW. Findings reveal how creative writing pedagogy in Ibero-American countries is shaped by unique relationships to CW as a culture, local cultures and settings; and how the threshold methodology offers a way to reflect on one's own pedagogy using the very words of its creative practice.

Dr Elena Traina is an independent researcher in Creative Writing Studies (CWS). She received her PhD at Falmouth University and is now collaborating with Escuela de Escritores (Spain) and Universidad del Sagrado Corazón (Puerto Rico) teaching CW, training tutors of CW and mentoring PhD students in Creative Writing and CWS.

WORKSHOP: THE PRACTICE OF ATTENTION
AN INTERACTIVE WORKSHOP BETWEEN PROFESSOR JULIA BELL AND DR LILY DUNN

11:30-13:00 Room 3

Julia Bell & Dr Lily Dunn



Professor Julia Bell and Dr Lily Dunn

In the age of advancing technology and AI threatening the future of writing, the process of creative writing and the workshop have never felt so important.

Both Bell and Dunn have recently published books celebrating this process and will explore attention as the foundational creative skill: how to slow down, observe more precisely and move from habitual to surprising. In this workshop they will celebrate the democratic process of the workshop and of people sharing stories, for empathy and understanding, and connecting with all that makes us human.

Dr Lily Dunn is an author and mentor. Her critically acclaimed, Sins of My Father: A Daughter, A Cult, A Wild Unravelling was published (W&N) in 2022. Into Being: The radical craft of memoir and its power to transform was published by MUP, 2025. She teaches at Bath Spa University.

Julia Bell is Professor of New Writing at Birkbeck, University of London, where she has taught for nearly twenty five years. Her books include the novel Massive, the verse memoir Hymnal (Parthian, 2024), Radical Attention (Peninsula, 2020; reissued 2026 with an introduction by Grace Blakeley), and Between the Lines (Simon & Schuster, 2026).

NAWE LUNCHTIME BARS
13:00-13:30 Rooms 1, 2 and 3

Every great conference has a bar and NAWA has three, with a variety of themes and activities to choose from. The bars will be open over lunchtime on both days for networking, hanging out and some writing time. Take your pick and see you there.

Room 1: NAWE Bar for those with an interest in education, HE or FE, hosted by members of NAWE's Higher Education Sub-committee.

Room 2: NAWE Bar for a lunchtime workshop. **Ruth Moore: The Great Big Map of NAWE 2026.**

We all know that NAWE members are an extraordinary bunch of writers, teachers and facilitators - but we don't know the half of what's happening on the ground where you are. Join us for this fun and interactive workshop to create our inaugural digital map of the wonderful range of projects and people represented by NAWE. From access courses at universities to poetry salons in prisons, from mentoring opportunities in inner cities to retreats in the wilds, we want to know and celebrate everything you are doing. Who knows, maybe you'll spot a new connection just around the corner...

Dr Ruth Moore writes and teaches fiction and poetry. A trustee of NAWE since 2024, her creative facilitation practice draws on principles of care and inclusion. Recent collaborations include Exeter University, The Story Museum, and Oxford Poetry Library. She delivers research support for the English Faculty at the University of Oxford.

Room 3: NAWE Bar for a lunchtime writing workshop. **Liz Cashdan: The Thought Forest**

This workshop will use the idea and existence of microforests in the UK and elsewhere to further aspects of creative writing while at the same time using creative writing to understand the microforest movement first introduced by Akira Miyawaki in Japan in the 1970s and spreading in the UK through the work of Earthwatch. We will not be planting trees in this workshop but we will be writing Thought Forest poems or prose pieces.

Liz Cashdan is a published poet and teaches Creative Writing for the Open College of the Arts at BA level as well as running creative writing workshops for Bristol Folk House. She also runs an international Stanza group for the Poetry Society.

BIG CONVERSATION: AI, THE HUMAN ELEMENT 13:30-14:30 Room 1

An invited panel including Dr Jonathan Taylor, Leicester University, Dr Francis Gilbert of Goldsmith's, Andrea Holland, Associate Professor UEA, and Society of Authors Chief Executive Anna Ganley will set out the challenges and affordances of teaching and facilitating creative writing in the age of AI. What does NAWE think? Join us for this important discussion.

HAUNTED WORLDS 14:30-16:00 Room 1

Open University Panel: **Emily Bullock & Jennie Owen & Samuel Sargeant**



Jennie Owen

Emily Bullock, Jennie Owen, and Samuel Sargeant from The Open University will explore the world of the supernatural through the lens of creative writing. Participants will be invited to consider the rise and popularity of the haunted house as inspiration, the 'truth' of ghost stories, and representations of the haunted mind. The session will explore the supernatural as a trope in writing practise including the narrative poem, the short story

and historiographical representations of the supernatural. It will include creative readings. The panel will discuss how collaboration informs practice and innovates approaches of practitioners.

Jennie E. Owen is a Senior Lecturer in Creative Writing for The Open University. Her poetry is widely published online, in anthologies, and journals. Collections include The Horses Still Run, available from The Flight of the Dragonfly Press (2025), and Tips for Collectors of the Macabre published by Yaffle (2026).

Emily Bullock is a Senior Lecturer in Creative Writing and Media Fellow at The Open University. Almost a Ghost Story is her latest novel, and her others are The Longest Fight and Inside the Beautiful Inside. Her short story collection, Human Terrain, was longlisted for the Edge Hill Prize 2022.

Samuel Sargeant is a Senior Lecturer in Creative Writing at the Open University, specialising in the translation and adaptation of medieval Icelandic sagas. His latest novel is Faith of their Fathers.

SAFETY IN NUMBERS

14:30-16:00 Room 2

Jane Moss, **Sarah Butler**, Gill Connors, **Alexia Casale**, Dr Elena Traina and Adrian Markle



L-R: Jane Moss, Sarah Butler, Gill Connors, Elena Traina, Adrian Markle

How to Make a Community Novel **Dr Jane Moss**

How can a novel be a vehicle for community participation? When Jane Moss embarked on research at Falmouth University she had no idea whether a finished novel would be possible, but – spoiler alert – *Trevow*, the first community novel of its kind, was completed by volunteers in 2022 and self-published in 2025. The model of practice is now available as a guide for facilitators. This presentation takes you through five types of participation, with examples that illustrate how a novel can be made (not just written) by a writing group and participants from the wider community around them.

Dr Jane Moss lives in Cornwall where she hosts The Writing Retreat and runs community writing groups and writing-related projects. Jane is Co-chair of NAWF with Dr Jocelyn Page.

Not Home **Sarah Butler**

From 2016-2018 I designed and delivered a project called “Not Home”, with the charity Justlife, who work with people living in unsupported temporary accommodation. Justlife wanted me to create a piece of long-form fiction, inspired by the lives of the people they worked with, in order to raise awareness and empathy for a group of people often denigrated in society. I was concerned to ethically represent the people I engaged with. I will talk about my process and experience with “Not Home”, and also consider the value of projects such as these, for participants, writers and wider society.

Sarah Butler is the author of three novels, Ten Things I’ve Learnt About Love, Before The Fire, and Jack and Bet, all published by Picador. Her work examines ideas of home, belonging, identity,

family, and urban landscapes and she also explores the relationship between writing and place through participatory projects.

Safety in Numbers - a Conversation in Poetry **Gill Connors**

In 2025 Gill Connors facilitated an anthology in which women poets responded to each other in poetry, taking themes, words and experiences and shining a light on their own. This will examine the process and show how poetry can become a conversation when we are able to tell our own stories.

Gill will use the poets' own reflections of their experience of the project to show the process and she will talk about the legacy the anthology will leave.

Gill Connors is a poet and creative writing facilitator from Yorkshire.

Her poetry has been published widely and she is working on her third collection Made of Paper which is the product of her PhD on the links and parallels between 16th and 21st century women.

Literature Across Borders **Dr Alexia Casale**

Literature across Borders helps books for children and young people – and conversations about them – travel across borders. Alexia will explore how the project combines research, curriculum innovation, public engagement, policy engagement, and knowledge exchange across LaB's range of activities.

These include international university-to-university dialogues, international school-to-school dialogues, author-to-author dialogues, industry panels, and more. Impacts include enhanced empathy, expanded cross-cultural communication skills and understanding, and an increase in diverse reading for pleasure. Publications and recordings of events can be found [on our website](#).

Dr Alexia Casale is an author, script consultant, and academic at Bath Spa University. She is passionate about pedagogic innovation involving how literature can enhance empathy and support for human rights. Her fiction includes middle grade for Bloomsbury, young adult for Faber, and adult crime with Viking/Penguin Random House.

Writing Europe: Art, Craft and Translation in European Contemporary Short Stories **Dr Elena Traina and Adrian Markle**

Writing Europe (Bloomsbury, forthcoming) is a unique volume exploring the world of the contemporary European short story. Featuring 16 short stories, alongside translators' notes and critical chapters, this book unites 45 authors, translators and tutors in conversation about fiction and place.

Ahead of its publication, editors Elena Traina and Adrian Markle reflect on the making of the volume: acquiring funding and permissions, recruiting contributors across Europe, editing the manuscript, and designing a programme of workshops and events to follow publication. For those interested in learning about the production process of a new and exciting creative writing resource.

Dr Elena Traina is an independent researcher in Creative Writing Studies (CWS). She received her PhD at Falmouth University and is now collaborating with Escuela de Escritores (Spain) and Universidad del Sagrado Corazón (Puerto Rico) teaching CW, training tutors of CW and mentoring PhD students in Creative Writing and CWS.

Dr Adrian Markle is the author of the novel BRUISE and an editor of The Creative Writing Workshop in the 21st Century (Bloomsbury, 2026). Originally from Canada, he has a PhD from the University of Exeter and is course leader of English and Creative Writing at Falmouth University.

WORKSHOP: EXPLORING EUROPEANA'S CULTURAL HERITAGE COLLECTIONS

14:30-16:00 Room 3

Beth Daley



Beth Daley

The first Europeana Creative Action Award encouraged participants to create new writing inspired by a gallery of images from Europeana.eu's cultural heritage collections.

The resulting online exhibition showcases nine pieces of work that offer ideas, hopes for our futures, and potential directions for us all to think further about. In this workshop, we'll explore some of the works and our reactions to them and then create our own.

Participants will dive into cultural heritage collections related to the natural world and create their own short piece or work in progress.

Beth Daley is a novelist, cultural and creative writer and Europeana's Editorial Adviser. She has a PhD in Creative Writing, runs writing workshops and her novel Blood and Water is published by Hic Dragones, Manchester.

Beth leads initiatives in storytelling with Europeana, and is a writing mentor in Europeana's Online Creative Residency.

GENRE-WRITING

16:00-17:30 Room 2

Jonathan Macho, **Heather Clitheroe**, Casey Brown, **Fiona Smith**



Jonathan Macho, Casey Brown, Fiona Smith

'There is Another World, Which is this World' – Remediating Comics into your Writing Practice

Dr Jonathan Macho

This explores how I brought the worlds of comics and prose together on the page for my PhD. As a lifelong comics fan, their stories have always been an influence on my work. I leaned into that influence through stylistic remediation, blurring the distinction between the two mediums to produce a novel which behaves like a comic book. Using my experience as a starting point, I will suggest how writers can start to remediate in their own work, from comics or elsewhere, and how to bring the practice into the classroom as a writing exercise.

Dr Jonathan Macho (he/him) recently completed his Creative Writing PhD at Cardiff University. He has a substantial number of creative publications to his name and has written and presented on remediation, comics and Doctor Who, including a forthcoming chapter on comics and annuals for the Routledge Handbook of Doctor Who.

The Cooperative Alien Space Agency: Plate Tectonics through Science Fiction

Heather Clitheroe

Erth 210 is a first-year course on geological methods at the University of Calgary. The course was developed around a science fictional framework, with students participating in an imagined mission to survey an earthlike planet.

I'll describe how we developed optional creative writing exercises to extend this SF framework.

Our 'transmissions' gave students an opportunity to explore their growing understanding of science as a profession.

We discovered that the exercise was transformative in how it shaped our experience as educators, and how we developed a cross-disciplinary collaboration to bridge English literature, education and geoscience through science fiction.

Heather Clitheroe is a PhD student in English literature at the University of Calgary.

She is also a published science fiction and fantasy writer, and teaches creative writing with the University of Calgary's Continuing Education programs and the Calgary Public Library.

Episodes from the Early Life of a Gothic Novel

Casey Brown

My research as a creative writing PhD student focuses on how Body Dysmorphic Disorder, and body image more generally, can and has been explored through Gothic fiction.

I will discuss my process in developing the novel, as well as how my research into both concepts has shaped the experiential world of my protagonist through perspective, form, and the Gothic genre.

My name is Casey Brown. I am a PhD student in Creative Writing at the University of Winchester, and my research focuses on how body image disturbance has and can be explored in the Gothic and science fiction genres.

Neo-Golden Age Detective Fiction: Writing Through a Neo-Historic Lens

Fiona Smith

In 2024 the CWA added a new Dagger to its awards: The Whodunnit Dagger. It was in response to the growing popularity of 'cosy crime, traditional crime, and Golden Age-inspired mysteries.' This paper explores whether mysteries set in the interwar years, overtly reproducing traditional Golden Age detection style and tropes, exhibit characteristics of neo-historical writing or are mere pastiche.

Harris (2017) argues that a neo-historic aesthetic can be identified by markers of anachronistic presentism, 'looking at the known past and then creating new, conspicuously present-influenced stories.'

I will suggest how neo-historic markers may be incorporated into contemporary Golden Age-inspired mysteries.

Fiona Smith is a first-year CW PhD student at the University of Strathclyde. She is researching, through creative practice, women's representation and neo-historicity in neo-Golden Age detective fiction. She holds a PG Cert in Teaching Creative Writing from Cambridge (2025).

Commercially, she writes Golden Age-inspired mysteries as Fiona Veitch Smith.

WORKSHOP: GRANT WRITING AS A CREATIVE AND DEVELOPMENTAL PROCESS

16:00-17:30 Room 3

Dr Francis Gilbert



Dr Francis Gilbert

This practical workshop explores grant writing as a creative and developmental process rather than an administrative task. Francis will draw upon his experience co-leading, with Professor Tom Dobson, the AHRC-funded Creative Writing Together project, which received approximately £1 million, one of the largest AHRC awards connected to creative writing pedagogy and participation. The session will demystify the grant-writing process, sharing practical strategies for developing ideas, building partnerships, framing impact, and sustaining motivation.

It will also explore how unsuccessful applications can still deepen research, strengthen collaborations, refine creative thinking, and generate future opportunities. Attendees will leave with practical techniques.

Francis Gilbert is Head of Education at Goldsmiths, University of London, author of The Mindful Creative Writing Teacher and co-lead of the AHRC-funded Creative Writing Together project.

He writes and researches widely on creative writing pedagogy, mindfulness, teacher development, creativity, and educational innovation.

MEMBER MEET UP AND DAY ONE CLOSE

17:30-18:00 Room 1

SATURDAY 14 NOVEMBER 2026

OPENING SPEAKER: BURHAN SÖNMEZ

09:00-10:00 Room 1



Burhan Sönmez
(photo by Roberto Gandola)

NAWE is delighted to welcome Burhan Sönmez, President of PEN International as our opening speaker for day 2 of Writing Worlds. Burhan will be in conversation with NAWA Trustee Dr Yvonne Battle-Felton. He will reflect on his own journey to becoming a writer: from arriving in the UK as a refugee; his transition from a career in law to literature; acquiring a new language, home and occupation, and his experiences with PEN International and the importance of freedom of expression.

Our conference's Big Conversation themes will be touched upon, with Burhan offering timely insights into today's topic, 'Why Writing Matters', and the impact of AI on our sector.

[Burhan Sönmez](#) is the author of seven novels. A recipient of the Hemingway Prize, the Vaclav Havel Award and EBRD Literature Prize, his novels have been published in fifty three languages. He is president of PEN International and a Senior Member of Hughes Hall College and Trinity College, University of Cambridge. He was born in Turkey to a Kurdish family. He worked as a lawyer in Istanbul before coming to Britain for political reasons and living here in exile for several years.

He has been on the judging panel of various events, including the Inge Feltrinelli Prize and Geneva International Film Festival, and has written for press such as La Repubblica, Der Spiegel and The Guardian. He has translated the The Marriage of Heaven and Hell by William Blake into Turkish. Having written five novels in Turkish, he began to write in his mother tongue, Kurdish, with his sixth novel, Lovers of Franz K.

"Sönmez playfully expands Kafka's world in a literary experiment that encourages readers to reimagine the unfinished work of their heroes."

- Natalie Perman, **Financial Times**

"There's a Kafkaesque quality to the interrogation – but Kurdish author Sönmez is really interested in the question of who owns literature. Was Brod right to publish? Would Kafka be unknown if he hadn't? The dialogue-led approach makes the book punchy..."

- John Self, **The Guardian**

"With echoes of Borges and Dostoevsky, Lovers of Franz K is more than a literary psychological thriller - it is a creative resurrection; a metafictional kaleidoscope where Poe meets Kafka. Literary rebel Sönmez does not just pay homage to Kafka - he enacts it."

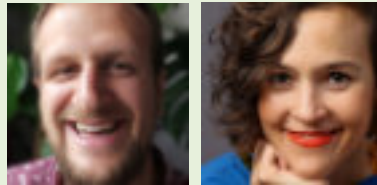
- **BookBlast**

SATURDAY PRESENTATIONS AND WORKSHOPS

TRANSLATION AND MULTILINGUALISM

10:00-11:30 Room 1

Michaël Vidon and Sara Shahwan, **Lorena Bredis and Lucian Georgescu**



L-R: Michaël Vidon, Lorena Bredis

Multilingual Poetry and filmmaking as pedagogy with students in a secondary school in the UK

Michaël Vidon and Sara Shahwan

I will present a chapter which features in a book to be published by Bloomsbury in 2027 (Digital Literacies and Inclusive Practices: Multilingual Storytelling, Filmmaking, and Global Connections). This is a practice chapter in which I discuss the workshops I led with students aged 12 to 15 who wrote multilingual poems, made short films to illustrate them and reflected on the process. They included the languages they are learning at school (French and Spanish) as well as their home languages (Chinese, Moroccan Arabic dialects, German, Italian, etc). I will be conversing with Sara Shahwan who wrote the theory-based sister chapter.

Michaël Vidon is a French spoken word educator and a MFL teacher. He holds an MA in Education and creative writing from Goldsmiths and works with the Institut Français du Royaume-Uni, the European Union and many schools to encourage students to play, collaborate and express themselves in multiple languages.

Sara Shahwan is currently an Associate Lecturer in Children's Literature and Graduate School Fellow at Goldsmiths, University of London. She has a PhD in Educational Studies from Goldsmiths, University of London and an MA in English and Comparative Literature from the Faculty of Women for Arts, Ain Shams University (Egypt).

The EACWP VIII International Pedagogical Conference: On Adaptation **Lorena Bredis and Lucian Georgescu**

As the most representative association of creative writing in continental Europe, the EACWP has consolidated its engagement within the pedagogical debate.

From May 6-8 (2027), the EACWP will organise along with Cinepub its VIII International Pedagogical Conference in Bucarest (Romania) on Adaptation, underlining its most artistic domains dealing with both translation and re-imagination. This presentation intends to outline the main aims and contents of the conference as well as the challenges of the topic itself. Thanks to our agreement of mutual membership with NAWÉ, our ultimate will is to reinforce our collaborative initiatives between continental Europe and the UK.

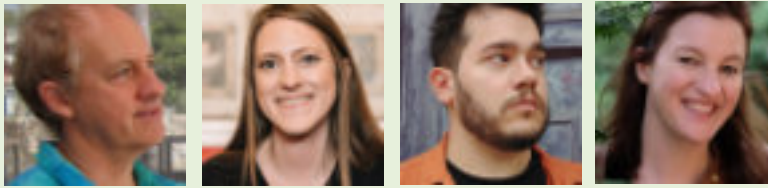
Lorena Bredis is EACWP manager. Writer and Creative Writing teacher at Escuela de Escritores (Madrid, Spain).

Lucian Georgescu is Professor of Film and Media, Coordinator | CARA | Carabăţ Academic Research Centre in Screenwriting and Creative Writing | UNATC Head of Editorial | President | cinepub.ro

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

10:00-11:30 Room 2

Paul Williams, Laura Stroud, Christos Callow Jr, Rachel Hamilton



L-R: Paul Williams, Laura Stroud, Christos Callow Jr, Rachel Hamilton

Writing human and writing AI: comparing generative AI and human creative writing worlds

Paul Williams

This aims to compare the underlying process by which humans and LLMs undertake complex creative writing tasks, in order to further understand how human creative processes and AI generative production operate. The results show that there are fundamental differences in AI and human creative writing processes, and that anthropomorphic linguistic agency is falsely attributed to LLMs. Human creative processes are varied and eclectic, sometimes illogical and non-linear, but humans could use some of the techniques used by LLMs as labour saving shortcuts to what is sometimes a laborious and time-consuming procedure.

Paul Williams is Associate Professor in Creative Writing and Publishing at the University of the Sunshine Coast, Australia. Recent publications include Novel Ideas: Writing Innovative Fiction (2020), Don't Tell (2021), Writing the Radical Memoir (2023), Write Now! (2025) and Writing Human in the Age of AI (forthcoming).

Beyond the Professional Mask: Using Creative Writing in the World of Work to Build Stronger Teams

Laura Stroud

With the growth in remote and agile working, the lingering effects of the pandemic, and the rise in AI technologies, the way we work is changing. Developing and maintaining strong teams has never been more essential.

This ongoing doctoral research asks whether creative writing pedagogy can be translated into the workplace and used as a tool for team building. Drawing on a pilot study across three businesses, early findings point to a central mechanism – the ‘humanising encounter’ – colleagues seeing one another as a whole person, beyond their professional mask. This presentation outlines the research and initial findings.

Laura Stroud is a doctoral researcher at the University of Derby. As the founder of the Derbyshire Writing School, Laura is passionate about opening up the world of creative writing for beginners. Laura is a Fellow of the Higher Education Academy and an Associate Lecturer at the University of Derby.

How Not To Not Human: Navigating notions of Writer Identity and Alienation when writing about Artificial Intelligence in Fiction and Performance

Christos Callow Jr

University students and writers are increasingly expected to incorporate AI in their studies and practice, while being told they risk falling behind. How can writing about AI in this context, for example via science fiction playwriting, explore issues of human identity while remaining empowering? This paper will centre Writer Identity development over product, based on experiences with an MA Creative Writing module “Being a Writer” and of

constructing AI characters in theatremaking, with the aim to explore identity & alienation in a creative writing context.

Christos Callow Jr is a Greek playwright, Senior Lecturer in Creative Writing at University of Derby and director of Talos Science Fiction Theatre Festival.

He's published short stories in khōréō, Radon Journal and elsewhere. Produced sci-fi plays include: Odysseus, Not Your Hero (Lambeth Fringe) and Posthuman Meditation (Being Human Festival).

Research and Innovation: Can a Machine Write with Empathy? AI-Generated Fiction and the Teaching of Emotional Effect **Rachel Hamilton**

While empathy is central to creative writing, teaching students how to evoke it remains surprisingly difficult. Students easily sense when a scene falls flat emotionally, but struggle to explain why or how to fix it. This presentation introduces a workshop model developed through my PhD research that uses generative-AI as a controlled disruption.

By comparing their own writing with AI responses to identical prompts, students confront hidden assumptions about authorship and authenticity.

This helps them develop a more explicit craft vocabulary for discussing and revising emotional effect. This contributes to the conference's Big Conversation on AI: the Human Element.

Rachel Hamilton is an award-winning children's author and a lecturer in Creative Writing at Bath Spa University. She is a PhD researcher at the University of Bristol, exploring human–AI creative collaboration and recently contributed chapters to Routledge's AI and Literature Handbook and Anthem's AI in Contemporary Youth Literature and Film.

WORKSHOP: WRITING OTHER WORLDS **A WORKSHOP ON DEVELOPING HISTORICAL FICTION** 10:00-11:30 Room 3 Rosanna McGlone



Rosanna McGlone

Where do we begin when writing historical fiction? How important is the truth and where do we uncover it? We will briefly discuss research methods and then explore how to find the story from the plethora of material that we have unearthed.

Based on a commission by Lincolnshire County Council, Lincoln University and Arts Council England to write *Feisty Females*, a book of short stories inspired by a medieval land registry, this workshop is applicable to any historical period.

Rosanna is a journalist and author who has written more than 100 articles for national newspapers including The Guardian and The Australian.

Her book, The Process of Poetry, is on university reading lists. She has also written plays and short stories. Feisty Females was Rosanna's first foray into historical fiction.

CHALLENGING TOPICS AND TECHNIQUES

11:30-13:00 Room 1

Janet Ferguson and Lucy Cuthew and Beth Parker and Rachel Knightley



L-R: Janet Ferguson, Lucy Cuthew, Beth Parker. Rachel Knightley

Tasting the Past: Food, Memory, and Autobiographical Writing

Janet Ferguson

A Foodoir-based approach to autobiographical writing that uses sensory memory and food as an entry point into storywork. Developed through webinar and course delivery with the Birren Center for Autobiographical Studies, the approach extends autobiographical writing practices associated with narrative gerontology through reflective, creative, and expressive methods. Using examples from *Tasting the Past*, this presentation explores how sensory memory can open pathways into reflective writing, crafted narrative, and new ways of working with lived experience.

Attendees will encounter practical approaches using sensory prompts, reflective dialogue, oral narration, digital storytelling, and accessible self-publishing methods within autobiographical and community writing contexts.

Janet Ferguson is a Bermuda-based educator, writer, and facilitator working at the intersection of storywork, adult learning, and creative non-fiction. She has facilitated international digital storytelling initiatives with StoryCenter, including Walking the Long Road Home and Signpost Stories, and serves on the Instructional and Curriculum Committee of the Birren Center for Autobiographical Studies.

Writing Intimacy: Writing about Pornography and Other Sensitive Topics

Lucy Cuthew

The session is aimed at writers, teachers, and practitioners interested in addressing difficult or challenging topics in their writing or teaching. In this workshop, we will think about how creative writing can respond to the ways pornography and digital culture shape expectations of relationships and intimacy.

This workshop combines my research, a YA novel which addresses the impact of porn on a young relationship, with practical creative exercises.

Through guided prompts and discussion, we will consider how writers and facilitators can approach sensitive content ethically and imaginatively for their audience, creating complexity, nuance and empathy rather than moral panic.

Lucy Cuthew is a YA author and Senior Lecturer. Her latest work is a YA verse novel about the impact of porn on a young relationship, titled FILTHY (Fox & Ink, October 2026). She is Programme Leader on the MA in Writing for Young People at Bath Spa University.

Writing Worlds: Presenting a Creative Writing PhD Project Focusing on Self-love as a Narrative Discourse in Addiction Memoirs

Beth Parker

What would the transformation process look like if the driving force behind the recovery narrative of addiction memoirs was self-love? While recovery narratives allude to the

dislocation and isolation that lead to and perpetuate addiction, the act of self-love, or lack of, is seldom claimed as the overarching theme (Alexander, 2017; Peele, ed. 2015; hooks, 2001). This presentation will be a 10-minute illustration of the practice-led research methods used in writing an addiction memoir, with self-love as its central focus.

The presentation will provide insights into the world of addiction memoirs, their common tropes, and their impact on self-love discourse.

Beth Parker was part of the On Silence podcast, with the University of Lincoln where she is writing a reflexive-ethnographic memoir as part of her PhD. Beth has poetry published in Recovering the Self: A Journal of Hope and Healing, and is a contributor in this year's From the Cauldron anthology.

Fear Fiction: Supporting and Empowering Writers Unpacking Difficult Stories **Dr Rachel Knightley**

Witnessing stories emerge is the great privilege of life as a creative writing facilitator. But when difficult material rises to the surface in a session or feedback piece, how do we safeguard the writer, the group and ourselves, while still making space for emergence?

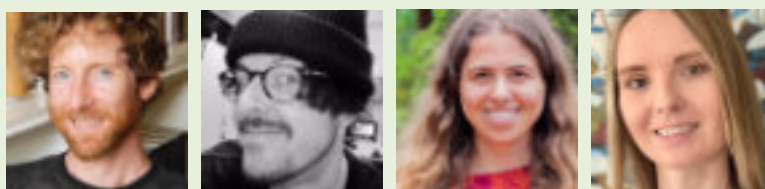
Professionally Certified Coach and creative writing lecturer Dr Rachel Knightley shares her own stories of the possibilities and pitfalls of feedback, discussion and 1:1 writing coaching, and the tools she developed from living through them.

Dr Rachel Knightley is a fiction and non-fiction author and Professionally Certified Coach.

As founder and presenter of The Writers' Gym Podcast and membership platform, she works with award-winning, bestselling authors and the newly writing-curious to build creative confidence and healthy writing lives.

WRITING TECHNIQUES: LOOKING OUTSIDE OF LITERATURE **11:30-13:00 Room 2**

Peter McAllister, Niall James Holohan, Fernanda Binati, Olga Kenton



L-R: Peter McAllister, Niall James Holohan, Fernanda Binati, Olga Kenton

Writing With Negative Space - Learnings From Outside Literature **Peter McAllister**

Across the arts, the strength in employing negative space lies in leaving gaps just large enough for the reader to fill in, inviting them to co-create and thereby engage more. But how much negative space can (and should) writers employ to capitalise on this? And what are the various categories/definitions of negative space identifiable in literature today?

This paper examines how numerous techniques of negative space implementation can be adapted from disparate art forms that have traditionally understood its power: visual arts, architecture, music etc. to the benefit of creative writers.

As well as being commissioned to write for BBC Radio 4, Peter McAllister has been shortlisted and highly commended in several International Literary Prizes for his short-form fiction and poetry. His work has been published online, in print journals and numerous anthologies.

Transcendental Style in Theatre (The Anti-Retinal Stage)

Niall James Holohan

How can dramatic writing reclaim human presence in a hyper-distracted digital world? This presentation explores transcendental style in theatre, linking Marcel Duchamp's concept of anti-retinal art to contemporary playwriting.

By examining intentional structural silence in Samuel Beckett's *Come and Go*, Harold Pinter's *A Kind of Alaska*, Annie Baker's *Circle Mirror Transformation*, and the conceptual work of Tim Crouch, this session investigates how playwrights bypass visual spectacle to cultivate interior stillness.

The research demonstrates how deliberately crafted dramatic silence acts as a mindful antidote to the attention economy, offering creative writing educators innovative frameworks for playwriting pedagogy.

Niall James Holohan is a PhD candidate at University College Dublin. His research investigates transcendental style in theatre, exploring how intentional dramatic silence and "anti-retinal" conceptual frameworks offer mindful, creative resistance to the attention economy through the works of Beckett, Pinter, Baker, and Crouch.

The Art of Writing

Fernanda Binati

This involves delving into the art of writing by tapping into the life of the writer. It will offer deep and resonant examples about the process of welcoming new ideas in contrast to resorting to artificial intelligence.

It will illustrate that with visual examples in order to envisage and map the art of creative writing through various works from brainstorming to the study of acoustic ecology by Hempton's research on inner and outer silences.

The workshop will also help other writers and aspirants to distinguish between creative writing and artificial intelligence through poems, sketches and paintings.

Fernanda Binati is a contributor to the Worlds into Words creative writers' group.

Her poems and articles have been published by Humanising English Language Teaching (HLT), Culture Matters, the International House of English Journal, and the International Association of Teachers of English as a Foreign Language (IATEFL).

Turning Raw Interview Data into Compelling Narratives

Dr Olga Kenton

In this practical workshop, participants will learn how to move from messy interview notes to compelling narratives. Drawing on narrative-building methodologies from creative nonfiction, life writing, and ethnography, we will explore persuasive ways of assembling and reconstructing life stories.

The workshop will highlight the importance of multilingualism and multiculturalism in interpreting and representing interview data, using examples from interviewing immigrants. Through practical activities using authentic data or past experiences, we will address simultaneous translation, preserving the interviewee's register, and the role of AI in managing raw data, including when AI assistance is most appropriate.

Dr Olga Kenton is a writer, practice-based researcher, and educator, teaching across Creative Writing, Digital Media, and Modern Languages at the University of Birmingham. Her main research interests are creative nonfiction, interviewing, and translingual creative writing. Olga's latest publication is 'The England We Know: Russian Voices Abroad' (Academica Press, 2025).

WORKSHOP: TELLING THE UNTOLD LANGUAGE AWARENESS AND WRITING DIVERSE INNER WORLDS FOR CREATIVE WRITERS

11:30-13:00 Room 3

Susan Mandala



Susan Mandala

As writers, we often want to tell the untold stories, the stories of those who struggle to belong. In this workshop, I demonstrate how greater language awareness can bring the inner worlds of these characters to life.

Drawing on participants' own intuitions about language, the workshop starts with discovery-based exercises in noticing linguistic features and patterns and then moves into a series of guided writing experiments in both the use and avoidance of these features to create diverse mindstyles.

No prior knowledge of linguistics is required. The focus throughout is on noticing and experimenting, with plenty of time for discussion.

Susan Mandala holds a PhD from the University of Cambridge. Formerly an academic at the University of Sunderland, she is a highly published author in literary stylistics, the study of language in fiction. Now a freelancer and founder of Writing Works Consulting, she delivers workshops for writers and educators.

NAWE LUNCHTIME BARS

13:00-13:30 Rooms 1, 2 and 3

Every great conference has a bar and NAWE has three, with a variety of themes and activities to choose from. The bars will be open over lunchtime on both days for networking, hanging out and some writing time. Take your pick and see you there.

Room 1: NAWE Bar for those with an interest in education, HE or FE, hosted by members of NAWE's Higher Education Sub-committee.

Room 2: NAWE Bar for those with an interest in communities, whether self-employed as writing facilitators, or involved in running writing projects and groups.

Come in and find others like you, hosted by a NAWE Trustee.

Room 3: NAWE Bar for a lunchtime writing workshop. **Anne Taylor: Movement and Metaphor: Somatic awareness and writing for resilience and self-care**

This workshop will allow participants to explore how a combination of movement, somatic awareness and expressive writing can cultivate and enhance self-knowledge and resilience.

According to Bessel van der Kolk, author of *The Body Keeps the Score* (2014), agency starts with interoception, our awareness of our subtle, sensory, body-based feelings. 'The greater the awareness,' he says, 'the greater our potential to control our lives...'.

Gentle movement sequences based on the Feldenkrais Method of somatic education followed by expressive writing and some clean language questions will encourage the discovery of fresh personal metaphors and perspectives.

THE BIG CONVERSATION: WHY WRITING MATTERS

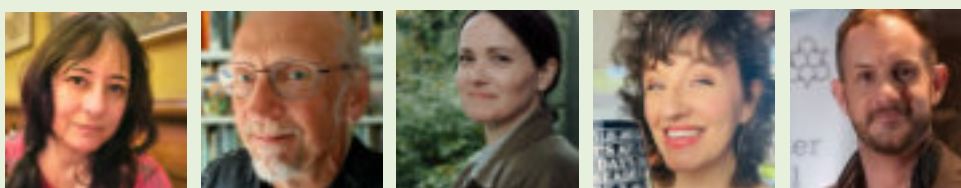
13:30-14:30 Room 1

We know writing matters, but why? In the context of the National Curriculum Review, cuts to the arts and humanities in Higher Education, and yet increasing recognition of the value of creativity to health and wellbeing, what arguments can NAWE make to policy makers and funders? Join host Dr Karina Lickorish Quinn plus Mel Perry (Chair, Lapidus International), Anthony Cockerill (Director, NATE), and Bethan Goddard (Head of Programmes, First Story), and take part in the discussion.

ALTERNATIVE APPROACHES IN HE

14:30-16:00 Room 2

Amina Alyal and Oz Hardwick, **Louisa Flynn**, Kirsty Bunting, **James Draper**



L-R: Amina Alyal, Oz Hardwick, Louisa Flynn, Kirsty Bunting, James Draper

Everyone's a Seed: Community Project and Interdisciplinarity

Amina Alyal and Oz Hardwick

'Everyone's a Seed' was a two-year project, ending May 2026, a DEFRA-funded collaborative project with plant scientist Dr Charles Lane of Fera Science Ltd and Dr Celia Knight, MBE. The hypothesis was whether creative writing can increase engagement with plant health amongst diverse groups of the public. We ran community writing workshops, and published an anthology including the resulting group poems, and individual poems from further workshops and a call for submissions.

Amina Alyal and Oz Hardwick teach English and Creative Writing at LTU, and often collaborate. Amina publishes poetry and academic research, working with community projects, ekphrasis, and Renaissance and Victorian literature. Oz, an international award-winning prose poet and academic, has been published and performed internationally in and on diverse media.

Unsettled: Heathland, Hybridity and Heritage

Louisa Flynn

This presentation outlines my MA final project, which explores the lowland heaths of East Dorset as sites for ancestral and ecological investigation. My creative-critical, practice-led research aims to create a hybrid form of new nature writing that examines matrilineal heritage through the lens of overlooked heathland. I will discuss my method of reflective journaling, positioning the heath not just as a backdrop but as a metaphor for navigating the Anthropocene.

This presentation highlights the challenges and insights gained while writing during personal and environmental transitions, emphasising how these experiences can enhance our understanding of nature.

Louisa Flynn is an emerging writer whose work often explores themes of emotional resilience, and she has been published across various literary platforms. Louisa is currently developing a work of new nature writing, blending creative non-fiction and poetic reflection, asking what it means to be human at this time.

Low Stakes Creative Play in the HE Writing Workshop: Role-playing Games and Romance Novel Narratives
Dr Kirsty Bunting

I facilitate play of my romance-narrative generating Table Top Role Playing Game [TTRPG] 'Always on My Mind' with English and creative writing undergraduates to teach about the genre's reader expectations and storytelling devices, and as a way of overcoming reservations about a genre which, although globally bestselling, can be subject to reductive value judgements in academic spaces. My presentation will share key takeaways from student questionnaires evaluating the game's success as a pedagogic and creative writing tool, outlining the benefits, drawbacks and things to consider when using RPGs for safe, inclusive active learning, as well as encouraging delegates to consider developing their own TTRPGs for teaching.

Dr Kirsty Bunting is a senior lecturer at Manchester Metropolitan University's 'Manchester Writing School' and a romance author (writing as 'Kiley Dunbar'). She co-designed a table top role-playing game 'Always on My Mind' in which players co-create a romance narrative. She embeds this game into her [genre fiction modules](#).

Where are you putting your guest speakers? Towards a practical guide on who to invite in – and when
James Draper

Guest speakers are everywhere in Creative Writing teaching. They play an important role in highlighting pathways into the industry and modelling what it means to be a writer in the world today. But the pedagogy behind how we use them is under-examined. Sharing findings from a Manchester Metropolitan University innovation scholarship project, this talk examines key points from sector benchmark statements, creative industry policy documents and experiences of devising and delivering professional practice modules and events. It suggests some models as the starting point for a conversation to help guide who we invite in – and, perhaps more importantly, when.

James Draper is the MFA/MA Creative Writing Programme Leader at Manchester Metropolitan University, where is also Deputy International Lead for the School of English and GoGlobal Lead for Arts and Humanities. He is a Senior Fellow of the Higher Education Academy and on the Board of Directors at Comma Press.

A NEW FORMULA FOR WRITING?
14:30-16:00 Room 2

Sean Gregory, Ross Young and Francesca Bonafede



L-R: Sean Gregory, Ross Young, Francesca Bonafede

The Pedagogy of Poetics

Dr Sean Gregory

For three years, I have worked with final-year undergraduates at Leeds Arts University to develop their own statements of poetics. Poetics is not a term or approach widely used in undergraduate studies (I first heard the term at MA level), yet undergraduate students are, traditionally, required to produce reflective statements/essays of increasing insight throughout their studies, alongside critical essays analysing creative writing.

This presentation proposes poetics as creative-critical methodology. Drawing on poetic statements by writers such as Ben Lerner and Virginia Woolf, I will explore how poetics enables students to connect critical analysis, creative action, self-reflection, and artistic development.

Dr Sean Gregory is Course Leader and Senior Lecturer in Creative Writing at Leeds Arts University. He is a short story writer and novelist. His research explores the relationship between critical enquiry and creative action. In 2025, he developed LAU's MA Creative Writing programme, centred on practice-based and interdisciplinary approaches.

What happens when children and young people's writing worlds meet the writing world of school?

Ross Young and Francesca Bonafede

This presentation explores the rich and varied writing lives children and young people lead beyond the classroom and asks what happens when these vibrant, self-directed writing worlds collide with the more structured demands of school writing. Dr Francesca Bonafede of the National Literacy Trust and Ross Young of the Literacy Lab at the University of Edinburgh draw on their current research to examine the tensions, opportunities and missed connections that emerge at this intersection. Together, they consider how students and teachers might better bridge these worlds and develop more motivated, authentic, and engaged young writers.

Ross Young, founder of The Writing For Pleasure Centre and University of Edinburgh PhD researcher, supports schools and researches effective writing practice.

Francesca Bonafede researches the affective, cognitive, behavioural and environmental dimensions of writing engagement, leading analysis and authorship of the National Literacy Trust's annual writing trends report.

WORKSHOP: WRITING THE RIVER AND THE BOG

14:30-16:00 Room 3

Anne Caldwell



Anne Caldwell

This explores how these places can inspire and enrich creative practice, based on two projects I have completed over the last three years in collaborating with other artists. Participants will be encouraged to work from photographs, memory, myths and other

writers' work as starting points. The workshop aims to create new writing in prose poetry or creative non-fiction. We will consider how this writing can strengthen our own connections with these fragile, watery habitats that are at risk from climate change and human development.

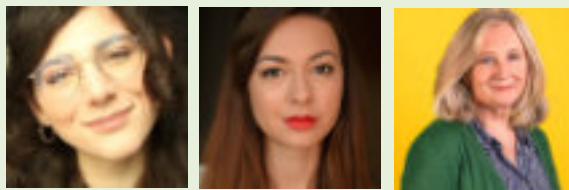
Dr Anne Caldwell is a lecturer with the Open University, a poet, editor and freelancer. She specialises in prose poetry and place writing.

Her latest publication, The Language of Now, (Valley Press, 2026) includes work inspired by peat bogs in Finland and Yorkshire.

SELF-CARE AND SPACE-MAKING

16:00-17:30 Room 1

Trudi Holland, **Grace Holliday**, Amanda Hodgkinson



L-R: Trudi Holland, Grace Holliday, Amanda Hodgkinson

Hydrosexuality as a Trauma-Informed Pedagogy for Romantic and Erotic Writing **Tru Holland**

How do we teach romantic and erotic writing to sexual assault survivors? Currently, we don't. Students in a wide variety of learning environments are encouraged to skip sessions with triggering material—trauma thus becomes a barrier to learning. I posit that survivors can and should learn to write romantic and erotic material, but lessons must be delivered in an accessible and trauma-informed manner.

I suggest a hydrosexual pedagogy. Hydrosexuality, mothered by ecofeminist theory, encourages fluidity in identity, sexuality and gender, freeing survivors from patriarchal power dynamics. Romance writing is navigated through the collective body and parallels to hydro-pollution.

Tru Holland is a PhD candidate in Creative Writing and an Associate Lecturer at the University of Worcester. She currently studies a PGCert in Teaching Creative Writing at the University of Cambridge. Her research centres on gendered approaches to comic fantasy writing and pedagogical accessibility models in creative writing.

Scaffolding Bravery **Grace Holliday**

I believe it is our duty as educators and facilitators to encourage our writing students to be brave. After all, we are not just nurturing students, but citizens of the world.

This presentation will explore how writing lecturers can create learning environments and 'writing worlds' in which students thrive, even when faced with diverse viewpoints, differing opinions and provocative materials.

My presentation will propose that 'brave spaces', a continuation of the more familiar 'safe spaces', could guide us all in our teaching ethos and practice, and suggest that ludic pedagogy could provide a framework on which to build our foundations.

Grace Holliday is Senior Lecturer of Creative Writing BA (Hons) at Leeds Arts University, and Module Leader of True Stories: Creative Nonfiction and Lifewriting at Falmouth University.

She is a journalist specialising in features, opinion and travel writing. Her weekly column, Smart Shot, is published in the Guardian's Saturday magazine.

Home-Work: Writing as a Way of Life **Dr Amanda Hodgkinson**

This presentation considers how writers can create for themselves a sense of 'homeliness' within writing and within the experience of being a writer.

Using the case study of a Creative Writing workshop where students built a house of imagination together, the presentation considers 'homeliness' as a creative practice that attends to the maintenance, care, and repetition that life and writing both demand.

Drawing on theories of home, domestic labour and care, it considers how the creative writer can actively bridge artistic process and lived experience, offering a writing practice that can feel 'less like writing and more like living.'

Dr Amanda Hodgkinson is an Associate Professor and an international award winning novelist.

She is currently the Director of the Suffolk Centre for Culture and Heritage at the University of Suffolk. Her research interests include representations of family and the role of memory in fiction and poetry.

CULTURE AND PSYCHOLOGY IN CREATIVE WRITING **16:00-17:30 Room 2**

Mike Hollows



Mike Hollows

The Psychology of Teaching Creative Writing **Mike Hollows**

As part of my research for an MSc in Psychology in Education I conducted a grounded theory research project into the psychology of teaching creative writing.

Across the institutions where I teach writing I surveyed students and asked questions related to their emotions related to studying creative writing and put this together in a research project.

I would like to share this research with other writing tutors and to begin a conversation about how we can develop pedagogy to limit anxiety and apprehension around sharing work and workshopping personal writing projects.

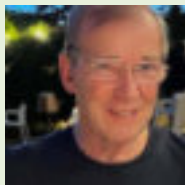
Mike Hollows is a Doctor of Creative Writing, and teaches creative writing at the University of Cambridge, the Professional Writing Academy, and is a member of the Fiction Writers Network at Edge Hill University.

He recently completed an MSc in Psychology in Education in which he researched the psychology of creative writing workshops, particularly relating to neurodivergent students. He is also the author of four historical fiction novels, as well as a number of short stories and articles.

WORKSHOP: MEMOIR WRITING: A PRACTICAL GUIDE

16:00-17:30 Room 3

Reinhard Tenberg



Reinhard Tenberg

This is a practical workshop exploring memoir as a distinctive form of life writing, followed by minutes of discussion.

Drawing on examples from contemporary memoir, autobiography and autofiction, the session will examine memory, truth, voice, and compelling beginnings.

Participants will engage in short generative exercises designed to help them identify the 'core' of a memoir and transform lived experience into vivid narrative scenes through showing rather than telling. The workshop is aimed at creative writers, teachers, and emerging memoirists seeking accessible techniques for developing authentic and engaging in life writing with confidence.

Reinhard studied English, Economics and Politics at the University of Cologne, where he completed a PhD in English Literature and Linguistics. From 1984 onwards he has been living in London and Cambridge, working in academia and at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. He has been a full-time writer since 2013.

MEMBER MEET UP AND PLENARY

17:30-18:00 Room 1

Join us as we announce the winners of the inaugural NAWE Flash Fiction Contest 2026 'Writing Worlds' and share thoughts about this year's conference.