



nawe

Online Conference

**Inspiring Writing
7-8 November 2025**



For over two centuries the Royal Literary Fund has offered financial support to professional writers across the UK.

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click or tap on an event to see its full description

	Room 1	Room 2	Room 3	Room 4
09:00	Intro/Guest TBC			
09:25	<i>Poetry as a Facilitator of Conversation in Safe Spaces</i> Gill Connors		<i>Think, Feel, Write: What do humans offer that AI never can?</i> Jennie Dayes and Catherine Wilcox	<i>Telling Stories with Text Games: Teaching Interactive Fiction</i> Lauren O'Donoghue
10:00	1) <i>Rediscovering the True Discoverer of Photography Through the Historical Biographical Novel</i> Caroline Summerfield 2) <i>Inspired Research: Reimagined Methodologies for PhDs in Creative Writing and Creative Writing Studies</i> Elena Traina	<i>Creative autumn: a writing and drawing workshop</i> Heather Richardson		
10:35	1) <i>The Process of Poetry: how do leading contemporary poets craft their work?</i> Rosanna McGlone 2) <i>Behind every great idea there stands an author: Writers & what inspires them</i> Dina Kafir	<i>Making Connections: Creative Collaboration in Writing</i> Jo Carrington and Petra Mansour	<i>Inspirational Safety: A Mindful Approach to Safeguarding for Creative Writing Teachers</i> Francis Gilbert	<i>Create your own story dice using free cultural heritage from Europeana.eu</i> Beth Daley
11:05	BREAK			
11:20	<i>Translating Plus</i> Liz Cashdan		<i>How to Bring Silences Into Your Work</i> Eve Grubin	<i>Letters to the Sea</i> Rosemarie Corlett, Samantha Carr, Jo Higson
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12:25	LUNCH		<i>NAWE East Bar: 12:45- 13:15</i>	<i>NAWE West Bar: 12:45- 13:15</i>
13:25	<i>Writing with and against Inspiration: Crip Theory and Creative Experimentation</i> Victoria Schechter	1) <i>Inspiring Community Anthology Writing</i> Fiona Lindsay 2) <i>How can interdisciplinary approaches support access to creative writing for hard to reach young people?</i> Adam Kammerling	<i>Writing With Negative Space</i> Peter McAllister and Kate Horsley	<i>How to use family history to write speculative fiction</i> Sonya Hundal
13:55	<i>Writers in Residence: Developing Creativity and Writing with Unpaid Family Carers</i> Shelley Tracey			
14:00		<i>Going Global: inspiring writing – and writers – through internationalisation</i> James Draper		
14:30	BREAK			
14:45	<i>Paratopia and How to Find It</i> Chris Rose	<i>The Joy of finding a Voice: Writing and publishing with recovering addicts in Great Yarmouth</i> Belona Greenwood	<i>Inventing Origins: A Myth-Making Workshop for Writers and Educators</i> Sarah Stretton	<i>Creative Empathy: Empathic Creativity</i> Felicity James and Helen Foster
15:20	<i>Prompting Inspiration: The art of the educational writing prompt</i> Helen Kenwright	<i>The Use of Questions and Pauses as Feedback on Creative Writing in the Narrative Coaching Process</i> esme mills		<i>Welcome to the Rooming House</i> Tyler Keevil
15:55	1) <i>Behind Creativity</i> Oliver Harris 2) <i>Inspiring Writing through the 'Mantle of the Expert' approach to Creative Writing</i> Christelle Avery Earl	<i>Speculative Frequencies: can poetry support cultural & heritage partners in delivering impactful education and lifelong learning activities?</i> Briony Hughes	<i>Stimulating Texts for Found Poetry: A Register-Based Exploration of Writing Inspiration</i> Yuka Nakai	<i>Using Creative Writing for Social Good: Creative writing as a tool for positive change</i> Emma McKenzie
16:30	<i>Myth, Memory, and the Poetic Unearthing of History</i> Jumoke Verissimo and Saddiq Dzukogi	<i>Sustaining Inspiration, Not a Fleeting Thing</i> Cindy Shearer		<i>Creative Writing at the NHS: Collective Voice and the Care of NHS Workers</i> Siobhan Campbell and Mel McEvoy

SATURDAY 8 NOVEMBER 2025 09:00 – 17:00

click or tap on an event to see its full description

- 1) and 2) : 15-minute presentations •
- 30-minute presentations •
- 60-minute workshops •
- 30-minute workshops •

	Room 1	Room 2	Room 3	Room 4
09:00	Intro/Guest TBC			
09:25	<i>Essaying Place</i> Melanie Perry and Zoë Quick	1) <i>Full STEAM Ahead: Exploring the influence of science fiction on the decision to study STEM</i> subjects Sarah Margree 2) <i>Archive fury: a novelist's rewriting of ancient sources</i> Molly Aitken	<i>Research & ethics for writing in/outside your lane</i> Alexia Casale	<i>Using our neurodiversity and unique perspectives to enhance creative style and improve mental health</i> Samantha Ford
10:00	<i>It belongs to all of us: considerations of writing with folklore</i> Sophie Parkes-Nield	<i>Introducing novice writers to storytelling using the Story Funnel</i> Anna Faherty		
10:35	1) <i>Open Return: How can creative writing research inspire caregiving within a family?</i> Sam Butler 2) <i>Inspiring Lives: Writing Through Cancer</i> Gail Webb	<i>Inspiring Writing? Threat or Tool? AI and the Creative Writing Classroom</i> Lubjana Matin-Scammell	NAWE PhD Network Ruth Moore and Elena Traina	<i>Climate Writing with Form</i> Jocelyn Page
11:05	BREAK			
11:20	<i>Tasting Notes</i> Lania Knight	<i>'Be Me. Write Free': the benefits of utilising writing for wellbeing as a form of 'play' inside and outside the secondary classroom</i> Isabel Caddy	<i>The Creative AI Writing Workshop</i> Sarah Gibson-Yates and Amy Spencer - 15 max capacity	<i>Wrangle Your Words – A Writing Workshop for Teachers</i> Chitra Soundar
11:55	<i>The Art of the Writer's Blog</i> Ruth Moore	<i>The Stories Behind Storytelling: Overcoming the Barriers to Telling Stories of Our Lives</i> Alison Mott and Dr Karen Jiyun Sung		
12:25	LUNCH		NAWE North Bar: 12:45–13:15	NAWE South Bar: 12:45–13:15
13:25	<i>Write, Speak, Connect: Creative Confidence On and Off the Page</i> Rachel Knightley	1) <i>Queering Narratives in Creative Writing Teaching</i> Ben Fergusson 2) <i>Trans Inspirations: The Importance of Trans Poetry</i> Aryk Greenawal	NAWE HE Committee open meeting Joanne Reardon and Andrea Holland	<i>Writing the Government Art Collection: a whistle-stop tour</i> Claire Collison
14:00	1) <i>(Un)Finished Product: Process as inspiration in memoir</i> Harley Ryley 2) <i>The Ethics of Interviewing in Creative Nonfiction: Impact of Interviewees' Withdrawals on a Project's Outcome</i> Olga Kenton	<i>Going Going: Solastalgia in Rural England</i> Beth Gaylard	<i>What makes a 'writer'?</i> Katherine Davis-Wright	
14:30	BREAK			
14:45	<i>Writing Europe from different Europes</i> Lorena Breidis	<i>Divergent Writers: Thriving as Creative Writing Practitioners, Students, and Teachers Despite Ableism</i> Christie Collins, Saul Lemerond, Leigh Camacho Rourks, Rachel Carney	<i>Space for Poetry: Facilitating Writing for Wellbeing</i> Natasha Ryan and Danny Pandolfi	<i>Writing Revolution: 101 tips and ideas for working with young writers</i> Beverley Ward
15:20		<i>Writing for Wellbeing for Survivors of Religious Trauma</i> Zoe Lambert		<i>Inspiring Writing in Interesting Times</i> Sarah Bower
15:55	<i>Non-Innocent Creative Writing: Poetry in the Digital Age in China</i> Yilin Tang	<i>So bad, it's good: using cliché and collaboration to make metaphor less scary</i> Anna Polonyi	<i>Anaphora and Butterflies</i> Andrea Holland	
16:30	Inspiring Writing – Plenary (speakers TBC)			

CONFERENCE INFORMATION

Inspiring Writing is an online conference, delivered using Zoom.

Using Zoom

If you have not used Zoom before we recommend you register for a free account here: <https://zoom.us/signup#/Signup> and download the software onto your computer or device. For the best experience we recommend participating on a computer or tablet rather than a smartphone.

If you already have a Zoom account, please make sure you have downloaded the most recent update of the software. Zoom have made end-to-end encryption of meetings available to create a highly secure meeting environment. Each session at the NAWE Conference will be passcode protected and the waiting room feature will be applied to ensure the meeting is fully secure.

On entering the session your microphone will be muted but we would encourage you to enable your camera.

Live Transcription

We will now be using Zoom captions for transcriptions throughout the event.

Please email admin@nawe.co.uk if you have any other access needs.

Accessing conference sessions

This year we have simplified the process. There will be 4 streams, with sessions taking place in each stream. You can choose which sessions you wish to attend on the day. One week prior to the event, you will be emailed the links to each of the three rooms, plus joining instructions.

To help you decide which sessions you want to attend, please see the full programme.

If you are having trouble accessing the links, please email admin@nawe.co.uk or call 0330 3335 909.

All sessions will be recorded and available to view on the NAWE website for 60 days after the conference ends.

Q&A

During each session you will be able to ask questions through the Q&A and chat function on Zoom, and most questions will be answered at the end of each session. Speakers will do their best to answer all questions but depending on volume this may not be possible. Some speakers may also invite you to unmute and to ask your question in person.

Social Media

Follow NAWE on Bluesky [@NAWEWriters](https://bsky.app/profile/nawewriters). Bsky.social. Instagram: [nawe_writers](https://www.instagram.com/nawe_writers). LinkedIn [National Association of Writers in Education \(NAWE\)](https://www.linkedin.com/company/national-association-of-writers-in-education). Facebook: [NAWE Writers](https://www.facebook.com/NAWEWriters).

The hashtags we are using for the event are: #NAWEConf25 #InspiringWriting.

Support with IT

Please test your Wi-Fi connection in advance. If you cannot hear the sound, please check that you have your speakers or headphone volume turned up and have selected the right output device on zoom (Click the arrow next to the mic and select the right speaker in select a speak option). If any issues persist, please contact our technical team on admin@nawe.co.uk or call 0330 3335 909.

[For booking and ticketing information click here or visit www.nawe.co.uk.](https://www.nawe.co.uk)

FRIDAY MORNING 7 NOVEMBER 2025

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12:25	13:25	Lunch — including Room 3: NAWE East Bar 12:45-13:15 and Room 4: NAWE West Bar 12:45-13:15

Friday



Saturday



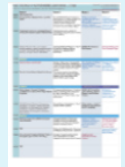
FRIDAY AFTERNOON 7 NOVEMBER 2025

Start	End	Event
13:25	13:55	Room 1: <i>Writing with and against Inspiration: Crip Theory and Creative Experimentation</i> Victoria Schechter (30-minute workshop)
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Friday



Saturday



FRIDAY 7 NOVEMBER 2025



Gill Connors

Poetry as a Facilitator of Conversation in Safe Spaces *Gill Connors (30-minute presentation)* **Room 1: 09:25-09:55**

This presentation will examine how poetry specifically can be the facilitator for conversation within online and real-life safe spaces, how it can open dialogue on sensitive subjects and be used to address trauma. It will examine the idea of 'safe spaces' and how they might vary to different people, and present primary research as well as published work to argue that writers and non-writers can use poetry as a way to begin to speak about subjects they might not have done before.

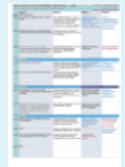
The presentation will use poetry to showcase new work.

Gill Connors is a published poet and workshop facilitator from North Yorkshire. She has published two poetry collections with Yaffle Press: *Tadaina* (2019) and *A Small Goodbye at Dawn* (2022). her PhD research at Leeds Trinity is on the links and parallels between sixteenth and twenty-first century women.

Friday



Saturday



Jennie Dayes (top)
and Catherine Wilcox

Think, Feel, Write: What do humans offer that AI never can? *Jennie Dayes and Catherine Wilcox (60-minute workshop)* **Room 3: 09:25-10:25**

Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) is creeping into our professional lives and is often talked about as a threat. As writers, we are concerned about robots becoming the next bestselling authors, with our hard won structuring, insights, and literary sentences being created at the click of a few buttons.

As those providing psychological therapy, we are worried about the use of therapist 'bots' or apps which approximate how we talk and what we say, giving the illusion of therapy far cheaper than from a qualified professional.

In this session, Catherine and Jennie speak about AI from their perspectives of writer and psychologist. Using the six core conditions for therapeutic change (Rogers, 1957), we consider what humans can offer which AI never can.

Attendees will be given the opportunity to reflect and write in the session. We hope to inspire this writing from a starting point of being human, the essence of which is impossible to replicate.

Dr Jennie Dayes is a senior lecturer in Psychology at Manchester Metropolitan University (Man Met) and a Psychologist who specialises in therapy. Jennie currently studies the MA in Creative Writing (Novel Route) at Man Met and enjoys applying psychological models and theory to character and story development.

Dr Catherine Wilcox is a senior lecturer in Creative Writing at The Manchester Writing School at Manchester Metropolitan University and co-leader of the Centre for Fiction research group. Writing as Catherine Fox, she is author of eight adult novels that explore themes of the spiritual and the physical with insight and humour.



Lauren
O'Donoghue

Telling Stories with Text Games: Teaching Interactive Fiction *Lauren O'Donoghue (60-minute workshop)* **Room 4: 09:25-10:25**

The video games industry is one of the fastest-growing creative sectors in the UK, a trend that is reflected in the increasing number of game writing courses and modules being offered by universities. Interest in interactive storytelling is high, especially among young people, and making games is more accessible than it's ever been. In this workshop, we'll look at the basics of using Twine—a free, open source tool for creating text games—and discuss how writers and educators can bring this brilliant tool into the classroom, even if you've never made (or played!) a game before.

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Lauren O'Donoghue is a writer, game designer and PhD researcher based in Yorkshire. Her short fiction has been featured in publications including *Msllexia*, *Northern Gravy*, and *Blood Orange Review*. As a freelance arts workshop facilitator, her recent clients include Leeds Trinity University, XR Stories, and Children's Capital of Culture.

Friday



1) Rediscovering the True Discoverer of Photography Through the Historical Biographical Novel *Caroline Summerfield*

2) Inspired Research: Reimagined Methodologies for PhDs in Creative Writing and Creative Writing Studies *Elena Traina* (2 x 15-minute presentations) Room 1: 10:00-10:30

Saturday



Caroline Summerfield
(photo: Enigma Portrait Photography)

1) This paper examines why 'creative invention' (Lackey, *Biofiction*, 2022:24) serves the writing of a historical biographical novel; how this is grounded by historical research; and what are the types of historical research (Library Research Guide for the History of Science, Harvard University). Contextualisation is provided by my novel, *The Experimental Woman*, in which the forgotten life of Elizabeth Fulhame, as the true discoverer of photography (Jarvis, 2020), is re-discovered.

Caroline Summerfield (novelist/playwright) is a final year PhD research student in the English Department of Manchester Metropolitan University, where she is researching: *The Novelist's Art of Writing the Contemporary Historical Biographical Novel : The Experimental Woman*. Her Masters in Research in Playwriting Studies (University of Birmingham) was awarded in 2016.



Elena Traina

2) This presentation explores imaginative methods to enrich and diversify PhD projects in Creative Writing and Creative Writing Studies. Starting with fiction-as-method and the principles of bibliodiversity (i.e. the diversity of authors, cultures and voices) and libroddiversity (i.e. the diversity of forms, formats and materials), it highlights techniques such as metafiction, heteronyms, marginalia, literary translation, multiple perspectives and artisanal publishing to open creative, form-conscious approaches to the critical component of doctoral research. The talk draws on *Creative Writing in the Threshold*, an annotated 100,000-word thesis on the teaching of creative writing in Ibero-American countries, submitted alongside a handmade book and zines."

Elena Traina (PhD, Falmouth University) specialises in creative writing pedagogy and has trained fellow tutors in universities in Puerto Rico, Colombia, Ecuador, Brasil and Mexico. She is one of the PhD reps on the NAWA HE Committee and serves on the board of the European Association of Creative Writing Programmes.



Heather Richardson

Creative autumn: a writing and drawing workshop *Heather Richardson* (30-minute workshop) Room 2: 10:00-10:30

Late autumn feels like the perfect time for creative exploration. As we move through November, with the days getting shorter and the darkest time of the year ahead, it can feel like a time of hibernation and retreating into ourselves. Spring seems very far away.

This 30-minute online workshop is an opportunity for you to explore your own creative response to autumn. It will incorporate creative writing and visual art activities, allowing you to write, draw and reflect. You'll take inspiration from poetry and art about autumn.

Please bring paper and colouring pencils or pens.

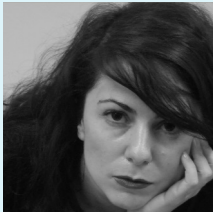
Heather Richardson is a writer, textile artist and arts educator. She taught creative writing at The Open University for over eighteen years. Her most recent publication is *A Dress for Kathleen*, a creative nonfiction exploration of family history, memory, and the power of making.

FRIDAY 7 NOVEMBER 2025

1) The Process of Poetry: how do leading contemporary poets craft their work? *Rosanna McGlone*
2) Behind every great idea there stands an author: Writers & what inspires them *Dina Kafiris*
(2 x 15-minute presentations)
Room 1: 10:35-11:05

1) In order to demystify the creative process, I interviewed 15 UK and 11 Australian poets for my books on redrafting. Participants included Don Paterson, Gillian Clarke, Pascale Petit, John McCullough, Judith Beveridge and Anthony Lawrence. Each poet shared an early draft of a poem and discussed its development into its final iteration. My presentation will introduce this Arts Council funded project, exploring the process and its implications for our understanding of poetry. Questions raised include: What insights does this material offer our students as both writers and readers? How might this knowledge be applied in the classroom?

Rosanna McGlone is a freelance journalist and writer. Her books include *The Process of Poetry* and *The Making of a Poem*. She has written more than 100 articles for publications including: *The Guardian*, *The Australian* and *The Sydney Morning Herald*. She also runs poetry and creative writing workshops.



Dina Kafiris

2) The creative writing process is a complex one. But it is the initial stage of the process that is the most crucial, that is the idea that starts the journey. In this paper, I will explore some of the most memorable ideas turned into books by both emerging and established writers from George Orwell to Margaret Atwood among others. I will discuss how these literary works have come to exist, looking primarily at what or who inspired these authors to write these remarkable works that we now consider an integral part of the literary and contemporary world."

Dr Dina Kafiris was Writer in Residence and Guest Lecturer at Kingston University London. She is the author of the poetry collections *The Blinding Light Circling Elpida, in one act* and *Hypocrisy has a Face and Other Writings*. She holds a PhD in Critical and Creative Writing from the University of Wales, Bangor.

Making Connections: Creative Collaboration in Writing

Jo Carrington and Petra Mansour

(30-minute presentation)

Room 2: 10:35-11:05

By collaborating with local creative organisations, including a multidisciplinary arts venue and an online newspaper, students have explored how creative writing can be a powerful form of expression, producing scripts, articles, stories, and poems. Their collaborative work has been celebrated through school events such as The Celebration of Voice, an evening highlighting student expression, and through performances and screenings at local arts venues. Sixth-form students, and in some years, their parents, have continued this journey through extracurricular workshops in the Apprenticeship of Fine Arts in Creative Writing, exploring new and collaborative forms of expression beyond that of GCSE.



Francis Gilbert

Inspirational Safety: A Mindful Approach to Safeguarding for Creative Writing Teachers

Francis Gilbert

(30-minute workshop)

Room 3: 10:35-11:05

What if safeguarding didn't just protect writing—but inspired it? In this practical workshop, we'll explore how mindful safeguarding can spark deeper, more authentic creative work. When participants feel emotionally and physically safe, they write with greater courage, complexity, and freedom. Drawing on real-life scenarios from schools, libraries, and online spaces, we'll show how thoughtful boundaries, attuned listening, and clear structures can open—not close—creative possibility. We'll also explore writing prompts that

Friday

A small grid showing the schedule for Friday, with various time slots and session titles.

Saturday

A small grid showing the schedule for Saturday, with various time slots and session titles.

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engage with themes of safety, agency, and trust. Safeguarding is not a barrier to Inspiring Writing—it's one of its most powerful foundations."

Francis Gilbert is a trustee of NAWE and Head of Education at Goldsmiths, where he also leads the MA Creative Writing and Education. He most recently published *The Mindful Creative Writing Teacher* (2025). More details here: www.francisgilbert.co.uk

Friday



Beth Daley

Create your own story dice using free cultural heritage from europeana.eu

Beth Daley

(30-minute presentation)

Room 4: 10:35-11:05

Find out how to use europeana.eu's database of European digital culture heritage to create your own story dice. Europeana's story dice use cultural heritage images to provide creative prompts. Use them in workshops or lessons to enhance your students' writing practice. In this workshop, you'll learn how to search europeana.eu and choose evocative images, then use our template in Canva to make your own story dice. Then, just print, cut, roll and write! europeana.eu is a practical, accessible and free online resource, funded by the European Commission. Please sign up for a free Canva account in advance.

Dr Beth Daley is a novelist, cultural and creative writer and Europeana's Editorial Adviser. Her first novel, *Blood and Water* is published by Hic Dragones. A self-confessed story addict, Beth has led various initiatives in digital storytelling and is the writing mentor for Europeana's Digital Storytelling Festival Online Creative Residency.

Translating Plus

Liz Cashdan

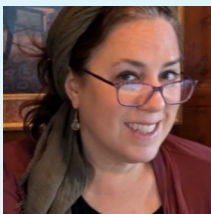
(30-minute workshop)

Room 1: 11:20-11:50

This workshop will give participants the chance to extend the idea of translation beyond moving from one language/dialect to another, but also a chance to include a carrying-across of material from one genre to another, one structure or form, one set of characters, one place and time, one event to another. For example, we'll take a poem written in German, where the narrative might be set in 1930s Germany, and not only translate the language, but also maybe change the date to 1870s or 2020s and place events on the Mexico/US border or middle east. You will be provided with a literal translation of the first language.

I am a published poet myself with a first degree in History and a PhD in literature. I have taught all genres of creative writing at all levels from Year 1 upwards in schools and with university students and community groups. I know French well and have some knowledge of German, Spanish, Russian and Hebrew.

Saturday



Eve Grubin

How to Bring Silences Into Your Work

Eve Grubin

(60-minute workshop)

Room 3: 11:20-12:20

The unsaid is a crucial element in poetry. Louise Glück wrote, 'The unsaid, for me, exerts great power: often I wish an entire poem could be made in this vocabulary'. How do silences generate meaning? How do we, as poets, work with spaces on the page to empower our poems?

This 60 minute workshop has two parts: during the first part, I will share ideas about how to bring silences into the writing process by analysing poems by others and myself. Then participants will be given writing prompts to which they will respond with their own poems. All participants will have the opportunity to share their writing with the group.

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Eve Grubin's most recent book of poems is *Boat of Letters* (Four Way Books, 2025). Eve holds a PhD on the poetics of reticence. She teaches at NYU London and is a tutor at the Poetry School and teaches online poetry courses on Zoom throughout the year.

Letters to the Sea

Rosemarie Corlett, Samantha Carr, Jo Higson

(60-minute workshop)

Room 4: 11:20-12:20

Letters to the Sea is a workshop which, through a series of prompts, exercises and readings, invites participants to bring their hopes, concerns and memories together connected to the ocean, and to ask – if you could write a letter to the sea, what would it say?

It provides an inclusive way of holding marine environments, shifting focus from humans as lamenters of loss to ecological collaborators. It seeks to contribute to the literary mode of climate change writing.

It began in 2024 as an exhibit curated by Plymouth's Poet Laureate, Dr Corlett, at The Box Museum. The project evolved into a programme of events in partnership with PSNMP, Plymouth Culture and Literature Works, engaging groups across sectors and age ranges.

Dr Rosemarie Corlett: Bilingual author and English Lecturer; Plymouth's Poet Laureate. Debut collection *Flightless Bird* released in 2022 with Shearsman Books. Published with Guardian Faber, Poetry Wales, Tears in the Fence, Iota and others. Recent engagements include The Racial Equality Council, Plymouth Sound National Marine Park, Theatre Royal Plymouth, Children's University and The Box Museum and Gallery.

Samantha Carr: PhD Creative Writing candidate and Doctoral Teaching Assistant at the University of Plymouth. Her work explores the embodiment of complex chronic illness alongside her previous experience as a registered nurse through prose poetry. Her work has been published in *Arc*, *Acuman*, *Belfast Review* and *Ink Sweat and Tears*.

Jo Higson: PhD Creative Writing candidate in the Department of English and the Centre for Gender and Violence at the University of Bristol. She has over thirty-five years of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion advocacy experience. Her work explores domestic violence in contemporary fiction. Jo lives with and writes through her disability experience.

1) Rewilding the Creative Process – Seasonality and Creative Writing

Alison Taft

2) Rewild Your Writing: affect, eco-resistance, and offline pedagogy

Kevan Manwaring

(2 x 15-minute presentations)

Room 1: 11:55-12:25



Alison Taft

1) 'Rewilding is about working with nature to get natural processes, the foundations of life, working again.'

This research presents the findings of a study into a year-long creative writing course that was delivered online to over fifty writers, and was designed to enable participants to create and work in harmony with the seasons. The presentation provides a timely and much-needed understanding into the conditions needed to best support creative practice. It gives an insight into how the adoption of natural processes - ensuring variations in both pace and nature of effort - can benefit writers' well-being whilst simultaneously increasing productivity.

Dr Ali Taft is the author of five crime-fiction novels including *The Disappeared* (HarperCollins, 2018) and *The Runaway* (HarperCollins, 2019), published under the pen name Ali Harper.)

Friday

Saturday

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Kevan Manwaring

2) This talk advocates the importance and effectiveness of facilitating sensory-rich experiences in natural environments for students: to inspire writing primarily, but also to cultivate offline culture, nurturing in-person social skills, wellbeing, and ecoliteracy. Drawing upon long-established practices of Wild Writing, as well as a recent MA Summer Residential Weekend, we'll explore how spending time in nature with students leads to significant improvement in individual behaviour and group dynamics, writing, and general resilience and wellbeing. Tapping into 'Rights of Nature' discourse and Wall Kimmerer's 'grammar of animacy', it suggests such an approach offers a refugium and a vital form of resistance.

An academic consultant for BBC 4's *The Secret Life of Books* and contributor to 'Free Thinking' (BBC Radio 3), Dr Kevan Manwaring is Programme Leader in MA Creative Writing at Arts University Bournemouth. He is the author of *Writing Ecofiction* (Palgrave) and editor of *Heavy Weather* (The British Library).

Friday



Saturday



1) The Mother Of All Theatres - a creative critical response to Bernardine Evaristo's *Girl, Woman, Other* Helen Williams

2) How does perspective inspire and dictate the story? Pawel Kuziemski
(2 x 15-minute presentations)

Room 2: 11:55-12:25

1) Bearing in mind Bernardine Evaristo's inclusion in the A Level curriculum, this practice-based presentation explores how creative writing can engage with acclaimed writers' techniques, focusing on the novel *Girl, Woman, Other*. Through a performed monologue, it links the novel's themes with London's National Theatre, highlighting parallels between Evaristo's experimental 'fusion fiction' and the theatre's inclusive ethos.

As 'fusion criticism,' the piece blends literary analysis and performance to examine narrative style, polyvocality, humour, and matricentric feminism. The National Theatre is personified to explore its ideological ties with Evaristo's work, especially regarding intersectionality and empowerment. A companion poster extends this analysis through visual storytelling.

Helen Williams is a doctoral researcher in creative writing at Brunel University of London. Her thesis explores matrilineal fiction, focusing on university-educated mother-daughter relationships in British novels. With a background in journalism and teaching, she examines matricentric feminism in both mainstream "mums' lit" and experimental, intersectional writing.

2) Olga Tokarczuk, Polish Nobel prize winner, in her essay *The Tender Narrator*, notes that nowadays, many stories are focused around a first-person narrator where the narrational voice is distorted because of the narrator's perspective. I put forward a set of theoretical tools that deconstruct that perspective. I believe that such knowledge will help inspire the storytelling of authors because, as noted by Prop, Eco, or Booker, all the stories have already been told, and the key aspect of writing is how we tell them. A consciously tailored perspective can enrich each re-telling.

Pawel Kuziemski is a PhD Candidate in creative writing at the University of Lincoln. He specialises in rhetoric and narratology, specifically in relation to unreliable narration. He is also a teacher and a writer. His works were published in different magazines, including *The Red Ogre Review*.

LUNCH: 12:25-13:25 INCLUDING:

ROOM 3: 12:45-13:15 NAWA EAST BAR

ROOM 4: 12:45-13:15 NAWA WEST BAR

If an online conference could have a virtual bar this would be it! Bring a beverage and a bite and drop in for some lunchtime networking. Your genial host is a NAWA trustee and we would love to see you. On Friday we welcome members from the east and west, and on Saturday the north and south. Wherever you are on the map, choose your region and come on in.

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Writing with and against Inspiration: Crip Theory and Creative Experimentation

Victoria Schechter

(30-minute workshop)

Room 1: 13:25-13:55

What if inspiration came not from sentimentality but from form, tension, and dissonance? In this 30-minute session, Victoria Schechter, postgraduate researcher in Creative Writing at the University of East Anglia, draws on crip theory — a reclaimed term from disability communities describing a stance that refuses ableism and sees disability as a source of insight and innovation.

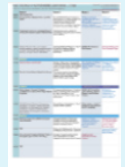
This talk examines how disability has been used as a plot device in fiction and explores inspiration drawn not from the disabled figure but from the lived experience of the disabled bodymind, imagining literary possibilities in constraint, interruption, and refusal. Followed by a brief prompt and discussion.

Victoria Schechter is a Brazilian writer and PhD candidate in Creative and Critical Writing (3rd year) at the University of East Anglia. Her novel *Prismas* (Patuá, 2023) explores visual impairment and the gaze. Her current research engages crip theory to investigate disability, narrative form, and experimental writing.

Friday



Saturday



1) Inspiring Community Anthology Writing

Fiona Linday

2) How can interdisciplinary approaches support access to creative writing for hard to reach young people?

Adam Kammerling

(2 x 15-minute presentations)

Room 2: 13:25-13:55



Fiona Linday

1) I'll share my process for facilitating cohesive community anthology writing projects, and how ongoing projects were helpful in extending my lifelong learning engagement and facilitating workshops. By capturing the previously unheard voices of those who aspired to improve their writing and experience the editing/submission process, two of these inclusive groups were given a positive opportunity for publication and platforms to showcase their prose and poetry. After repeated support from Arts Council England (ACE) with collaboration from Dahlia Publishing, as well as the Attenborough Arts Centre service user groups, Leicester University, I edited another anthology with the Scriptorium Writers' Group. A fourth is proposed.

Fiona enjoys freelance facilitating with Attenborough Arts, Leicester's lifelong learners. She received ACE grants for *Family Matters* & *Making Our World Better* community anthologies. Her collection of stories and poetry is *Count Our Blessings*. Recently, she edited *Moments of Grace-Creative Nonfiction & Poetry* by Scriptorium Writers and Guests.

2) I will detail some of the challenges that I have faced as a writer in residence at Alternative Provision school Eko Pathways, and share some of the approaches that have been hugely beneficial in engaging the young people there. Eko Pathways receives referrals from the local authority based on both behaviour and SEN. As a result, the variety of needs in a relatively small class can be huge. Traditional approaches were failing to engage the students in the provision, and with the schools support I have developed radical new approaches which have been successful in engaging and retaining students, even those with close to zero literacy.

Adam Kammerling is an award winning poet, interdisciplinary artist and educator. His most recent works include *Seder*, his debut poetry collection which was a finalist in the National Jewish Book Awards, *Shall We Take This Outside*, a three-person spoken-word/dance theatre show that toured nationally, and *Inside!*, a piece of poetry/rave theatre commissioned by Centrepont and the Saatchi Gallery.

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Writing With Negative Space *Peter McAllister and Kate Horsley* **(60-minute workshop)** **Room 3: 13:25-14:25**

How does space work in individual flash and short fiction pieces? And how do flash pieces and stories interconnect to form a collection or a novella-in-flash? Exploring ideas about negative space, this workshop will investigate space on the page, ambiguous gaps and indeterminacies within stories, and the resonant spaces between pieces that form a collection. Using prompts and exercises, we will draft a mini-collection of two or three pieces that enjoy the benefit of negative space between them, discussing how both resonances and absences help to weave short pieces together to form a larger narrative.

Dr Kate Horsley is a creative writing lecturer with an MA from Oxford and PhD from Harvard. Her first novel was shortlisted for the Saltire Award; the second published by William Morrow. Her fiction appears in many magazines and she's placed in competitions including Bath, Bridport, and Oxford.

Peter McAllister

A Creative Writing researcher at Exeter, Peter also lectures at the University of Hull. He is the editor and co-founder of *Inkfish Magazine*, an issue editor for *NAWE Writing in Practice* and a committee member for the Penzance Literary Festival. Peter is the 2025 Writer in Residence at The Morrab Library.

Friday



Saturday

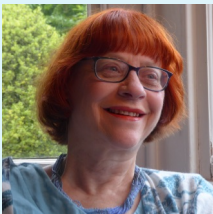


Sonya Hundal

How to use family history to write speculative fiction *Sonya Hundal* **(60-minute workshop)** **Room 4: 13:25-14:25**

A brief introduction and description of my PhD research: How to document trauma in a South Asian family using creative fiction. Two practical writing activities from my research and my creative practice to explore ways of identifying events, characters and narratives in family history. The first is a model for re-imagining the family tree and the second, an exercise in extrapolating themes speculatively. A discussion and sharing of work and ideas from participants after each exercise.

Sonya is a PhD student in Creative Writing at the University of Leicester. She has led writing workshops and residencies with: First Story, Transported, Writing East Midlands and Nottingham City of Literature. Published work includes short-stories, non-fiction and plays. She lives in Lincolnshire and owns a small wood-fired bakery.



Shelley Tracey

Writers in Residence: Developing Creativity and Writing with Unpaid Family Carers *Shelley Tracey* **(30-minute presentation)** **Room 1: 13:55-14:25**

The *Writers in Residence* project gave carers in Northern Ireland opportunities to develop their writing skills. Carers took part in individualised mentoring sessions and eighteen writing workshops, both online and face to face, in 2024. Carers also received training in facilitation skills and peer support. Writers' responses to the project revealed that taking part not only raised their confidence as writers; it also reduced isolation and contributed to wellbeing and a sense of belonging to a writing community.

This presentation will share carers' feedback, their reflections on writing and creativity, and examples of their writing, including a poetry film.

Dr Shelley Tracey is a writer, creative writing facilitator and Poetry Therapy Practitioner in Northern Ireland. Current projects include producing a writing publication with autistic writers and collating reminiscence stories. Shelley is a passionate advocate for the power of arts participation to enhance wellbeing and a sense of belonging.

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James Draper

Going Global: inspiring writing - and writers - through internationalisation
James Draper
(30-minute presentation)
Room 2: 14:00-14:30

The Faculty of Arts & Humanities at Manchester Metropolitan University has a commitment to offering all students an international experience. A key factor in achieving this is GoGlobal Week, an annual programme of activities within and beyond the curriculum. The Manchester Writing School's contributions have included international guest speakers, worldwide digital industry panels, collaborative workshops with overseas partners, and in-class topics taking in global themes and perspectives. This presentation will showcase highlights from GoGlobal Week, offer models and advice for internationalising the creative writing classroom, and explore some of the impact, inspiring student writing and expanding their professional horizons.

James Draper is Deputy International Lead for the new School of English at Manchester Metropolitan University, where he is also Programme Leader for the MFA/MA in Creative Writing and International Lead for the Department of English. He is a Senior Fellow of the Higher Education Academy and from 2006-2023 was Manager of the Manchester Writing School.

Friday



Saturday



Chris Rose

Paratopia and How to Find It
Chris Rose
(30-minute presentation)
Room 1: 14:45-15:15

In Italo Calvino's *Invisible Cities* Marco Polo responds to his home city of Venice through its imaginative recreation. I describe this method as 'paratopian,' and aim to build on Calvino/Polo's work by introducing a different way of writing place.

A paratopia is more than a fictional place. A paratopia takes aspects of place as it exists and exaggerates or distorts them for a particular purpose. Should we choose to see them, paratopias already exist, and offer the chance of re-imagining and re-enchanting our environment.

This presentation will look at examples of literary paratopias and – most importantly – how to build one.

C.D. Rose is a writer and teacher. He has a PhD in Critical and Creative Writing from Edge Hill University, and has published five books, most recently *We Live Here Now* (Melville House, 2025). He is currently a RLF Fellow and at work on a paratopian gazetteer of the Upper Calder Valley, where he currently lives.



Belona Greenwood

The Joy of finding a Voice: Writing and publishing with recovering addicts in Great Yarmouth
Belona Greenwood
(30-minute presentation)
Room 2: 14:45-15:15

In September 2024, the writing group in the High Support Unit at Herring House, a single homelessness hostel in Great Yarmouth launched their first anthology of writing. The book, *Untitled*, is a collection of lived experience, poetry, prose, fiction, creative non-fiction and a group script – the supernatural story of a train crash. It is not solely about addiction, but that lived experience informs the writing. This presentation is about the making of a community of writers and the production of the book.

Belona Greenwood is a scriptwriter, writer and creative facilitator. She received a Norfolk Arts Award for 'Outstanding Contribution to the Arts' in 2018 for her work supporting women writers. She is adept at co-creation both in creating theatre and publishing. She has extensive experience of working with vulnerable people.

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Inventing Origins: A Myth-Making Workshop for Writers and Educators

Sarah Stretton

(60-minute workshop)

Room 3: 14:45-15:45

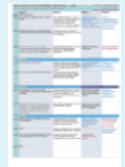
This workshop explores the craft of myth-making through the creation of original origin stories. Drawing on classical and familiar examples, participants will examine the narrative structures, archetypes, and language that give myths their lasting resonance. Using Oxford as a case study, we'll explore how place, imagery, and etymology can inspire new worlds and stories. Through guided exercises, reflection, and optional collaboration, participants will develop practical tools for generating and shaping myths. We'll also consider how myth can support writers — especially those lacking confidence — by offering familiar frameworks. The ideas shared are adaptable for teaching both children and adults.

Sarah Stretton is a Welsh, Oxford-based writer and teacher with a Creative Writing MA (Distinction). She teaches English to pupils aged 9–13 and has also taught literature and ESL to undergraduates. A published and prize-winning writer, her work explores myth, imagination, and voice through student-led storytelling and creative classroom projects.

Friday



Saturday



Felicity James
(left) and Helen
Foster

Creative Empathy: Empathic Creativity

Felicity James and Helen Foster

(30-minute presentation)

Room 4: 14:45-15:15

This paper will explore the links between empathy and creativity (shared reading, writing, and journaling). Writers and academics Dr Helen Foster and Dr Felicity James both work at the Stoneygate Centre for Empathic Healthcare, University of Leicester, exploring how – and why – to teach and enjoy creative writing with medical students and healthcare professionals. We'll discuss the long history, and the growing evidence base, for the use of creative writing in healthcare, before interactively introducing the exercises and experiments we have found most rewarding in our work with the Stoneygate Centre.

Dr Felicity James is Associate Professor in Eighteenth and Nineteenth Century Literature at the University of Leicester. She has published on creative collaboration, friendship, life-writing and the personal essay, and teaches Romantic and Victorian literature, and creative writing, both within the School of Arts, Media and Communications and for the Stoneygate Centre for Empathic Healthcare,

Dr Helen Foster is a writer, researcher, oral historian, and a practitioner of creative writing for wellbeing. She is Creative Associate at the Stoneygate Centre for Empathic Healthcare, and Writer in Residence for CILIP, the library and information association. Her book *Arts for Health: Creative Writing* (co-authored with Mark Pearson) was published by Emerald Press (July 2024).



Helen Kenwright

Prompting Inspiration: The art of the educational writing prompt

Helen Kenwright

(30-minute presentation)

Room 1: 15:20-15:50

In this session we will explore the art of creating inspiring prompts and writing exercises for our students and fellow writers. As well as stimulating writing, the best prompts also help writers to focus on specific elements, with the aim of building confidence and skills. Exercises can help writers to understand principles of writing first-hand to embed their learning about writing more deeply. The presentation will present the ideas and principles which the Writing Tree has developed to create prompts and involve participants in sharing their own prompting practice. Finally we'll try out a few for ourselves!

Dr Helen Kenwright is the Director and Founder of the Writing Tree, an organisation that provides support and education for writers. She is also

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Creative Writing Lead for Converge at York St John University and teaches at the University of York. She writes contemporary fantasy with themes of social justice.

Friday



The Use of Questions and Pauses as Feedback on Creative Writing in the Narrative Coaching Process

esme mills

(30-minute presentation)

Room 2: 15:20-15:50

Creative writing is the perfect tool to support the life coaching process and other journeys of self-exploration. But how to provide feedback when the goal is to inspire personal growth? esme mills, a writer, coach and communication professional, explores the use of questions and silence as feedback for these creative endeavours. Guided by the question 'What does the story want to be asked?', esme explores what questions to ask (and when to ask them), what silence says, and how creative writing teachers can benefit from a coach approach.

esme mills is passionate about the power of story to change lives. She recently completed a post-graduate programme in Teaching Creative Writing at Cambridge University. In her roles as writer, certified life coach and communication manager, esme became interested in how to help others to explore their own life stories.

Welcome to the Rooming House

Tyler Keevil

(30-minute presentation)

Room 4: 15:20-15:50

This paper reflects on the formation, development, and publication of a multi-author anthology of interconnected stories, *The Rooming House* (Egaeus Press, 2024). Dr Tyler Keevil will present and discuss the visual sources of inspiration, the writing guidelines and editorial requirements, and the challenges of joining other authors in inhabiting this shared imagined space. In so doing he will draw on his own experience, as well as that of fellow contributors and editor Mark Beech. The paper will further consider the potential for using a similar collaborative project in a teaching setting.

Dr. Tyler Keevil is an author and teacher from Vancouver, Canada. He is a Senior Lecturer in Creative Writing at Cardiff University, has published several books, and received a number of awards for his writing. His most recent novels are *No Good Brother* (HarperCollins) and *Your Still Beating Heart* (Myriad).

1) Behind Creativity

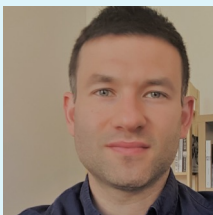
Oliver Harris

2) Inspiring Writing through the 'Mantle of the Expert' approach to Creative Writing

Christelle Avery Earl

(2 x 15-minute presentations)

Room 1: 15:55-16:25



Oliver Harris

1) This paper explores the psychological forces behind creativity, not just where ideas come from but why. The source of creation is one of the oldest questions posed by mankind – how can something emerge from nothing? – a troubling conceptual horizon to which myth, religion and philosophy have responded. But there remains an awkwardness around asking: why create? To what need does it respond?

The comparative rarity of this approach suggests it touches on something uncomfortable, potentially egotistic, about artistic production. But now that computers themselves are 'writing' this hinterland of need and desire will be crucial in defining human creativity.

Saturday



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I write crime novels and spy thrillers (Jonathan Cape/Little, Brown), and teach creative writing at Manchester Metropolitan University. I also published a book on Greek myth and psychoanalysis, which will inform this presentation. I have just returned to the UK after two years living in South Korea.

2) My presentation will have some workshopping elements, and focuses on how the 'Mantle of the Expert' drama theory of teaching can be utilised in the Creative Writing workshop to inspire 'voice'. I will then go on to say that this practice can be employed to inspire students in their creative work, but also in the critical reflection element of their PhD projects, and in their 'voice' for conference presentations and research papers. That in a seminar setting, students can take on the mantle of teacher to support each other in reflecting on creative work for discussion. My underlying message is that all peers in the field are 'expert' whether published or not, employed or not.

I am a first year Creative Writing PhD student at Lancaster University, currently researching the themes of Time, Space and Identity in the EcoGothic novel. I hold a Masters from The Open University in English Literature and was a teacher in secondary education for fifteen years.

Friday



Saturday



Briony Hughes

Speculative Frequencies: can poetry support cultural & heritage partners in delivering impactful education and lifelong learning activities?

Briony Hughes

(30-minute presentation)

Room 2: 15:55-16:25

Speculative Frequencies (2025) incorporated writing exercises designed to explore feelings of human-nature enmeshment, alongside establishing kinship with a crucial yet misunderstood mammal – bats. Through partnership with the Bat Conservation Trust, alongside arts/heritage/environmental organisations such as Orleans House, Wildlife Trusts, Royal Parks, and Cambridge Botanic Garden, I explore how poetry can widen the disciplinary scope of eco-education programmes and diversify participation. This presentation offers *Speculative Frequencies* as a collaboration model – ongoing activities include a kit co-developed with Richmond Council, and outdoor workshops with communities/conservation professionals/policy makers.

Dr Briony Hughes is a lecturer in Creative Writing at Royal Holloway. She co-edits the *Resurgence* and *Ecologist* poetry feature and runs *Osmosis Press*. Publications include *Speculative Frequencies* (*Permeable Barrier*), *June: A Haunting* (*Intergraphia*), *Rhizomes* (*Broken Sleep Books*), amongst others. Her limited-edition bookarts have been widely collected by UK archives.



Yuka Nakai

Stimulating Texts for Found Poetry: A Register-Based Exploration of Writing Inspiration

Yuka Nakai

(60-minute workshop)

Room 3: 15:55-16:55

What kinds of texts inspire students to write poetry? This exploratory session investigates how university students created found poetry from varied source texts and considers how Halliday's register theory (field, tenor, mode) might help explain which texts encouraged creative transformation.

The 47 poems produced in a workshop were analysed for how their language, structure, and voice shifted in relation to the original texts, which included science books, essays, fictional monologues, and phishing emails.

This session shares tentative patterns and proposes directions for developing practical frameworks to support text selection in creative writing activities.

Yuka Nakai is an Associate Professor in Japan researching the teaching of poetry writing. Her work focuses on poetry pedagogy, literacy, and digital tools for creative writing. She leads a cross-cultural project using a poetry-making app and explores inclusive, confidence-building approaches through school-based poetry workshops.

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Emma McKenzie

Using Creative Writing for Social Good: Creative writing as a tool for positive change

Emma McKenzie

(30-minute presentation)

Room 4: 15:55-16:25

This presentation will explore how creative writing practice can be used to instil positive change within culture and help people to build personal connection and compassion.

Using examples from a practice led PhD research study and creative writing within health care and educational settings, Emma will explore the way in which creative writing has helped her to re-frame the mental health system and engage with people recovering from mental health illness in a unique way. Drawing on work both in leading autobiography writing sessions and in eco-therapy creative writing classes this session will conclude with examples of re-storying in action.

Emma McKenzie is a writer and health care professional based in York, UK. Emma is currently studying for a practice led PhD in Humanities / Creative Writing. Emma has a special interest in autobiographical writing and nature-based writing and has used creative writing throughout her career in mental health care.

Friday



Saturday



Jumoke Versimo (left) and Saddiq Dzukogi

Myth, Memory, and the Poetic Unearthing of History

Jumoke Versimo and Saddiq Dzukogi

(30-minute presentation)

Room 1: 16:30-17:00

This panel explores history's transformative power in shaping contemporary poetry. We argue that the past, from ancient myths to migration narratives, isn't just subject matter but a living archive crafting compelling, emotionally resonant, and intellectually rigorous poetry.

Dr. Dzukogi will present on interweaving Hausa mythology, spirituality, and history with poetic practice. He'll show how ancient oral traditions, and historical events reanimate modern forms, bridging past wisdom and present sensibilities.

Dr. Versissimo will discuss her collection excavating Afro-Brazilian ancestral return migration. Her work navigates the transatlantic slave trade and the complexities of return, forging powerful narratives from personal and collective memory.

We'll illustrate how rigorous engagement with diverse historical sources fuels poetic invention. The panel offers practical insights for writers, encouraging them to explore their own histories as fertile ground for inspiring and innovative writing, ultimately charting new literary territories.

Dr. Saddiq Dzukogi is a Nigerian poet and author of the award-winning collection *Your Crib, My Qibla* and the forthcoming epic poem *Bakandamiya: An Elegy*. His presentation will examine how interweaving Hausa mythology, spirituality, and history reanimates modern poetic forms, bridging past wisdom and present sensibilities.

Dr. Jumoke Versissimo is a Nigerian poet and novelist based in Toronto, Canada, with two award-winning poetry collections, *I am memory* and *The Birth of Illusion*, and the forthcoming *Circumtrauma*. She will discuss her collection excavating Afro-Brazilian ancestral return migration, navigating the transatlantic slave trade and the complexities of return to forge powerful narratives from personal and collective memory.

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Cindy Shearer

Sustaining Inspiration, Not a Fleeting Thing

Cindy Shearer

(30-minute presentation)

Room 2: 16:30-17:00

In *Stay with Writing*, (Bloomsbury Academic, 2026), I share how I've learned "being inspiring can be a very good thing, but being inspired can be a fleeting experience." In this presentation, I'll show writer-participants how inspiration is of most value when it not only motivates us--but connects us to a writing process we can rely on again and again. I'll offer two exercises that show writers how their writing itself is a source of inspiration, one they can use to start writing and one to gain insight into what they care about as well as choices that will sustain their work.

Cindy Shearer is Professor and Program Chair for the MFA in Interdisciplinary Arts and Writing at CIIS in San Francisco, CA. She also co-designed and supervises the Creative Dissertation Pathway within CIIS' PhD in East-West Psychology. She is a writer and text/image artist. *Stay with Writing* will be published by Bloomsbury Academic in January 2026.

Friday



Saturday



Siobhan Campbell

Creative Writing at the NHS: Collective Voice and the Care of NHS Workers

Siobhan Campbell and Mel McEvoy

(30-minute presentation)

Room 4: 16:30-17:00

This paper explores the insights, obstacles, and potential results of a creative writing project co-developed with NHS frontline health-care workers. The writing intervention, supported by the theory of dialogical communities (Wenger 1991), encourages reflection on the process and new ways of thinking about practice.

By developing fresh metaphors, symbolic through-lines and shared storytelling, participants uncover new forms of knowledge. Co-designed with health-care staff, the outcomes are both creative and critical. A collectively-written poem captures the nexus of the interface between Creative Writing, the lived experience of working in crisis, and the available supports for NHS medics.

We ask whether creative writing practice can inspire several different counterpoints to clinical documentation, opening space for deeper communication among patients and professionals, and shaping future in-service initiatives.

Siobhan Campbell is a poet and Senior Lecturer at The Open University whose work combines creative writing, social impact, and co-designed arts-based interventions. She develops creative writing methodologies now used by NGOs in conflict-affected regions and with the NHS. Siobhan's practice-led research contributes to creative innovation in health and community care, underpinned by a commitment to co-design and real-world impact.

Mel McEvoy has been an NHS nurse for forty years, with 24 as a Nurse Consultant in Palliative Care. Now researching creative writing for in-service settings, he holds an MA in Poetry and has published two collections of his work. Creative writing has helped him know himself and subsequently enables him to support others to find meaning through writing.

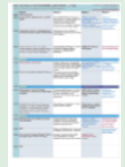
SATURDAY MORNING 8 NOVEMBER 2025

Start	End	Event
09:00	09:20	Room 1: Intro/Guest TBC
09:25	09:55	Room 1: <i>Essaying Place</i> Melanie Perry and Zoë Quick (30-minute presentation)
09:25	09:55	Room 2: 1) <i>Full STEAM Ahead: Exploring the influence of science fiction on the decision to study STEM subjects</i> Sarah Margree 2) <i>Archive fury: a novelist's rewriting of ancient sources</i> Molly Aitken (2 x 15-minute presentations)
09:25	10:25	Room 3: <i>Research & ethics for writing in/outside your lane</i> Alexia Casale (60-minute workshop)
09:25	10:25	Room 4: <i>Using our neurodiversity and unique perspectives to enhance creative style and improve mental health</i> Samantha Ford (60-minute workshop)
10:00	10:30	Room 1: <i>It belongs to all of us: considerations of writing with folklore</i> Sophie Parkes-Nield (30-minute presentation)
10:00	10:30	Room 2: <i>Introducing novice writers to storytelling using the Story Funnel</i> Anna Faherty (30-minute presentation)
10:35	11:05	Room 1: 1) <i>Open Return: How can creative writing research inspire caregiving within a family?</i> Sam Butler 2) <i>Inspiring Lives: Writing Through Cancer</i> Gail Webb (2 x 15-minute presentations)
10:35	11:05	Room 2: <i>Inspiring Writing? Threat or Tool? AI and the Creative Writing Classroom</i> Lubjana Matin- Scammell (30-minute presentation)
10:35	11:05	Room 3: <i>NAWE PhD Network</i> Ruth Moore and Elena Traina
10:35	11:05	Room 4: <i>Climate Writing with Form</i> Jocelyn Page (30-minute workshop)
11:05	11:20	Break
11:20	11:50	Room 1: <i>Tasting Notes</i> Lania Knight (30-minute workshop)
11:20	11:50	Room 2: <i>'Be Me. Write Free': the benefits of utilising writing for wellbeing as a form of 'play' inside and outside the secondary classroom</i> Isabel Caddy (30-minute presentation)
11:20	12:20	Room 3: <i>The Creative AI Writing Workshop</i> Sarah Gibson-Yates and Amy Spencer - 15 max capacity (60-minute workshop)
11:20	12:20	Room 4: <i>Wrangle Your Words - A Writing Workshop for Teachers</i> Chitra Soundar (60-minute workshop)
11:55	12:25	Room 1: <i>The Art of the Writer's Blog</i> Ruth Moore (30-minute presentation)
11:55	12:25	Room 2: <i>The Stories Behind Storytelling: Overcoming the Barriers to Telling Stories of Our Lives</i> Alison Mott and Dr Karen Jiyun Sung (30-minute presentation)
12:25	13:25	Lunch — including Room 3: NAWE North Bar 12:45-13:15 and Room 4: NAWE South Bar 12:45-13:15

Friday



Saturday



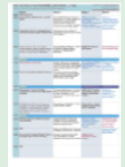
SATURDAY AFTERNOON 8 NOVEMBER 2025

Start	End	Event
13:25	13:55	Room 1: <i>Write, Speak, Connect: Creative Confidence On and Off the Page</i> Rachel Knightley (30-minute presentation)
13:25	13:55	Room 2: 1) <i>Queering Narratives in Creative Writing Teaching</i> Ben Fergusson 2) <i>Trans Inspirations: The Importance of Trans Poetry</i> Aryk Greenawal (2 x 15-minute presentations)
13:25	13:55	Room 3: <i>NAWE HE Committee open meeting</i> Joanne Reardon and Andrea Holland
13:25	14:25	Room 4: <i>Writing the Government Art Collection: a whistle-stop tour</i> Claire Collison (60-minute workshop)
14:00	14:30	Room 1: 1) <i>(Un)Finished Product: Process as inspiration in memoir</i> Harley Ryley 2) <i>The Ethics of Interviewing in Creative Nonfiction: Impact of Interviewees' Withdrawals on a Project's Outcome</i> Olga Kenton (2 x 15-minute presentations)
14:00	14:30	Room 2: <i>Going Going: Solastalgia in Rural England</i> Beth Gaylard (30-minute presentation)
14:00	14:30	Room 3: <i>What makes a 'writer'?</i> Katherine Davis-Wright (30-minute presentation)
14:30	14:45	Break
14:45	15:15	Room 1: <i>Writing Europe from different Europes</i> Lorena Breidis (30-minute presentation)
14:45	15:15	Room 2: <i>Divergent Writers: Thriving as Creative Writing Practitioners, Students, and Teachers Despite Ableism</i> Christie Collins, Saul Lemerond, Leigh Camacho Rourks, Rachel Carney (30-minute presentation)
14:45	15:45	Room 3: <i>Space for Poetry: Facilitating Writing for Wellbeing</i> Natasha Ryan and Danny Pandolfi Natasha Ryan and Danny Pandolfi (60-minute workshop)
14:45	15:15	Room 4: <i>Writing Revolution: 101 tips and ideas for working with young writers</i> Beverley Ward (30-minute workshop)
15:20	15:50	Room 1: TBC
15:20	15:50	Room 2: <i>Writing for Wellbeing for Survivors of Religious Trauma</i> Zoe Lambert (30-minute presentation)
15:20	16:20	Room 4: <i>Inspiring Writing in Interesting Times</i> Sarah Bower (60-minute workshop)
15:55	16:25	Room 1: <i>Non-Innocent Creative Writing: Poetry in the Digital Age in China</i> Yilin Tang (30-minute presentation)
15:55	16:25	Room 2: <i>So bad, it's good: using cliché and collaboration to make metaphor less scary</i> Anna Polonyi (30-minute presentation)
15:55	16:25	Room 3: <i>Anaphora and Butterflies</i> Andrea Holland (30-minute workshop)
16:30	17:00	Room 1: Inspiring Writing – Plenary (speakers TBC)

Friday



Saturday



SATURDAY 8 NOVEMBER 2025

Essaying Place

Melanie Perry and Zoë Quick

(30-minute presentation)

Room 1: 09:25-09:55

This presentation discusses 'self-in-site-writing' (Rendell 2010) workshops held annually for architecture Masters students at the Centre for Alternative Technology (CAT). Through a series of walking, 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 will discuss how this may hold relevance for other disciplines and settings.

Mel Perry is a poet and therapeutic writing facilitator from Wales and is currently Co-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.

1) Full STEAM Ahead: Exploring the influence of science fiction on the decision to study STEM subjects

Sarah Margree

2) Archive fury: a novelist's rewriting of ancient sources

Molly Aitken

(2 x 15-minute presentations)

Room 2: 09:25-09:55

1) At a time when there is international concern over the number of students studying STEM, and an anticipated shortfall of qualified persons, a better understanding of what influences these decisions will play a key role in encouraging more people to enter this arena. This paper examines interviews with 22 STEM professionals to discover what influenced their decision to undertake education and careers within STEM.

Analysis of this data is then used to determine what role science fiction played in their decision, and how we can use this to write inspiring science fiction to encourage future generations to study STEM subjects.

In the second year of a PhD in creative writing, Sarah holds an MA in Creative Writing and a Postgraduate Certificate in Space Science. A lifelong science fiction fan, Sarah has always been intrigued by humanity's future in space and hopes to encourage others to join her.



Molly Aitken
(photo: Christy Ku)

2) Have you heard of archive fever; that affective tremor researchers feel when bringing something new to light? Well, my experience in the archive was not a fever. It was a fury, a fury brought on by the misogynistic writings I encountered. This presentation will discuss how I worked to transform this fury through writing a novel, illustrating how I used (and abused) ancient sources to construct a voice for a woman who has remained mostly voiceless. By embodying creative history theory, I transformed my rage into a new archival source. I hope to inspire you to do the same.

Molly Aitken is the author of *Bright I Burn*, a New Yorker and BBC Best Books of 2024. The novel was shortlisted for the Royal Society of Literature's Encore Prize. Molly's debut was *The Island Child*. Her short fiction has been published in Ploughshare for which she won the Alice Hoffman Prize for Fiction 2023 and

Friday

Saturday

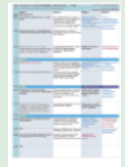
SATURDAY 8 NOVEMBER 2025

has been dramatised for BBC Radio 4. Molly is PhD student at Sheffield Hallam University in Creative Writing and History.

Friday



Saturday



Alexia Casale

Research & ethics for writing in/outside your lane

Alexia Casale

(60-minute workshop)

Room 3: 09:25-10:25

Inspiring writing provides 'mirrors, windows and sliding-glass-doors' (Rudine Sims Bishop), allowing us to see ourselves, peek into other lives, and vicariously walk in others' shoes, developing empathy, understanding, and positive attitudes to diversity across society. Writers must create some characters 'from the outside' if we're to represent the diverse world around us. Doing this sensitively, ethically, and with an understanding of how research can help us deliver quality work and not do harm, is key. Teaching in this space affords opportunities to help writers develop individual ethical stances and understand how to do deep, effective research to actualise their values.

Dr Alexia Casale is an author of YA fiction (Faber), adult crime (Viking/Penguin Random House), and a Reader at Bath Spa University, where she leads the MA Writing for Young People + MAWYP Online. She has a particular interest in how fiction can support the embrace of human rights.



Samantha Ford

Using our neurodiversity and unique perspectives to enhance creative style and improve mental health

Samantha Ford

(60-minute workshop)

Room 4: 09:25-10:25

The innovative creativity of many writers and artists throughout history has been attributed to their neurodivergent traits, examples being Lewis Carroll and Vincent Van Gogh. Cognitive differences, such as visual and non-linear thinking, may have enabled an unconventional approach, but with our own unique blend of experiences, influences and genetics, could we all be described as neurodiverse and, if so, how can we embrace these differences and use them to our creative advantage? This workshop will explore new ideas and avenues for inspiration, using Sammi's own work and the mental health journey which led to her AuDHD diagnosis.

Sammi Ford is a linguist, former RAF officer, business owner, artist and award-winning published writer and poet. She was diagnosed with AuDHD late in life and champions awareness of mental health using her unique blend of knowledge when delivering workshops, performing poetry and appearing as a keynote speaker.



Sophie Parkes-Nield (photo: Graeme Cooper)

It belongs to all of us: considerations of writing with folklore

Sophie Parkes-Nield

(30-minute presentation)

Room 1: 10:00-10:30

Folklore has long provided inspiration, intrigue and source material for writers, but should we consider how – and why – we work with it? Based on insights from both a chapter in the forthcoming Routledge Handbook on Heritage and Creative Practice and her practice-based PhD, Dr Sophie Parkes-Nield's presentation examines intangible cultural heritage, specifically the calendar custom, and the ethics of its representation in fiction, with reflection on the development of her novel, *Thankstide* (forthcoming 2026), and concluding with provocations for writers looking to work with these folkloric events.

Sophie Parkes-Nield is a postdoctoral researcher on the AHRC-funded National Folklore Survey for England project (nationalfolkloresurvey.co.uk). She completed her PhD in 2024 at Sheffield Hallam University where she is an

SATURDAY 8 NOVEMBER 2025

Associate Lecturer in Creative Writing. She also teaches at Leeds Arts University. *Thankstide* will be published in 2026.



Anna Faherty

Introducing novice writers to storytelling using the Story Funnel

Anna Faherty

Room 2: 10:00-10:35 (30-minute presentation)

The Story Funnel is a new research-informed model of how readers and listeners respond to stories – from first attraction, through involvement and transportation, to new thoughts and behaviours.

By helping students and writers think about how stories impact themselves, the Story Funnel shows what writers must do to engage an audience and, when desired, influence them to take action.

This presentation introduces the Story Funnel and its corresponding story ingredients, showing how they can be used in a classroom context to inspire and support students new to storytelling.

Anna Faherty is an Associate Lecturer at London College of Communication, University of the Arts London. A non-fiction specialist with a diverse writing and training portfolio, Anna's clients include the National Library of Scotland, the Natural History Museum, Wellcome Collection and V&A.

1) Open Return: How can creative writing research inspire caregiving within a family?

Sam Butler

2) Inspiring Lives: Writing Through Cancer

Gail Webb

(2 x 15-minute presentations)

Room 1: 10:35-11:05

1) This presentation outlines recent collaborative creative writing research undertaken with my mother using autoethnographic poetic inquiry to explore how writing-research can inspire more ethical forms of caregiving within a family. The research centres my mother's experience of care, both as the recipient of problematic care from her parents during her childhood, and in her multiple caregiving roles throughout her adult life.

The presentation seeks to demonstrate how a bricolage writing-research methodology employing Participatory Action Research, autoethnography and poetic inquiry is itself a deeply transformational form of care.

Sam Goundry Butler is a writer and teacher living in South-East London. He was short-listed for the AONB Section of the Ginkgo Prize 2023. He holds a MA in Creative Writing and Education from Goldsmiths, University of London and continues to research relationships between poetry and the ethics of care.

2) A presentation on Maggie's Creative Writing Group and the powerful act of writing as testimony to our own lives. The group has been a feature of day care services provided at Nottingham for several years. How can poetry and creative writing help people with cancer to navigate their own lives, illnesses and vulnerabilities and to assert their own life stories?

This presentation will explore personal reflections of a poet (and ex social worker) running a weekly group of disparate voices, connected by their experience of cancer, its impact on them and their families. Does writing help?"

Gail's first pamphlet *The Thrill Of Jumping In* (Big White Shed, 2022) dealt with friendship, grief and loss. She is published in several magazines and anthologies. Gail has been a creative writing facilitator at Maggie's since 2021. Gail was shortlisted for poems in Bridport Poetry Prize, 2024 , Derby Poetry Festival 2024 and highly commended in Verve Competition 2025.

Friday



Saturday



SATURDAY 8 NOVEMBER 2025

Inspiring Writing? Threat or Tool? AI and the Creative Writing Classroom *Lubjana Matin-Scammell* **(30-minute presentation)** **Room 2: 10:35-11:05**

This discussion based workshop explores the rise of the evolving and highly controversial role of AI tools in the creative writing classroom. With input from NAWE members coming together, we'll examine how AI is already being used in the classroom, how to guide students in its ethical and purposeful use, instead of banning AI and whether true collaboration between human creativity and artificial intelligence is at all possible? Challenging traditional notions of authorship and originality, this session invites thinking on how educators can support students to harness AI, away from submitting AI generated work, but as a powerful tool for creative exploration, especially in engaging reluctant writers and expanding the boundaries of the writing process.

Lubjana Matin has taught secondary English in South London for over 17 years and led creative writing workshops worldwide, from New Zealand to South Africa. Passionate about Teacher-as-Writer, she uses creative writing to engage reluctant readers and writers, and has worked with Arvon, First Story, and other writing organizations.

Friday



Saturday



Ruth Moore (left)
and Elena Traina

NAWE PhD Network *Ruth Moore and Elena Traina* **Room 3: 10:35-11:05**

NAWE's PhD Network is for anyone currently undertaking a PhD in Creative Writing, for those who teach in Higher Education and for the PhD-curious! This session will allow you to meet others from across the country (perhaps the world...) to explore the big challenges and delights of PhD life.

You can share something about your research, ask a question or just listen in.

Hosted by Ruth Moore and Elena Traina (outgoing NAWE PhD reps) and guests.



Jocelyn Page

Climate Writing with Form *Jocelyn Page* **(30-minute workshop)** **Room 4: 10:35-11:05**

During this workshop, you will write a draft a Golden Shovel, a poetic form originally created in 2010 by Terrance Hayes in honour of Gwendolyn Brooks. After reading source verse by four writers – Mahealani Delaney, Joel M. Toledo, Mara Kilcher and Merlie Alunan - featured on the Greenpeace's Climate Justice Liability campaign's project, Just Poetry, we will respond to their work as we explore this form's techniques and effects.

As we approach the crafting of climate writing through the Golden Shovel, we will discover the ways that this particular play with language can gesture toward inspiration, homage and collaboration.

Jocelyn Page teaches Literature and Creative Writing at Goldsmiths College and is a Fellow of the Higher Education Association. She is a Resident Creative Consultant for the Just Poetry project at Greenpeace. Her poetry has been published widely, displayed on prayer flags and dropped from a helicopter over London.

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Lania Knight

Tasting Notes

Lania Knight

(30-minute workshop)

Room 1: 11:20-11:50

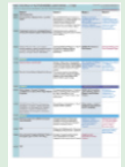
Join Lania Knight for Tasting Notes, a sensory-oriented, neurodivergent-friendly workshop session exploring creative writing and the senses. This workshop is an opportunity to experience connections and synergies between creative writing and the sensory experiences of taste, smell, sight and memory. You'll be invited to bring materials from your own environment and respond to short writing exercises, all designed to allow your senses to inspire your writing! This event is suitable for beginners and seasoned writers of any genre. Persons who identify as neurodivergent in any way are welcome, as well as allies and those curious about neurodivergence and creativity.

Dr Lania Knight is a Senior Lecturer in Creative Writing at The Open University. Born in New Orleans, she now lives in Cumbria near the Howgills. She writes fiction, non-fiction and poetry. Her research interests include creativity, neurodivergence and how we respond with art of all kinds to place and environment.

Friday



Saturday



Isabel Caddy

'Be Me. Write Free': the benefits of utilising writing for wellbeing as a form of 'play' inside and outside the secondary classroom

Isabel Caddy

(30-minute presentation)

Room 2: 11:20-11:50

As an English teacher, I witnessed the power of creative writing when I opened a space for young people's voices; now, as a writing for wellbeing facilitator for secondary schools, I champion the benefits of writing purposely set apart from mark schemes and grades. My programme has been designed with consideration of Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi's *Flow Theors*' and ideas surrounding autotelic learning. 'Play' is often wrongly synonymised with being infantile, as opposed to a recognised way of learning at secondary level. However, creating autonomous, freewriting opportunities for young people in the classroom can develop their confidence and skills as writers.

Isabel taught English for 17 years: she was Second in Department, new teacher mentor, and coach. She is beginning a PhD, supervised by the Creative Writing and Education departments, to further research writing for wellbeing; to complete her teaching memoir; and to explore the interconnectivity of staff and student wellbeing. She is completing my MA at the University of Gloucestershire in Creative and Critical Writing, before the PhD begins in October.



Sarah Gibson-Yates

The Creative AI Writing Workshop

Sarah Gibson-Yates and Amy Spencer

(60-minute workshop)

Room 3: 11:20-12:20 (note 15 max capacity)

Whatever we may think of generative AI, engaging with AI tools creatively and critically can offer new ways for thinking about and doing creative writing. It can also provide valuable new ways of developing AI literacy skills and future-shaping the kind of AI we want to see, inviting new stories into the world in the process. In this playful and fun workshop, we will explore the synergies, differences and limitations between two text generation methods: the traditional creative writing workshop prompt and popular AI prompt engineering methods. We will experiment and compare outputs from the three most widely used generative AI chatbots; ChatGPT, Google Gemini, Claude Sonnet.

Please make sure you are registered with these chatbots prior to the session. The free plan is fine. Please don't use them on the day to maximise the free use limit available in the workshop time.

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Gibson Yates is a Senior Lecturer and creative writing researcher at Anglia Ruskin University. Her research investigates creative human-machine collaboration across storytelling in fiction and film.

Recent British Academy-funded work explored applications of generative AI for screenwriting and filmmaking, creating a framework for AI-assisted creative writing. Her doctoral research at ARU established frameworks for digitally informed multimodal fiction writing, positioning collaborative authorship as vital for ethical and critical co-creation.

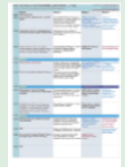
Amy Spencer is a Postdoctoral Research Fellow at the Centre for Creative and Cultural Industries at Bath Spa University.

Spencer has led multiple funded projects investigating AI's creative and ethical impact on creative practice and the creative industries. Her research interests include digital writing, ambient literature, collaborative authorship and do-it-yourself cultural production.

Friday



Saturday



Chitra Soundar

Wrangle Your Words - A Writing Workshop for Teachers

Chitra Soundar

(60-minute workshop)

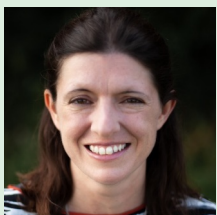
Room 4: 11:20-12:20

If you want to teach creative writing, there is an argument to try your hand at it first. Chitra Soundar has fun ways to create a writing buzz amongst children and adults of all ages.

In this workshop *Wrangle Your Words*, Chitra will introduce teachers to writing activities that helps writers flex their imagination and wrangle their words into a story or a poem, whatever your age and experience! From warm-up exercises to character studies there are fun ways to engage with writing.

Come prepared to flex your own imagination, wrangle your words and write a story or a poem.

Chitra Soundar is an internationally published, award-winning author of children's books, writer of kids TV and audio. She has published over 60 books for children of all ages, across genre and format. She has run over 1,000 school workshops and has visited schools across UK, Europe and North America.



Ruth Moore

The Art of the Writer's Blog

Ruth Moore

(30-minute presentation)

Room 1: 11:55-12:25

We are constantly told to promote ourselves as writers and educators - but how do we navigate the ever-changing landscape of tools and technologies available? Do we jump on the Substack train or hitch our wagon to visual micro-content providers like BookTok or Insta?

This session will suggest approaches to choosing a platform that works for you with a focus on the longform possibilities of the writer's blog. We will explore what makes for inspiring content and how to find an audience for your work. Whether you already blog or are curious, join us to illuminate this practical art form.

Ruth Moore writes fiction and poetry. Her work appears in collections from the Historical Writers' Association & Bridport Prize, and she won the 2020 Bath Children's Novel Award.

A NAWE trustee whose career spans creative education and project management, Ruth is completing a Creative Writing PhD at Exeter.

SATURDAY 8 NOVEMBER 2025



Alison Mott (left)
and Dr Karen
Jiyun Sung

The Stories Behind Storytelling: Overcoming the Barriers to Telling Stories of Our Lives

Alison Mott and Dr Karen Jiyun Sung
(30-minute presentation)
Room 2: 11:55-12:25

The benefits of telling 'stories of self' in writing and group work are well-documented, positively impacting on mental health, personal wellbeing and community engagement.

Yet people are often unexpectedly reluctant to take part in activities where they'll share even the simplest, most innocuous stories about themselves.

Alison Mott and Karen Jiyun Sung will discuss some of the protocols they've adopted to ease participants into believing in themselves enough to tell their own stories.

Alison Mott is a writer, teacher and creative facilitator who uses writing and storytelling activities to strengthen understanding and connection in communities.

Dr Karen Jiyun Sung is an illustrator and researcher in participatory storytelling. She leads community-led practices to democratise the arts in amplifying marginalised voices from multifaceted backgrounds.

LUNCH: 12:25-13:25 INCLUDING:
ROOM 3: 12:45-13:15 NAWE NORTH BAR
ROOM 4: 12:45-13:15 NAWE SOUTH BAR

If an online conference could have a virtual bar this would be it! Bring a beverage and a bite and drop in for some lunchtime networking. Your genial host is a NAWE trustee and we would love to see you. On Friday we welcome members from the east and west, and on Saturday the north and south. Wherever you are on the map, choose your region and come on in.



Rachel Knightley

Write, Speak, Connect: Creative Confidence On and Off the Page

Rachel Knightley
(30-minute presentation)
Room 1: 13:25-13:55

The greatest writing advice is never about the writing.

Fiction and non-fiction author, creative writing lecturer and qualified business and personal coach Dr Rachel Knightley shares coaching tools to build creative confidence in the writer, for life, work and art.

Whether you're looking to reconnect with yourself and your own writing, or for a creative recharge you can share with students or colleagues, Dr Rachel's gently powerful facilitation is a safe and inspiring platform to explore the unique palette of memory and imagination, observations and questions that make you the unique writer you are.

Dr Rachel Knightley is a fiction and non-fiction author, creative writing lecturer and qualified business and personal coach.

She founded the Writers' Gym membership and podcast and runs regular workshops, courses and coaching sessions at Riverside Studios, Olympic Studios, Roehampton University, the Century Club and online.

Friday

Saturday

SATURDAY 8 NOVEMBER 2025

1) Queering Narratives in Creative Writing Teaching

Ben Fergusson

2) Trans Inspirations: The Importance of Trans Poetry

Aryk Greenawalt

(2 x 15-minute presentations)

Room 2: 13:25-13:55



Ben Fergusson
(Photo: Christia Werner)

1) In this presentation, novelist Dr Ben Fergusson (Senior Lecturer in Creative Writing, Cardiff Met) will discuss his research into the ways in which narratives function in genre fiction by queer writers, with a particular focus on the 'queer historical thriller'.

Taking Sarah Waters *Fingersmith* (2002) as an exemplary text in this subgenre, he will outline how these kinds of novels undermine the 'reproductive' plots of traditional genre fiction. He will go on to show how these explorations can be used in the creative writing classroom to help students understand and reconfigure classic narrative structures in their own writing.

I am an award-winning writer of novels, short stories and non-fiction, as well as as a literary translator. I am currently Senior Lecturer in Creative Writing at Cardiff Metropolitan University, and the Programme Director for the BA in English and Creative Writing.

2) This paper discusses how transgender and nonbinary poetry plays a crucial role in trans resistance and the affirmation of life in an increasingly hostile political climate by reinforcing autonomy and subjectivity. It explores the construction of the body within the trans poem, and it interrogates the interplay between and delineation of body-focused and political poetry.

Arising from my perspective as a poet working with trans writing within higher education, this paper examines trans poetry as an urgent force emergent both from the academic discipline of queer theory and from lived, shared experience and the community.

Aryk Greenawalt is a PhD candidate in creative writing at Lancaster University, where they work with trans poetry, queer theory, and animal poetics. They received their MA in creative writing from Bath Spa University. They have had poetry and prose published in numerous online and in-print journals.

NAWE HE Committee open meeting

Joanne Reardon and Andrea Holland

Room 3: 13:25-13:55

Please join us for our Open Meeting to find out more about NAWE's Higher Education Committee. It's made up of writers who mostly teach Creative Writing in university settings. We attend three online meetings a year and carry out a number of duties which include working closely with other subject associations, raising concerns affecting the sector, and publishing our online, open access, peer-reviewed journal, *Writing in Practice*. You'll also see us Chairing NAWE conference sessions. Members of the Higher Education Committee are elected for a period of three years and the current Chair is Joanne Reardon and Deputy Chair is Andrea Holland.

Writing the Government Art Collection: a whistle-stop tour

Claire Collison

(60-minute workshop)

Room 4: 13:25-14:25

For 125 years, the Government Art Collection has been acquiring and displaying artworks that showcase British creativity and culture. For the past six years, Claire Collison has been creating educational content for the Collection.

Friday



Saturday



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Join her for this generative session as she takes you on a whistle-stop tour of artworks from the freely accessible online collection.

Claire Collison designs engagement resources, and runs Write From Art workshops in museums and art galleries. She was MaxLiteracy Awards programme coordinator for NAWA, 2022-4. Claire won the Women Poets' Prize, 2018. Her pamphlet *Placebo* is published by Blueprint. She is a founder member of Poets for the Planet.

Friday



1) (Un)Finished Product: Process as inspiration in memoir

Harley Ryley

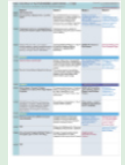
2) The Ethics of Interviewing in Creative Nonfiction: Impact of Interviewees' Withdrawals on a Project's Outcome

Olga Kenton

(2 x 15-minute presentations)

Room 1: 14:00-14:30

Saturday



Harley Ryley

1) While memoir has remained prolific, increasingly memoirists are moving away from the redemption arc narratives which characterised its 1990s boom.

Drawing from practice-based research into alternative models for memoir writing, and from memoirs such as *You Could Make This Place Beautiful* and *Notes Made While Falling*, this workshop will introduce exercises designed to expose, and capture inspiration from, the life-writing process.

By writing through our memory gaps and interrogating the things we avoid in our writing, the exercises seek to write into the spaces often smoothed out of the finished memoir product, inspiring truths beyond our carefully curated public personas.

Harley Ryley is a Creative Writing PhD student at the University of Sheffield. Her thesis will develop an innovative approach to memoir which exposes language constructs, challenges concepts of truth and unwrites genre rules. She is also Business Manager for, and runs writing workshops with, The Writers Workshop in Sheffield.

2) Interviewing has become a staple technique in creative nonfiction.

However, within the current discourse, little attention is paid to the ethical side of the question of what authors should do if an interviewee opts to withdraw from the project. Drawing on an example from my PhD (*Silent Voices of Russian Immigration* 2024), I discuss the ethical and creative implications of such an occurrence. I conclude with a brief discussion of the importance of consent forms and consider several ethical and legal aspects of interviewing.

Olga Kenton holds a PhD in Creative Writing from the University of Birmingham, where she currently teaches in the Department of Modern Languages. She is a module lead for an MA module, Narrative Enquiry, Interviewing, and Creative Nonfiction.

Her main interests are interviewing, creative nonfiction, and translingual creative writing.

Going Going: Solastalgia in Rural England

Beth Gaylard

(30-minute presentation)

Room 2: 14:00-14:30

As a species we can nurture or demolish fragile natural landscapes, with devastating effects on communities which inhabit them. Only some of us have the power to make these decisions.

Solastalgia is grief aroused when industrialisation, war or natural disaster destroys environments beloved by people, who are powerless to oppose massive detrimental changes to places they call home.

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This presentation explores why I was inspired to write about the contemporary concept of solastalgia for my Creative Writing PhD, briefly considering some of the authors and poets whose works touch on themes of environmental loss and its consequences.

Friday



What makes a 'writer'? An autoethnographic reflection on my positionality as a teacher, researcher and artist doing doctoral research in creative writing in secondary school students in the UK

Katherine Davis-Wright

(30-minute presentation)

Room 3: 14:00-14:30

Katherine Davis-Wright

My doctoral research uses ethnographically-oriented arts-based workshops and semi-structured interviews to look at how students' experiences of creative writing affect their authorial identities. Prior to data collection, I felt like an imposter, as my high workload left little time for me to work on my own writing and I simply had not prioritised my art.

This autoethnographic reflection narrates how taking time to prioritize my art reignited my passion for novel writing and uses the theoretical framework I created for my doctorate, based on Gee's affinity spaces and Craft's theories of creativity, to analyse my self-reflection.

Katherine Davis-Wright is a final-year doctoral student at the University of Sheffield and a secondary English teacher.

She is a novelist, having written her first novel as part of her MA in Creative Writing, and recently signed with a literary agent. She continues to write and embrace her artist-teacher-researcher identity.

Saturday



Writing Europe from different Europes

Lorena Briedis

(30-minute presentation)

Room 1: 14:45-15:15

As the most representative association of creative writing in continental Europe, the EACWP has consolidated its engagement within the pedagogical debate. Over history, one of the founding principles of Europe has been its multicultural and multilingual diversity. This fact has had a conspicuous impact on the different approaches, pedagogies, poetics and understanding of creative writing around the continent. This presentation intends to reflect about the consonances and complementary contrasts between continental Europe and the UK in this regard in order to strengthen further collaborative dialogues and initiatives, reinforced by our agreement of mutual membership with NAWE.

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



Divergent Writers: Thriving as Creative Writing Practitioners, Students, and Teachers Despite Ableism

Christie Collins, Saul Lemerond, Leigh Camacho Rourks, Rachel Carney

(30-minute presentation)

Room 2: 14:45-15:15

Clockwise from top left: Christie Collins, Saul Lemerond, Leigh Camacho Rourks, Rachel Carney

The forthcoming Bloomsbury Academic anthology, titled *Divergent Writers*, was created because too often creative writing spaces are largely engineered for neurotypical writers. Attitudes surrounding disability, illness, and neurodivergence range from reluctance to complete disregard, and impacted writers are often romanticized, erased, or both, as the writing world has little interest in accommodating those who do not fit neatly into ableist paradigms.

Our workshop panel, comprised of the anthology's two editor-contributors and two additional contributors, will discuss the forthcoming anthology, particularly as it applies to the teaching and facilitation of creative writing in university

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settings. We will also share our relevant experiences, suggest tips and interventions, answer questions, and discuss finding writing inspiration despite ableist writing beliefs and environments.

Dr. Christie Collins is a writer with ADHD, dyslexia, migraine, and RA. She completed a Ph.D. at Cardiff University and now teaches literature and creative writing at Mississippi State University in Starkville, Mississippi. She is the author of *The Art of Coming Undone*, and she is a co-editor for the forthcoming Bloomsbury anthology, titled *Divergent Writers*.

Originally from Green Bay, Wisconsin, Dr. Saul Lemerond is a dyslexic writer who lives with his family in Madison, Indiana, where he teaches at Hanover College. He has a book on podcasting with Bloomsbury Academic. His other work has appeared in *X-Ray JMWV*, *The Journal of Creative Writing Studies*, and elsewhere. He is a co-editor for the forthcoming Bloomsbury anthology, titled *Divergent Writers*.

Dr. Leigh Camacho Rourks is an Associate Professor at Beacon College, a small liberal arts college dedicated to educating neurodiverse students. Like her students, she is neurodivergent, with ADHD and a Disorder of Written Expression as well as chronic migraine and fibromyalgia. She won the St. Lawrence Book Award for her debut story collection, *Moon Trees and Other Orphans*.

Dr. Rachel Carney's debut poetry collection *Octopus Mind* is published by Seren Books and was selected as one of The Guardian's Best Poetry Books of 2023. Her poems explore the intricacies of neurodiversity and have been published in numerous magazines including *Poetry Wales*, *The Mackinaw*, and *The Ekphrastic Review*. She currently teaches at Cardiff University.

Friday

Saturday



Natasha Ryan (top) and Danny Pandolfi (Photo: MaddMann Photography)

Space for Poetry: Facilitating Writing for Wellbeing

Natasha Ryan and Danny Pandolfi

(60-minute workshop)

Room 3: 14:45-15:45

The Poetry Society's 'Steph's Poetry Space' project sees poets run workshops on poetry and wellbeing in secondary schools across the country. In this participatory session, The Poetry Society's education team and poet-facilitator Danny Pandolfi will outline how the project builds the '5 Ways to Wellbeing' – connect, be active, take notice, keep learning and share – into poetry workshop facilitation. We will guide you to explore how to use poems to generate wellbeing-inspired writing prompts and lead a discussion on how to consider wellbeing when facilitating.

Natasha Ryan is Education Manager at The Poetry Society. Danny Carlo Pandolfi is a poet, rapper, writer, educator and cultural producer. He has been featured on TedX, ITV News and BBC 1Xtra, reached #1 in the iTunes Hip Hop Chart, and recently had poetry published in *Aesthetica*, *New Statesman* and *Propel*.



Beverley Ward

Writing Revolution: 101 tips and ideas for working with young writers

Beverley Ward

(30-minute workshop)

Room 4: 14:45-15:15

If you're affronted by adverbials, confounded by clauses and longing to support young writers to go on an adventure without a story map, this is the workshop for you! Join writing facilitator Beverley Ward, as she takes you through a quick-fire range of tried and tested writing activities to inspire children and young people to write creatively.

Based on the book *Writing Revolution* (teacher's edition due for release in September 2025), this workshop is suitable for anyone who wishes to reignite

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a creative spark in young minds which are too often stultified by our current curriculum.”

Beverley Ward is a published author, writing coach, facilitator and founder of The Writers Workshop. She has run writing workshops for thirty years and runs Writing Clubs for children. She has also worked as an English teacher, youth worker and literacy consultant with libraries and literature organisations.

Friday



Zoe Lambert

Writing for Wellbeing for Survivors of Religious Trauma

Zoe Lambert

(30-minute presentation)

Room 2: 15:20-15:50

As a survivor of religious trauma, I've experienced its significant impact on my emotional and physical wellbeing. In 2024, I ran the first UK course in Writing for Wellbeing for Survivors of Religious Trauma. Co-facilitated by a BACP registered therapist, I adapted two models of writing for wellbeing to the needs of this demographic: the 'transformation-through-writing' model to facilitate participants' 're-storying' of their religious trauma (Lengelle & Meijers, 2009), as well as the 'self-directed neuroplasticity' model (Schwartz 2002; Adams & Ross, 2016). This presentation shares my reflections on running trauma-informed writing for wellbeing workshops which safeguard both participants and facilitators.”

I'm a Lecturer in Creative Writing at Lancaster University. My current practice-based research is my memoir-in-progress, *Her Voice When She Loves Me*, which explores mother daughter relationships in high control religion. I am also developing writing for wellbeing workshops for survivors of religious trauma.

Saturday



Sarah Bower

Inspiring Writing in Interesting Times

Sarah Bower

(60-minute workshop)

Room 4: 15:20-16:20

A workshop for writers in any genre in which we will explore how our writing can be inspired by the times we live in. What contribution can we make to debate about the crisis of capitalism, climate change, war, migration and the rise of a new totalitarianism? We will write in response to readings from a variety of texts which engage with crises from the past in order to explore how we can write about now.

Sarah Bower is an associate lecturer at the Open University where she is also currently studying for a PhD in creative and critical writing. Her research focus is on the use of anachronistic language in historical fiction. She is the author of four novels, three of them historical. 60 minutes including time for readings and discussion.



Yilin Tang

Non-Innocent Creative Writing: Poetry in the Digital Age in China

Yilin Tang

(30-minute presentation)

Room 1: 15:55-16:25

Following the concept of “non-innocent writing” (Haraway, 1991), the presentation firstly typifies internet poetry on the Chinese social media platform Xiaohongshu. A grounded analysis of 100 poems reveals three significant themes: poems about women, everyday life, and nature, with a concise yet avant-garde style.

The presentation will then propose inspiring, radical, and embodied pedagogical approaches to non-innocent creative writing through prosthetic devices in the digital age. It highlights that web poems are not just poems about the internet or merely published on the internet as a platform, but serve as materialised digital spaces for writing with and through the internet.”

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Yilin Tang (Jolin) is a PhD student in the Faculty of Education at the University of Cambridge, serving as President of the Cambridge Poetry and Prose Society. Her recent chapter appears in *Empathy in Creative Writing: Ethics, Diversity and Communication* (2025, Palgrave Macmillan), while presented at Great Writing Conference (2024).

Friday



Anna Polonyi
(photo: Carole Cassier)

So bad, it's good: using cliché and collaboration to make metaphor less scary

Anna Polonyi
(30-minute presentation)
Room 2: 15:55-16:25

Poetry is often perceived by students as rarified and inaccessible, which can be a challenge for any writing teacher. As a lapsed poet working primarily with non-poets, I propose to share a series of exercises on imagery that center playfulness and the possibility of failure.

This talk is useful if you are interested in hands-on activities to use in the classroom: the first relies on cliché to provoke discussion, the second encourages students to review terrible similes and produce their own, and the third uses collaboration to illustrate the unexpected gifts of metaphor.

Anna Polonyi is a French-American-Hungarian writer and poet. She holds an MFA in fiction from the Iowa Writers' Workshop and teaches with the Iowa Young Writers' Studio and Ecole Centrale de Nantes, a French engineering school. She is the co-founder of Nantes Writers' Workshop, a summer intensive course.

Saturday



Anaphora and Butterflies

Andrea Holland
(30-minute workshop)
Room 3: 15:55-16:25

This workshop explores the power of anaphora -- the intentional repetition of words or phrases at the beginning of a line -- as a lyrical device. We'll look at how anaphora can inspire our writing; how it can help create rhythm, build momentum and unify the concerns of a poem (and, in some cases, in prose too!)

We will share a few examples of the technique by established writers and participants will have the opportunity to engage in guided writing exercises and experiment with their own lyrical voice via anaphora. This is a chance to explore anaphora and harness it to establish voice, deepen meaning, add intensity and unify themes in our writing.

Andrea Holland is a poet and has taught creative writing at the University of East Anglia for many years. She has two collections *Broadcasting* (Gatehouse Press) and *Borrowed* (Smith/Doorstop) and specialises in cross-arts collaborative practices. She is Deputy Chair of NAWE's Higher Ed committee and sits on the Board of EACWP.

Inspiring Writing – Plenary

(speakers TBC)
Room 1: 16:30-17:00