



Association for the Study of Literature and Environment, UK and Ireland (ASLE-UKI)
 Biennial Postgraduate Conference 2026
 The Arcanum of Apocalyptic Anthropocenes
 University of Chichester
 3rd – 4th, September, 2026

Keynote Speakers

- Professor Hugh Dunkerly (University of Chichester)
- 2nd Speaker TBC

The 2026 postgraduate conference for the Association for the Study of Literature and Environment, UK and Ireland (ASLE-UKI) will be hosted by the Arcanum of Apocalyptic Anthropocenes at the University of Chichester. ASLE-UKI welcomes participation from postgraduate and early career scholars, readers, and creative practitioners interested in the relationships between literatures, arts, environments and cultures – past, present, or future – from anywhere in the world.

Conference Theme: No Future? Hopeful Worldings in Haunted Times

In the preface of the Italian philosopher Federico Campagna's *Technic and Magic*, Timothy Morton sketches out a disturbing image of our current times. A crumbling reality caught in the constant act of consuming itself (2018: x) however he is not the first. The Sex Pistols' iconic God Save the Queen (1977) rhapsodises the non-coming "no future for you", whilst Francis Fukuyama declared the end of history (1989). The rise of the field of hauntology from Derrida (1993), Fisher (2014), through to Coverly (2020) decries a future that expands and contracts upon a single moment of never-ending nowness. There is no future beyond. Or is there? Haraway's notion of chthonic companionship (Haraway, 2016) encourages kin-making with more-than-human species as an act of care influencing new-worlds.

As with previous ASLE-UKI conferences, we are happy to receive papers on any aspect of literature, culture, creative practice and the environment, but we particularly welcome responses to the following prompts:

Nostalgia as a projection of future worlding: our habit of reconstitution and reliance on sequels, prequels, and remakes risks the possibility of breaking out of 'the grip of a *formal* nostalgia' (Fischer, 2014: 8). Can nostalgia be utilised in new ways to be a "projection" in/on to a future, 'unshackled from its former connections with actual reality' (Campagna, 2025: 269) or is it doomed to always be a project of conservative longing for a non-existent lost past, providing a plan of action for that past's 'reestablishment in the present' (Campagna, 2025: 296). What can these "fantasies" do to provide a way beyond the "no future", and

what role can literature play in this task? Weary of the fragile nature of the 'double exposure [of] home and abroad, past and present, of dream and everyday life' (Boym, 2001), can nostalgia ever be utilised in fresh ways?

Ending stories of Endling species: An Endling is the last surviving member of a species (Webster & Erickson, 1996), but do the names we give them, 'Turgi', 'Sudan', 'Lonesome George', tell us more about ourselves than the species these nomenclatures were meant to memorialise? Is the naming of an Endling an anthropocentric attempt of 'laying claim' (Pyne, 2022) to their stories, to 'empathise with the imminent end of a whole animal's line' (Jørgensen, 2017), or simply a refusal to take response-ability (Haraway, 2012) for our actions? As the list of Endlings grows ever longer, what can these more-than-human figures tell us about our own place on that list? Who will be the Endling of the Human Species, and how will their final stories be documented?

Haunted Environments: Haunted environments, landscapes, ecosystems and buildings, are layered with traces of the political, historical or social. Residues of previous violences or displaced lives linger within the sites where 'both [the] absent and present, challenge our belief in the unbroken progression of linear time' (Coverley, 2020: 11). Within *The Arts of Living on a Damaged Planet* (Tsing et al, 2024) ghosts are found in various formats: human and nonhuman species, the histories of marginalised peoples, the ecological aftermath of human-caused disasters and the spectral presence of minute particles. The lives of each of these acting as a reminder of their troubled past, and potential 'imagined futures' (Tsing et al., 2017: 15), which they may find themselves returning to. What other revenant figures are found within haunted environments, and what may they be trying to communicate?

Finding feral identity in response to human systems and environments: Tsing acknowledges a feral nonhuman being as one which destabilises the boundaries between "wild" (nothing to do with humans) and "domestic" (under human control) by instead 'engag[ing] with human projects, but not in the way the makers of those projects designed.' (Tsing et al., 2024: 19) Feral beings find a way of evolving despite the development of human systems found within their shared environment. As feral identities continue to develop and grow, what will these environments begin to look like over time? Will humans find a way to not only live alongside these identities but instead move towards a place of learning from them and their systems?

Kin-making as a mode of practice: The 2016 text *Staying with the Trouble* by Haraway acts somewhat as a call to action, suggesting a need to confront the ecological crisis and foster resilient ways of living through engaging with "sympoiesis" (making-with) to practice companionship. Entangled relations across multispecies offer approaches to consider how kinship is formed. Haraway suggests 'SF' as a methodological framework (science fictions, speculative feminism, science fantasy, speculative fabulation, science fact, and also string figures) (2016: 27) in which new possibilities can be imagined. How may these modes of practice be used to understand kinship between humans and more-than-human?

Submission Process: We welcome proposals for 15-minute papers/presentations/performances (we are taking a liberal approach to what a performance is). To propose a contribution please submit an abstract of around 250 words and a brief speaker biography by **31 March 2026** (although earlier submissions would be welcome) using this form: https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSf-RIQfELmENAtOWejR_hvTmNsgBIIWWyRjOfS6vmnvdpCcw/viewform?usp=dialog

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