

Call for Papers and Sessions

Fantasy's Present Pasts

The inaugural European Conference on the Fantastic

University of Glasgow

Tuesday 23rd – Thursday 25th June 2026

Keynote Speakers

Stefan Ekman

(author of *Here be Dragons* and *Urban Fantasy: Exploring Modernity through Magic*)

Sofia Samatar

(author of *A Stranger in Olondria*, *The Winged Histories* and *The Practice, the Horizon, and the Chain*)

Helen Young

(author of *Race and Popular Fantasy Literature* and *Global Medievalism* (with Kavita Mudan Finn))

The [Centre for Fantasy and the Fantastic at the University of Glasgow](#) is delighted to invite proposals for 'Fantasy's Present Pasts'. This will be the first in a series of annual European Conferences on the Fantastic organised by groups of scholars across the continent, currently involving clusters in Denmark, Germany, Poland, Scandinavia and the UK.

'Fantasy's Present Pasts' invites innovative papers that explore works of Fantasy or consider genre culture more broadly. However, it focuses particularly on the ways in which speculative genres engage with the interplay of past and present. It hopes to explore the kinds of history on which works of Fantasy currently draw; the ways in which pasts present themselves in genre texts; and the manners in which we currently model the diverse pasts of genres across different cultures and traditions. As the inaugural conference in a new series, it hopes to take stock of where we are in genre studies and collaboratively to think through where we would like to get to.

Topics papers might address include, but are not limited to:

- The ways that pasts burst into the present in fantastical works
- The intermingling of actual and fictional histories
- The types of histories that genre texts draw upon and omit
- Fantastic histories across different media
- The histories of genres, subgenres and microgenres

- Different forms and scales of time: personal, societal, planetary, universal
- Diverse temporalities: indigenous, queer and culturally specific conceptions
- The ways in which our present pasts might evolve into brighter futures

We invite proposals for 20-minute papers to be presented in person; these should be submitted using the [paper proposal form](#). The form asks for a 250- to 350-word abstract supplemented by a list of 3 to 10 primary and secondary references (indicating the works with which your paper will engage) and a 100-word biographical note, as well as some brief information on dietary and accessibility requirements.

We also invite proposals for full panels, roundtables and workshops. For full panels, organisers should ask panellists to submit individual abstracts using the [paper proposal form](#), entering the panel name in the appropriate field. Organisers should also submit an overall panel description using the [session proposal form](#). For roundtables and workshops, please submit the [session proposal form](#), clearly describing your proposed session and listing all contributors (with contact details).

The Call for Papers and Sessions closes on **Friday 12th December** (11:59pm GMT). The organisers will respond to all proposals before the end of January to allow ample time for travel arrangements to be made. Alongside Glasgow's many accommodation options, the organisers have arranged a booking code for affordable student rooms; this will be made available when registration opens.

If you have any questions about the conference, please email arts-fantasy@glasgow.ac.uk or Matthew.Sangster@glasgow.ac.uk.

Hope to see many of you in Glasgow in June!

