

# First-Person Writing, Four-Way Reading

A three-day interdisciplinary research conference on literature, history, medical humanities & ethnography

## Call for Papers

**Proposals are invited for short papers  
in the ESF research conference  
*First-Person Writing, Four-Way Reading***

Among its strategic activities the ESF Standing Committee for the Humanities (SCH) is running an interdisciplinary research conference on the use of the textual first person in four fields of the humanities. The conference will take place in London, **Thursday 1 – Saturday 3 December 2011.**

### What is ESF?

The European Science Foundation (ESF) provides a platform for its Member Organisations to advance European research and explore new directions for research at the European level.

Established in 1974 as an independent non-governmental organisation, the ESF currently serves 78 Member Organisations across 30 countries.

The **ESF Standing Committee for the Humanities (SCH)** covers the following disciplines: anthropology, archaeology, art & art history, classical studies, cognitive sciences, history, history & philosophy of science, linguistics, literary studies, Oriental & African Studies, pedagogical and educational research, music & musicology, philosophy, psychology, religious studies & theology.

For further information, see:

<http://www.esf.org/humanities>



### Scientific scope

This Research Conference, coorganised by Professors Naomi Segal (UK: literature), François-Joseph Ruggiu (France: history), Petter Aaslestad (Norway: medical humanities) and Kristin Kuutma (Estonia: ethnography), aims to bring together researchers interested in the use of the textual first person in these four diverse fields of the humanities.

The term 'writing' is meant literally: the first-person material on which the project focuses is textual rather than oral, whether published or unpublished. The time-period covered is from the early modern period to the present day. The term 'reading' is meant primarily in a metaphorical sense: how do scholars from these four fields investigate, interpret or, more broadly 'use' first-person texts, what differences can be found in their methods and applications, and how can they debate these commonalities and differences in fruitful ways? It is hoped that, after the conference, further international and interdisciplinary research collaboration will follow.

Papers may cover one or more of the following issues – or others:

- How can one lie in the first-person?
- How can one tell the truth in the first person?
- Who speaks when no one speaks?
- Have new technologies entirely changed the way lives are narrated?
- What do egodocuments reveal about the growth of writing culture and writing practices from the end of the Middle Ages to today?
- How reliably do egodocuments reveal and describe bodily experiences?
- What is the scientific value of the different subcategories of egodocuments (diaries, memoirs, autobiographies, journals...)?
- To what extent have literary forms influenced private or personal writings?
- What is fictional in autobiography? What is confessional in fiction?
- How is the exemplariness of first-person writing distinct from other modes?
- What happens to the body in the text?
- Is it possible not to write autobiographically?
- Medical humanities: questions related both to doctors' and patients' texts

- How has the patient been made audible and visible in medical narratives throughout history?
- Is it possible to make use of the patient's personal written narrative in clinical practice?
- How can we read first person literary or autobiographical texts on specific illnesses, with both a literary and a medical approach?
- Ethnographies of writing
- Ethnography as process and product
- Ethnography of written texts
- Situated listening/reading and reflexivity: ethnographic research strategies

There will be a mixture of presentation formats: plenary talks by keynote speakers, plenary panels, and parallel break-out groups: panels/workshops on particular themes or issues. All plenary talks will be given by invited speakers.

Proposals are invited herewith for papers to be given in the break-out sessions. Papers will be 20 minutes in length and should aim to stimulate lively debate. There will also be an opportunity to present your research in the format of a poster session.

For the draft programme, see <http://www.esf.org/index.php?id=8674>

## Submission

### Eligibility

There is no restriction on nationality, but an advanced level of English is required, since the Conference will be in English (papers may refer to writing in any language, presented in parallel text).

### Selection criteria and process

The selection will be carried out by the Programme Committee according to:

- Quality of proposed paper;
- Scientific quality: track record and potential;
- Suitable groupings;
- Parity of spread (nationality, seniority, sex, age, field).

### Documentation requested

The application material must be submitted through the web form available at <http://www.esf.org/index.php?id=8674> by **4 June 2011, 12:00 (noon) CET**.

The application form allows you to specify/include:

- Full name and affiliation if appropriate;
- Main field: history/literature/medical humanities/ethnography;
- Proposal (title and 200-word summary);
- One-page CV;
- Whether you are also applying for a subsidy;
- Whether if your proposed paper is not accepted, you would like to be considered for presenting a poster.

### Timeline for application and selection

18 April 2011

4 June 2011, 12:00 (noon) CET

By 30 June 2011

Call for Papers published

Deadline for submission of application

Notification of successful applicants

### Contacts:

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