



Calls for Papers

MeCCSA Postgraduate Network Conference 2026

Media and Sustainability

University of Reading,

Minghella Studios, Whiteknights Campus

Reading RG6 6BT

9th September 2026

Organising committee: Babsie Keulemans, Emir Anday and Elizabeth Heaney

*Any questions about the conference or the submission process can be directed to:
Babsie Keulemans – e.l.keulemans@pgr.reading.ac.uk*

The MeCCSA Postgraduate Network is pleased to invite postgraduate researchers and creative practitioners to submit proposals for the 2026 MeCCSA PGN Conference, hosted by

the Department of Film, Theatre & Television at the University of Reading.

The conference will take place in the Minghella Studios, on the University's Whiteknights campus. The event brings together postgraduate researchers working across media, communication, cultural studies, screen studies and performing arts to share their research in a supportive and inclusive environment.

Conference Theme: Media and Sustainability

At a moment shaped by ecological crisis, institutional precarity, technological acceleration, and shifting labour conditions, questions of sustainability have become central to the fields of media, communication, cultural studies, screen studies and performing arts. The theme invites participants to explore how media industries, forms, cultures, and research practices endure, adapt, resist or reimagine themselves within unstable or emerging environments. We also encourage reflection on the sustainability of academic and creative labour, and the infrastructures that support media work.

These conversations build on a growing body of critical work across media, screen, performing arts and cultural research that engage with sustainability through questions of representation, creative practice, aesthetics, institutions and the conditions under which work is made and sustained (for example in the work of scholars such as Salma Monani, Sean Cubitt, Adam O'Brien, Phaedra Pezzullo, Nicole Starosielski, Laura U. Marks and Lisa Woynarski).

The University of Reading provides a particularly resonant setting for these conversations. The University was named Sustainable University of the Year 2025 by *The Times* and *The Sunday Times Good University Guide*, recognising its sustained commitment to environmental responsibility.

Participants are encouraged to interpret the conference theme broadly and creatively. Submissions from interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary perspectives are warmly welcomed, including practice-based work.

Areas of Interest:

The following areas are intended as points of orientation rather than limitations, and proposals that speak to the theme in other ways are very welcome.

Possible areas of interest include, but are not limited to:

- **Sustainable media industries:** policy, production cultures, funding, and independent practice.
- **Sustainable creative and research methodologies:** slow scholarship, decolonial and feminist methods, ethics of care, collaboration and community partnership.

- **Environmental sustainability and media:** climate communication, ecocinema, eco-media, green production, and environmental representation.
- **Sustainable archives and preservation:** memory, heritage, obsolescence, and care for audiovisual materials.
- **Sustainable digital technologies and infrastructures:** platforms, AI, media infrastructure, resource extraction, and the environmental costs of data.
- **Sustainable identities and communities:** queer, Indigenous, diasporic, and disabled media-making. Visibility, survival, and continuity.
- **Sustaining the self:** wellbeing, burnout, emotional labour, and the lived realities of postgraduate research.

Formats and Participation

In recognition of the diverse ways postgraduate researchers work and communicate research, we invite proposals in a range of formats, including:

- Paper presentations (15 minutes)
- Panel proposals (typically 3-5 named contributors)
- Practice-based or creative contributions, including film, audiovisual work, performance or artistic practice

We particularly welcome work-in-progress and contributions from early-stage postgraduate researchers.

Submission Guidelines

Proposals should be submitted via this [LINK](#) by Friday 15th May 2026

Please provide the following information:

- **Name**
- **Email address**
- **Institutional affiliation**
- **Year of study (e.g. MA, MRes, first-year PhD, final-year PhD etc.)**
- **Preferred format of presentation (paper, panel proposal, or practical/creative contribution)**
- **An abstract of up to 300 words outlining the focus of your proposed contribution.**
- **Five key words or short phrases related to your submission.**

· **A short biography of up to 150 words, including your research interests.**

Panel proposals should clearly identify a panel chair and include abstracts and biographies for all contributors.

Bursaries and Fee Waivers

We are pleased to offer a limited number of £50 bursaries and fee waivers to support participation from researchers facing financial barriers.

Applicants who wish to be considered for a bursary will be asked to complete a short additional statement as part of the submission process. This statement will be used to support fair and transparent allocation of bursaries, with attention to access and diversity and inclusion.

Hybrid and Remote Participation

The conference will take place primarily in person at the University of Reading. Where possible, a limited number of remote presentations will be accommodated to support access needs.

Due to logistical and technical constraints, remote presentations will be capped at approximately 10% of the total programme. Requests for remote delivery will therefore be considered on a case-by-case basis, with priority given to presenters for whom in-person attendance is not feasible.

Presenters wishing to be considered for remote participation should indicate this at the point of submission. Confirmation of remote presentation slots will be provided following the review process.