

## [Updated CFP and Deadline Reminder: Association for the Study of Literature and Environment \(ASLE\) 2019 Conference](#)

Discussion published by Amy McIntyre on Friday, December 7, 2018

[Updated ASLE 2019 Call for Papers](#) (PDF)

Conference Website: <https://www.asle.org/conference/biennial-conference/>

**ASLE 2019 Conference: Paradise on Fire**

**June 26-30, 2019**

**University of California, Davis**

**Submission deadline is December 15, 2018 at 11:59pm EST**

### **CALL FOR PAPERS**

#### **Note from the organizers:**

The name of the conference was not drawn from any specific event, but from the long literary imagining of California as another world, as we hope the call for panels and papers have made clear. The title was intended to be metaphorical, and took on an unintended new meaning in light of the tragic November 2018 Camp Fire, which destroyed the town of Paradise CA. ASLE mourns for the loss of life, home and habitat in that fire, and will continue to take steps to assist the fire's victims. We will reach out to affected communities as part of our conference effort as well. ASLE is a community dedicated to grappling with difficult, long-term and often irresolvable issues. Despite its unintended resonance we have retained the conference's title to remember what happened in California and to memorialize the tragic loss of life and home. To back away from a conference title that has proven to be disturbingly prescient, even though it is now a difficult, even problematic title, would be to sidestep the trouble rather than dealing intellectually, artistically, and pragmatically with reality. We request that our members think respectfully about the fire and its victims as they think through their presentations. ASLE will continue to seek out ways that our organization and conference attendees can aid the victims of this tragedy and assist their recovery. (To donate, see <https://www.asle.org/stay-informed/asle-news/2019-conference-call-papers/> for a list of organizations.)

This year the Association for the Study of Literature and Environment (ASLE) is experimenting with a two-part submission process intended to make the conference more participant-driven and democratic. The second step is this Call for PAPERS. **Proposals must be submitted by December 15, 2018 at 11:59 pm EST.**

A [diverse array of panels](#) has been chosen by the conference committee; this call for papers now invites anyone who wishes to submit a paper proposal for consideration for inclusion within a specific

panel, or to the open call, between October 15 and December 15, 2018. Panel organizers themselves will choose presenters from the submissions that they receive; the panel organizer will evaluate your proposal carefully and notify you of its final status by January 10, 2019. All paper proposals that do not find a home in the panel to which they were submitted will be considered for placement into one of the conference's open panels. If you submit to the open papers call, or you were not accepted to the original panel you applied to, conference organizers will evaluate your abstract and you will be notified by February 4, 2019 of its final status.

There are nearly 130 [panels seeking participants](#) on a variety of topics. Submitting to an accepted panel GREATLY increases your chances of being accepted to the conference, as there is very limited space on the schedule for panels formed via the open call for submissions. **Please Note: Only one paper submission per person is allowed.**

### Conference Theme: Paradise on Fire

The Biennial ASLE Conference will be held in Davis, California, in June 2019. Following a longstanding tradition, this conference gathers scholars and artists working in a diverse array of environmental humanities projects.

"Paradise" is the Greek word for a walled garden. What is it like to find yourself on the wrong side of that structure? Margaret Atwood's *MaddAddam* trilogy imagines a walled city with a climate-controlled dome called Paradise where genetic engineers create new forms of life, a bubble breached by human violence and climate catastrophe. In the sixteenth century Garcí Rodríguez de Montalvo imagined a place called "California," an island ruled by a dark skinned Amazonian queen with an Arabic name, Califia (*Las Sergas de Esplandián*). *California* was affixed to our maps by conquistadors, eager readers of Montalvo who believed the Earthly Paradise to be nearby. The price of its establishment was the genocide of the land's indigenous populations. The Greek word for Eden is "Paradise," a walled garden that bars entrance to most. Yet as Octavia Butler's dystopian vision of California on fire has shown, walls seldom lead to lasting safety and cannot exclude a turbulent world for long (*The Parable of the Sower*). If as Rebecca Solnit contends, "paradise arises in hell," when democratic communities are built from the ground up during times of disaster that leave us "free to live and act another way," what might life in catastrophic times entail for the environmental humanities? How should we write, teach, protest, live, and act during this era when "paradise" is on fire, figuratively and literally?

The Biennial ASLE Conference "Paradise on Fire" explores the connections among storytelling, real and imagined landscapes, future-making, activism, envired spaces, differential exclusions, long histories, and the disaster-prone terrains of the Anthropocene. Plenary addresses will be given by [Nnedi Okorafor](#), [Cherríe Moraga](#), [Melissa K. Nelson](#), and [Ursula Heise](#).

Topics may include but are certainly not limited to:

- reckoning with "paradise" in the face of colonial histories, environmental injustice, and ecological catastrophe
- the intimacy of myth to possibility, alternative realities, and catastrophe
- the reduction of diversity after the arrival of settler colonialists, especially but not only in California

- cross-cultural currents and global vectors, human and nonhuman
- the relation of imagination to discovery, settlement and transformation
- extinction, ecological imperialism, monstrosity, megafauna, and scale
- gender, race and ecology in dystopian times
- the proliferation of material and ideological walls around enclaves, states, and nations
- attending better to the people, animals, plants, and natural forces that find themselves on the wrong side of the gate, forced into communities not of their choosing, or forced to migrate without safe destinations
- radical welcome: creating more just, capacious, and humane modes of living together across species
- how the past matters to the imagination of a more capacious future
- climate fiction (CliFi), climate fact, and the future of ecological science studies
- archives of recovery and enclosure
- Afro-futurisms, Indigenous futurisms, Latinx futurisms, Asian futurisms, queer futurisms
- California and beyond: exceptionalism, secession, natural and unnatural disasters, green gentrification (the L.A. River), evacuation zones, Sanctuary Cities and States, gated communities, immigration and Dreamers, Trump's border wall, housing and being humane
- The Trans-Pacific: imaginaries, cultures, materialities, flows
- Fire as emblematic of the strange agencies and hybrid onto-epistemologies of the Anthropocene, and fire as emblematic of the passion, energy, and incendiary creativity of activism

**Submitting your Proposal:**

[Paper Submission Instructions](#) page

[Accepted panels seeking participants](#) page

**[SUBMISSION FORMS](#) (via Submittable, deadline December 15)**

**Pre/Post-Conference Workshops: Pre-registration required.** Information is found at the [Schedule and Events](#) page (click on the Workshops tab)

Related date:  
December 15, 2018