

Centre for
Death & Society
(CDAS)



UNIVERSITY OF
BATH

Centre for Death & Society

December 2025 Newsletter

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Director's Note

Hello everyone and welcome to our last issue of the CDAS newsletter for 2025. Relatively speaking we have had a quiet month here, as we have all been focused on our respective research projects and teaching. It was really good to hold our first CDAS business meeting of the 2025-2026 academic year however, and to welcome so many Visiting Fellows and Profs to the fold. It was also great to see there Lucy Hyde from the University of Bristol and PhD student Catriona, who is currently on parental leave, and to meet her son. Thank you for coming both and to Catriona we look forward to welcoming you back fully in early 2026.

Launched in our last issue, our main news this month is that our annual conference call for papers is open, the theme of which in 2026 will be 'Death and Power'. We welcome abstracts but also workshops, panels and roundtables, and creative ideas for evening activities. Please do get in touch via cdas@bath.ac.uk for an informal chat if you have an idea you'd like to explore as a contribution to the conference. We normally have about 150 attendees over two days online, who are the most supportive and constructive community we know – it is a very positive place to share your work and ideas, both finished and in progress.

We also want to flag that next year looks really productive in terms of global events and publications, and there are a number of calls for conferences and other activities that close in the next few weeks included in the calls section of this newsletter.

Thank you to you all for your continued support of CDAS throughout 2025 and for those of you that celebrate the next few weeks we wish you a peaceful and happy festive season.

We look forward to seeing you all in 2026.

Kate and Naomi

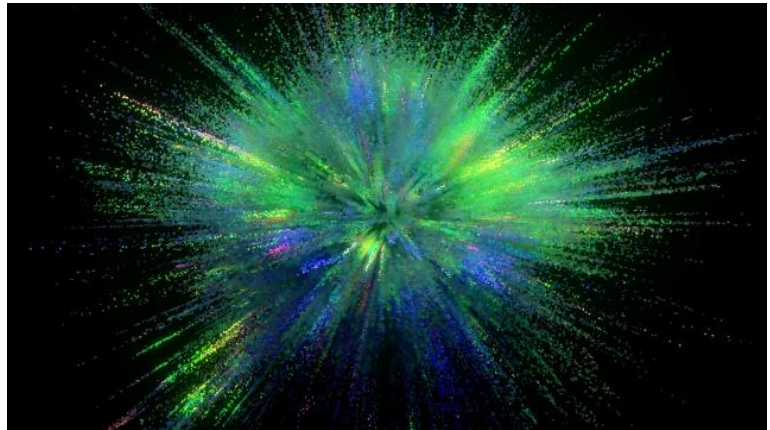


CALL FOR PAPERS

CDAS Conference 2026: Death and Power is now open for contributions

The CDAS conference 2026: death and power will take place from Wednesday 17 - Friday 19 June 2026. It will be wholly online to facilitate international attendance and promote accessibility.

Power, in all its forms, is central to the human condition, peoples' relationships to others, the planet's future, and how endings are experienced. Theorised across many, if not all, disciplines, power is inherent in professions, care, associations with others, policy and politics, perspectives and approaches, rationales and logic. Whether it is something possessed or negotiated, practiced or rejected, power in all its guises is part of life, and of death.



This year's CDAS Conference's theme of power is intended to reflect what is known, and knowable, about dying, death, loss, grief and more, in the past, present and the future. We intentionally leave what we mean by 'power' as open as possible, to encourage as wide a group as possible to engage with the theme.

We welcome abstracts up to 250 words long by 9am GMT on Monday 2 February 2026 from academics, practitioners, policy-makers and others, that address the conference theme.

For more information on topics and the format, please look at [our website](#).

Congratulations to Yu-Ching Liu

Congratulations to [Yu-Ching](#) who passed his PhD viva last week, on the caregiver burden of family perspectives and their views on care services in Taiwan. We are delighted for you Dr Liu - well done!

New CDAS publications

New report by the CNIL (Commission National de l'Informatique et des Libertés) titled "Our Data After Us"

This is a comprehensive publication by France's national data protection authority, examining the digital afterlife industry and various aspects of digital afterlife and data protection. The report draws on the work of many digital death scholars, including former and current CDAS people such as Debra Bassett, Johanna Sumiala, Edina Harbinja, and Tal Morse. You can find the full report [here](#).

Other CDAS news

Mortal Films are now live

Taking inspiration from the Death Positive Movement, artists Ben Faircloth, Eilidh Nicoll, and Mariana Leal have made films reflecting on processing death anxiety, voicing personal grief communally, and queering funerary practice. The films have been developed through discussions with social anthropologist and CDAS visiting fellow Dr Hannah Rumble. You can watch all the films [here](#).



Hear from George Gumisiriza on Harbingers of Death

Harbingers of Death: Transnational Grief

"When death approaches, the natural world speaks first — through cries, calls, and whispers of its own."

For grief week, I reflect on the creatures who carry our mourning across borders — harbingers whose cries echo through ancestral memory, ecological labor, and diasporic longing.

Across cultures, creatures of the natural world have long been seen as messengers of death. Their cries and movements embody the complexity of grief, reminding us that mourning is never isolated but deeply social, ecological, and transnational.

The Screech Owl

For me, the screech owl is more than folklore. Its nocturnal cry unsettles the night, bridging the ancestors and the living. In Western Uganda, elders confront its omen with fire, acknowledging the message even as they drive the bird away. Among the Gullah of South Georgia Island, the owl carried spirits back across the Atlantic — a form of spiritual repatriation that speaks to the enduring desire for return.

The Hadedda Ibis (Nyawaawa)

Nyawaawa is a familiar companion in my village, its loud call echoing the wailing of mourners. Communities ridicule it as an omen bird, yet its ecological labor sustains balance

in fields and farms. Its cry — “haa-haa-haa-de-dah” or “Mpa’baana” (“Give me the children!”) — is both disruptive and necessary, a reminder that grief is inseparable from the rhythms of life and the responsibilities of care.

The Buzzing Bee

For the Baganda people in central Uganda, traditional folk songs depict the buzzing bee as a messenger of death. In performance, its buzz informs the bereaved of a loss miles away — a haunting parallel to the circumstances of transnational grief.

The buzzing bee close to the ear has long carried this role. Even today, diaspora communities recall bees appearing at moments of bereavement, bridging distance with symbolic presence. In this way, the bee becomes both a cultural signal and a transnational companion, reminding us that grief travels across borders in unexpected forms.

Harbingers of death remind us that grief is not only personal but collective, ecological, and transnational - a communion between the living, the dead, and the more-than-human world. Harbingers teach us that mourning is not silence but communion — between the living, the dead, and the more-than-human world.

#Griefweek#TransnationalGrief#Culturaldeathways#Afrocentricmourning
[hashtag#EcologicalMemory](#)

In sharing these reflections, I am reminded that harbingers are not only symbols of death but also of connection. They carry memory across borders, reminding us that grief is communal, ecological, and transnational. I would be interested to hear from others: what creatures, sounds, or symbols in your own traditions have carried messages of mourning or remembrance?

You can learn more from our recent PhD graduate George via his Linkedin account [here](#).



CDAS EVENTS

Helen Frisby funeral planning workshop at Arnos Vale- 7th February 2026

Learn about traditions of death and burial, and start planning your own send-off.

Whether it's a grand send-off or a simple celebration, one of the kindest things we can do for those we'll leave behind is to let them know what we want. This workshop is a space to help you put your own funeral plans down on paper.

To get started Dr Helen Frisby, author of the Shire book [*Traditions of Death and Burial*](#), will talk about English death and burial customs from the Norman Conquest right through to the present day and the impact of Covid-19. From funeral bells to winding-sheets, angels to the Alexa Ghostbot, we'll discover how funerary ritual helps the dead get where they need to go - and the bereaved where they need to be.

In part two, you'll take inspiration from the talk to begin planning your own 'good send-off.' What might your personal traditions of death and burial look and feel like?

Helen researches and publish on topics relating to death, funerals and bereavement, past and present. She's a Visiting Research Fellow at the University of Bath, an Honorary Research Associate at the University of Bristol and Hon. Secretary of [The Folklore Society](#). [Find out more about her work here](#). More information about the event can be found [here](#).

BNE & CDAS Seminar: The impact of traumatic death on social networks

Dr Georgie Akehurst, University of Edinburgh

5th March 5pm – 6pm GMT

Online, full details and sign up available [here](#).

We are very pleased to co-host with the Bereavement Network Europe this seminar on 'The impact of traumatic death on social networks

Abstract

When someone dies suddenly or unexpectedly, the impact on multiple individuals within a social network can be profound. This webinar makes a case for a more relational understanding of bereavement within this context of loss, arguing that such an approach helps us to recognise the value of one and other's grief being acknowledged, validated and supported, and how loss is mediated *between* people.

Drawing on qualitative evidence generated from a three-year study into the impact of traumatic deaths on social networks, the webinar will explore the extent to which social networks bereaved by a sudden or traumatic death attempt to remedy public disenfranchisement and stigma (Doka, 1989; Guy and Holloway, 2007). Given that the majority of bereavement support

is informal and carried out by close others (Jakoby, 2014; Logan et al, 2018), it will examine the ways in which grief is negotiated from multiple perspectives within a network and how any stigma is, or can be, mitigated.

Biography

Georgie Akehurst is a Research Fellow at the University of Edinburgh. Her PhD thesis at the University of Sussex focused on grief negotiation among social networks following traumatic bereavement. Her current work in critical suicide studies focuses on how meanings of suicide are culturally embedded and negotiated, and how we can explore what it means to live a 'liveable' life.



Links to publications:

[Out of the blue and into it: Autoethnography, emotions and complicated grief - Georgie Akehurst, Susie Scott, 2023](#)

[No-Body Relations and Negative Negotiations: Selfhood after Traumatic Loss \(Chapter 9\) - Interpreting Identities](#)

CDAS COMMUNITY NEWS

Call for participants



Paying Our Last Respects

Are you interested in taking part in a PhD study to help understand perceptions around how the responsibility for meeting funeral costs should be negotiated between the deceased, their family and the State?

Participants must be:

- Employed in the funeral industry in England or Wales, and have experience arranging funerals with families face to face
- Willing to take part in an online interview lasting approximately 1hr
- Happy to discuss their job role, and cover topics including: the family and funeral costs, the deceased and funeral costs, the involvement of the State and the role of the funeral industry

Please get in touch using the email address below

Think you can help, or have any further questions?
Email: lw Walton2@sheffield.ac.uk
This study has received ethical approval from the University of Sheffield



Your Voice Matters

Please Share Your Experiences of Psychological/Emotional Support in Palliative Care

What's Involved?
A 60-minute interview (online, by phone, or in person)
Share your thoughts on what worked, challenges you faced, and what could improve professional psychological support in palliative care.



Interested?

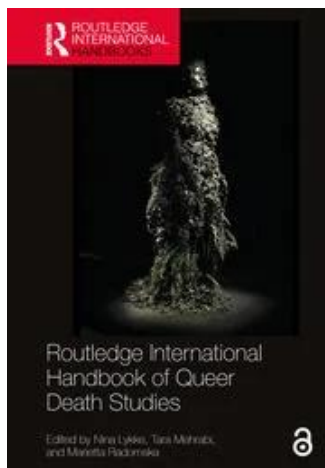
Please contact hospice staff or the researcher:
Maria Davies-Edwards
Email: md2404@bath.ac.uk
Phone: 07943070322
Scan the QR code:



Why Participate?
You could help inform potential efforts to improve psychological services for future patients, families and carers
Be a part of shaping better care.
Receive a £10 gift card for taking part



Please note: All information you share will be kept confidential and handled with care.
Ethics code: 7297-12340

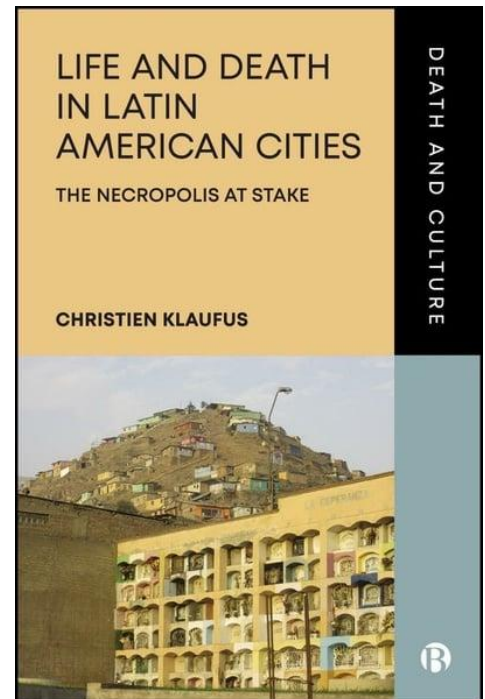


Nina Lykke, Tara Mehrabi, Marietta Radomska edit Routledge International Handbook of Queer Death Studies

The Handbook aims to provide a comprehensive, international cartography of Queer Death Studies, offering broad, in-depth insights into the field and its emergence through tentacular transdisciplinary networking. Taking research and art-making on death, dying, mourning, and afterlife into new directions, it explores the multiple effects of contemporary necropolitics and the proliferation of death-worlds during the current period of Earth's history, 'The Anthropocene' or 'the Age of Man'. More information and where to access the book can be found [here](#).

New book by Christien Klaufus: Life and Death in Latin American Cities

Life and Death in Latin American Cities: The necropolis at Stake, published in the Death and Culture series of Bristol University Press, examines the varied meanings and functions of public cemeteries and state-governed deathscapes in Latin American cities. Drawing on ten years of research conducted in six cities across the region, it analyzes the public policies that shape cemetery governance in each case-study city and identifies the social groups that most commonly engage with public cemeteries in their daily lives. Theoretically, the book adopts Jacques Lévy's concept of co-spatiality to frame the realm in which the living and the dead are understood to coexist. This perspective illuminates the emotional, spiritual, and socio-political dimensions of death and dead disposal practices in Latin American urban contexts marked by deep inequality and systemic violence. The book argues that the primary users of public cemeteries — often vulnerable populations — are the first to be displaced when modernization projects are introduced, thereby reinforcing the marginalization of the public necropolis.



Participate in Gov UK 'Make Work Pay: leave for bereavement including pregnancy loss'- Open consultation

The Employment Rights Bill introduced a new day-one right to unpaid bereavement leave for employees who experience the loss of a loved one, including pregnancy loss before 24 weeks.

We are seeking views to ensure the new entitlement is shaped with the needs of employees and employers at the forefront. This consultation seeks views on:

- eligibility criteria
- types of pregnancy loss in scope
- when and how bereavement leave can be taken
- notice and evidence requirements

We welcome views from all stakeholders, particularly those with insight into this sensitive and personal topic. This may include charities, individuals with lived experience, and employers.

This consultation closes at **11:59pm 15 January 2026**. More information can be found [here](#).

CDAS COMMUNITY EVENTS

Therapeutic mindful photography training in January

Dr. Jessica Thomas, therapist, researcher, author, grief educator, and creator of the Within & Without™ Therapeutic Mindful Photography Training is offering a Within & Without™ therapeutic mindful photography intro training in January 2026. This program is based on her original research published in 2016 and subsequent developments such as her book, [Choosing Light: Transforming Grief Through Mindful Photography and Self-Reflection](#). Please visit [the training page](#) for details and [complete an application](#)! You can also email her with any questions: mindfulphotogrief@gmail.com. DO NOT let finances be a barrier, please inquire about discounts for those in need. Pictured here is a collective view of several images paired with excerpts from their corresponding journals. It is a great honor to hold space for such depth and meaningful connections.



Good Grief Festival

The Good Grief Festival are immensely proud to announce their new initiative: an evidence-based course to equip GPs and primary care practitioners with the essential tools to navigate the mental and physical impact of grief on patients and families, including support in complex circumstances like a sudden death, the death of a child, or suicide.

Developed in collaboration with world-leading bereavement experts, practising GPs, and GP trainers, the course features neuroscientist Professor [Mary-Frances O'Connor](#), psychotherapist Julia Samuel MBE, [Andy Langford](#) (Clinical Director of [Cruse Bereavement Support](#)), Dr [Catherine Millington-Sanders](#) (Royal College of General Practitioners/Marie Curie National End of Life Care Clinical Champion) and [Lynne Innes](#) (NHS Education for Scotland).

How GPs and their colleagues respond when you're bereaved can make all the difference. This course is a crucial step towards ensuring compassionate, informed support for everyone.

📍 Online

🇬🇧 Early bird rate of £89 available until 6th January

📅 Starts 28th January 2026

🔗 Sign up through their website here: [Good Grief Festival](https://www.goodgrieffestival.org.uk)



Official Opening of Congress
The Art of Possibility: Creativity and Science in Modern Palliative Care
Dr Sarah Bowers & Dr Guy Schofield

We have chosen this engaging and timely theme as a reflection of the evolving nature of palliative care. It speaks to the need to integrate evidence-based innovations with creative, person-centred approaches reflecting the emotional and spiritual dimensions of palliative care. This chosen theme opens the door for a diverse range of speakers, to include clinicians, artists, researchers, as well as patients.

Opening Plenary – Grief and Bereavement
Professor Lucy Selman

Abstract Prize Awards
Presented by Dr Suzanne Kite

26-27 March 2026 | Brighton Dome
www.pccongress.org.uk

Early Bird Discounts available until 5pm (UK time) on 30 January 2026
Reserve your seat today!

3

Suicide Bereavement UK's 15th international hybrid conference in Liverpool: 16th September 2026

Suicide Bereavement UK's 15th international hybrid conference is going to be our biggest and boldest yet. This isn't your typical conference — it's professional, but never stuffy. Friendships are made here. We bring together those with lived experience, the bereaved, professionals, researchers, policy makers and carers — all united by a shared commitment to understanding, preventing suicide and providing better support to those bereaved by suicide. Expect groundbreaking research, genuine connection, and a space where friendships are formed and hope is renewed.

We know times are tough, but we promise — this experience will be worth every penny. It's a chance to recharge, reconnect, and remember why this work matters.

More details coming soon — but for now, save the date: 16th Sept 2026.

If you are interested in sponsoring this event, please contact Paul Higham on paul.higham@suicidebereavementuk.com

Call for papers to the international interdisciplinary conference in Ljubljana- July 1-3 2026

This is a reminder about the upcoming deadline for our Open Call for Papers to the international interdisciplinary conference *The agency of the dead in the lives of individuals: Communication with the dead*, organised by the ERC project DEAGENCY (ERC № 101095729) and the Department of Ethnology and Cultural Anthropology, Faculty of Arts, University of Ljubljana. The conference will take place in Ljubljana, Slovenia, from July 1 - 3, 2026

Contrary to pre-modern European societies, and many contemporary non-Western societies, where the dead were considered members of the community and continued to be significantly involved in people's everyday lives, the dominant Western ontology nowadays does not integrate communication and exchange between the living and the dead. However, as a bulk of quantitative as well as qualitative research testify, for some people in contemporary Western societies, social interactions do not necessarily cease after death but are merely transformed. The dead continue to be involved in our lives, affecting our thoughts, emotions, values, behaviour, and social relations. While scholars have often treated the accounts of the agency of the dead in people's lives as expressions of "folk belief", and ghosts as symbols and metaphors of larger cultural and social problems and changes, our aim is to take the agency of the dead in the lives of individuals seriously, as people themselves experience it.

The aim of the third DEAGENCY conference is to focus on the different types of interaction between the living and the dead. This will be broadly defined and may include both intentional and unintentional communication with the spirits of the dead, both familiar dead and impersonal ghosts, through both collective and private practices. It can include communication through dreams and other altered states of consciousness, visions, interactions through mediums or with the help of various other practitioners, 'legend trips' and tourism to haunted places, practices of 'summoning the dead', various after-death and memorialisation practices, online communication with spirits, and so on and so forth. Whereas in the past the way of communicating with the dead was largely prescribed by tradition, religion and/or the state, today individuals are free to engage in their practices without having to adhere to prescribed methods; in the fragmented and networked society of privatised death, they may not even have a community to share their practices with.

In this conference we want to explore whether practices of communication between the living and the dead are aimed at maintaining personal relationships with the familiar dead, or whether they are intended as a test of courage or perhaps carried out out of curiosity; do people perform them to honour and commemorate the dead, to ask them for advice, to keep a promise, to obtain or grant forgiveness, to enhance their social status, to improve their social relations, to strengthen their group's identity or a particular ideology, to demonstrate their political stance, or perhaps even as a means in intra-community power struggles and inter-group tensions? Are traditional forms of dealing with the dead (still) used or are they losing their significance for the individual? Have they changed and how, or have they been replaced

by new practices? What role do material objects and places play in creating and maintaining interaction with the dead? What consequences does interaction with the dead have for the lives of the living? What role does communication with the dead play?

We invite folklorists, ethnologists and anthropologists, sociologists, psychologists, thanatologists, scholars of bereavement and media studies, as well as scholars from other disciplines concerned with the dead in contemporary society, to submit an abstract and participate in the conference. Papers may draw on a variety of sources – ethnographic, archival, digital, media, etc. The conference language is English; the expected length of papers is 20 minutes. There is no conference fee, but you will need to cover your own travel, accommodation and meals. Please use the following link to submit your application:

- [Application](#)

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Ms Marja Kovanda, Chair of the Organising Committee: Marja.Kovanda@ff.uni-lj.si. The deadline for the submission of applications is 15 December 2025. Acceptance of papers will be confirmed by 31 January 2026.

Call for abstracts for SLSA26 Socio-Legal Studies Association

There is still time to submit your abstract to our hashtag#SLSA26 Socio-Legal Studies Association annual conference stream 'Death, Dying & the Dead', convened by Richard B. Gibson and me, running for the second year in a row.

The stream explores the many ways law intersects with death, dying, and the dead. Some of the questions we hope to tackle include:

- Are current legal or medical definitions of death (brain death, cardiopulmonary, information-theoretical) still viable?
- How do disability rights, palliative care, and costs shape end-of-life law reform?
- How should law respond to mass death in crises and conflicts?
- What duties exist regarding digital remains and AI's shaping of death?
- How do we regulate 'immortality' services?
- How should law handle contested burials and symbolic uses of the dead?

The stream offers a great opportunity to share research, engage with vibrant scholarly communities, and contribute to discussions shaping the future of socio-legal studies of death.

Deadline for paper proposals: Thursday 18 December 2025. Submit papers and posters [here](#).

Call for papers from all bereavement and global researchers

The [American Journal of Public Health](#) is soliciting papers on bereavement as a global health concern.

This Call for Papers seeks original research, analytic essays, history essays, notes from the field, and opinion editorials that address the central question:

👉 “Considering current global events, how does bereavement function differently across subgroups, either as a cause or a consequence of population health outcomes?”

👉 Submissions are due March 1, 2026.

If you are not yet aware of the [University of Southern California's Emily Smith-Greenaway's](#) work, you should do so prior to conceptualizing your papers.

Death Rituals and Death Technologies in Contemporary Ireland and Beyond: Questioning the Old and the New

Symposium at University College Cork, 28-29 May 2026.

Death is the great unifying force for all life — human and non-human. Death shapes our experiences of life as it signals materially and culturally that our existence is finite. In response, human societies have developed complex death, disposal, and mourning rituals over millennia to cope with the temporal reality of death and the corpse it is represented by. However, we are living in a time of flux — environmental degradation, economic precarity, and migrating populations are all upending how we respond to and subsequently ritualise death and the dead body. So-called ‘new’ death technologies such as pyro- and hydro-cremation, body composting, eco burial, and cryopreservation are disrupting traditional concepts of deathly rituals. In the traditional narrative of society’s unilineal development, the role of ritual and history is framed as being antithetical to these new technologies (and vice-versa). This symposium disrupts this notion.

While the majority of death technology studies focus on the ‘newness’ of the proposed and developing technology, this symposium challenges the notion that rituals are archaic and need to be rewritten if not entirely done away with or that death and technology are only newly united and have not been imbricated since the first human died, was mourned, and their body disposed of. Drawing on the vital work done by death studies scholars — and those who seek to ‘queer’ this increasingly established academic field — as well as the practical expertise of industry innovators, this symposium takes the affirmative position that rituals are not always old, and technologies are not always new.

The symposium will explore how traditional death rituals can adapt in the face of new technologies such as water cremation, human composting, eco burial, and cryopreservation. Ireland’s unique death culture, rooted in the nation’s rich history and death culture, is much-lauded. However, this traditional sequence of wake, rosary, removal, funeral mass, and burial

is often portrayed as a relic of the past — a quaint antiquity that harks back to a simpler time and is imbricated with Ireland's longstanding relationship with the Catholic Church. In fact, in several key ways, Ireland is at the forefront of new death technologies. The European Union's first water cremation facility opened in County Meath in 2023. A publicly-owned 'eco' burial ground is currently under development in Cork City, the result of a significant community-led movement. These developments signal a productive tension within Irish death culture, providing the opportunity to rethink deathly ritual and technology, and their intersections, not in opposition, but totally entwined. They also situate Ireland as a unique point of departure to propel transnational collaborations in death and technology studies.

The aim of this symposium is thus to locate the emerging rituals that come with new death technologies, as well as consider the unique value that new death technologies can bring to old rituals. Participants are asked to consider how their unique cultural experiences from their country of origin or current residence shapes their understanding of death culture, galvanising the international scope of the symposium. Topics can include, but are not limited to, Irish death studies, transnational comparison and contexts, Indigenous rituals and traditions, environmental and ecological impact, the social dimensions of mourning and disposal, and the role of technology in death and disposal.

Proposals should be approximately 300 words with a short bio and bibliography (of 3-5 works cited), and be submitted no later than 31 December, 2025. Responses are anticipated by the end of January. Presenters will be asked to submit draft papers for circulation to symposium participants by 30 April, 2026. Presentations will be 20 minutes long. Whilst online presentation can be facilitated, strong preference will be given to in person presentation. Please indicate your preference for online or in person presentation when submitting your proposal. The event organisers are in a position to offer some financial support to facilitate in person attendance. Final versions of articles (7500 words including bibliography) will be due at the end of July 2026 in anticipation of being part of a special issue at a leading death studies journal.

Please email proposals to Dr. Julia A. Empey (julia.empey@ucc.ie) and Dr. Kate Falconer (kfalconer@ucc.ie).

Call for Abstracts- DORS#8: Digital Death in Context- May 6th-8th 2026 at Aarhus University, Denmark.

The symposium will host a special workshop of participating postgraduate students and early career researchers the day before the symposium on May 5th.

Historically, the Death Online Research Network (DORN) was founded in 2013 aiming at establishing an international cross-disciplinary research environment for the, then, growing field of studies of what happened to conceptualizations, practices and technologies of death in the light of new platforms and technologies. Today, there is a growing awareness that what we now refer to as 'digital death' is a broader term recognizing that the doings in relation to death – whether online or offline – are all affected by digital death as sociocultural realities where the digital is one fundamental premise among others.

At the 8th International Death Online Research Symposium (DORS#8) we want to call attention to the conceptualisations, productions and uses of 'context' in the study of digital death.

The symposium will, besides hosting paper presentations, also reflect new ways of working together and promoting dialogical modes of knowing. You are welcome to suggest a panel or another format for presenting or discussing relevant ideas. Please share at nordrc@cc.au.dk

The symposium will be on-site only at Aarhus University, Denmark.

Submission guidelines

Paper submission:

Please send us an abstract no longer than 250 words and your contact info.

Panel submission:

Panels up to four papers should include a general description of the panel (max 250 words) together with abstracts of the individual papers (max 250 words) with contact details of each participant and the panel chair.

All paper and panel proposals should be sent to Dorthe Refslund Christensen, nordrc@cc.au.dk before January 5, 2026.

All submissions will be peer-reviewed.

Please note that participants will be accepted to present only one paper as the first author.

Conference organizing team:

Dorthe Refslund Christensen nordrc@cc.au.dk

Jonatan Spejlborg Juelsbo jsj@cc.au.dk

Important dates and info

Abstract/panel submission deadline: January 5, 2026

Notification of paper acceptance: February 7, 2026

Registration: February 8– April 10, 2026 (formalities will be communicated after February 8, 2026)

Ph.d. workshop: May 5, 2026

Conference: May 6-8, 2026

Conference fee: Includes coffee, snacks, lunches, reception, performance, conference dinner and PhD workshop

Early bird and ph.d.s: 2.200 DKK (approx 295 €)

Regular 2.900 DKK (approx 390 €)

Call for Papers- Language, Dying and Bereavement

How do we speak about loss? How do our words comfort, exclude, or transform grief?

This Special Issue curated by Michael Brennan, Gayle Letherby, John MacArtney, and Kate Woodthorpe explores the role of language and discourse in how individuals and societies make sense of dying, death, and bereavement.

We invite submissions from across the social sciences and humanities, including sociology, anthropology, linguistics, social policy, media, and the creative arts, on themes such as:

Language as a vehicle for meaning-making and healing

The role of technology and AI in expressions of grief

Inclusive and anti-oppressive approaches to mourning

Creative forms of language through art, poetry, and performance

Evolving deathways, metaphors, and cultural rituals

Abstract deadline: 19 January 2026

Full paper deadline: 29 June 2026

Further information: <https://lnkd.in/dBuhaStK>

The European Grief Conference 2026 - Call for Abstracts Now Open

EGC welcomes a broad range of abstracts on bereavement and grief-related topics with a focus on research, education/policy or practice aligned to levels of the public health model of bereavement. For the 2026 conference we especially welcome abstracts aligned with the conference theme: Bereavement, grief, and loss: Responding collaboratively to local and global challenges.

Full details on the abstract call are available here <https://europeangriefconference.org/call-for-abstracts>

The European Grief Conference will be held in Porto, Portugal, September 9th to 11th 2026.

Save the date for the third European Grief Conference 9th-11th September 2026 in O'Porto, Portugal. Read more: <https://europeangriefconference.org/>

Call for speakers at Arnos Vale Cemetery Trust

Arnos Vale Cemetery Trust runs a regular talk series for the public online and sometime in person and we have a wide range of talks that are broadly on the themes of death, dying, interment, bereavement, human remains, and cemeteries (and anything else we think fits). As a charity, it is a way for us to make a small income for the continuing care of the site, spread the word about Arnos Vale Cemetery and share research and knowledge to a non-academic

audience. We welcome the suggestions for presentations of around 45-50 mins from a wide range of speakers and disciplines. We are creating the 2026 programme at the moment and would love to hear from any researchers who'd like to share what they are interested in or working on. A number of previous talks have been delivered by CDAS staff, visiting fellows, and students but we are interested in presentations from all sorts of disciplines, research areas and levels of study.

If you are keen to support us then contact janine.marriott@arnosvale.org.uk

Check out the programme of events at arnosvale.org.uk

Unsung Heroes in Death Care, A Global Analysis

Editors: Drs. Kami Fletcher & Bulelwa Maphela

During the COVID-19 outbreak and its immediate aftermath, we saw death care professionals thrust from the margins to the center. In Ghana, pall bearers went viral for showing how significant ornate last rites are to guiding loved ones to the ancestral plane. In the United States, death doulas made TIME's "Top 100 Photos of 2022" as well as received a featured article. Even still, they were positioned as last responders, appropriately titled since they were last to receive PPE. The social and cultural value of their work to our communities, our nations, our world went unnoticed. These professionals play a critical role in our communities and do not appear in the developmental agenda. They remain as unsung heroes.

There is an urgent need to start appreciating the work done by these unsung heroes in the death care sector - globally. This volume aims to highlight the contributions of death care professionals - the funeral directors, the embalmers, the mortuary workers, the death doulas; and others death care workers - who all play a critical role in supporting bereaved families and communities during the period of losing a loved one. These death care laborers, as individuals and as group, play vital roles in the care and support of the deceased and their families, yet often go unnoticed or underappreciated in broader narratives about death and dying. This international call aims to attract scholars, researchers, and practitioners from around the world to submit abstracts that explore the experiences, challenges, and contributions of death care professionals.

Suggested themes

- The role of death care professionals in supporting bereaved communities.
- The role of government in supporting the death care professionals.
- The impact of death care work on the mental state of the professionals in the death care industries.
- Societal and cultural perceptions of death care professionals across time and space
- Historical and contemporary perspectives on death care practices.
- Comparative country practices in the death care activities. Innovative and best practices in death care work.
- Challenges affecting sustainability of the death work and within the death care professional circles.

- The role of death care workers in removing trauma in communities and treating the unbereaved.

Editors are asking all interested to please send in a 300-word abstract as well as a working bibliography (primary and secondary sources), no later than August 1, 2026 to kamif2311@gmail.com and bmaphela@uj.ac.za.

For all other queries concerning our volume, please do not hesitate to reach out through the same channels.

The 300-word abstract must include:

- Perspective contributors' name, affiliation, job title
- Essay's (working) title
- Clear argument/thesis statement

Jobs/PhDs

Funded PhD opportunity with the Open University

Inspired by the James Lind Alliance Priorities Setting Partnership for Palliative and End of Life Care and the To Know Dying Report, the Open University (OU) is currently advertising a funded PhD studentship focused on dying well and dementia.

Information about the PhD studentship:

Title: Dying well: exploring what it means for people living with dementia

The PhD project will aim to explore how people with dementia experience end of life and the meaning of a 'good' end of life and death for people living with dementia. Historically, this area of interest has listened to the views of carers, both informal and formal, to explore our understanding of needs and quality of life. However, the voices of people living with dementia are often missing from this research. This PhD will aim to centre people living with dementia in the area of discussion by using participatory and co-research methodologies and drawing on concepts from the 'To Know Dying' report (Greenfield et al., 2025). Through these approaches, the study aims to ensure that those with lived experience play a central role in shaping the research agenda and remain at the core of the project's design, implementation, and outcomes.

The PhD candidate will be supervised by Prof Erica Borgstrom and Dr Katie Davies, and we encourage potential applicants to contact the supervisors ahead of the application deadline to discuss the proposal (email katie.davies@open.ac.uk). The PhD candidate will be part of the Centre for Open Thanatology at The Open University, and will be able to join other research groups and seminars.

Link to studentship information: This studentship is [Faculty funded](#), and there is a [short project overview](#) to inform proposals. Funding is available for UK, EU and international students. Fully-funded PhD studentships will include fees and maintenance for three years, depending on satisfactory progress. Anticipated stipend for 2026/2027 is approximately £20,780 per annum. Only one studentship will be allocated to this project area.

Link to the application process: [Applying for a PhD at The Open University](#)

Head of Professional Learning at St Christopher's Hospice

Location:	Sydenham / Hybrid
Hours:	Full Time (36 hours per week) – Monday to Friday
Salary:	£60,259 per annum

About us:

This is a fantastic opportunity to work at a leading Hospice who aspires to a world in which all dying people and those close to them have access to care and support, whenever and wherever they need it. St Christopher's Hospice was founded in 1967 by Dame Cicely Saunders and formed part of the modern hospice movement. Proudly celebrating over 50 years and with a turnover of over £20 million, we provide invaluable care and support to over 7,500 people across the five London Boroughs of Bromley, Croydon, Lambeth, Lewisham and Southwark.

Your new role:

Head of Professional Learning has a critical role in ensuring the quality of learning made available through CARE, primarily for professionals involved in palliative and end of life care. The postholder will strongly influence the design and style of delivery of learning for professionals on offer, bringing knowledge and confidence as an educationalist to shape and enhance a broad variety of education and training events, courses and products. We offer a supportive working environment which includes flexibility around hybrid working.

As the Head of Professional Learning you will be responsible for the following:

- Leading the Professional Learning team, working closely with the Director of Education and Research
- Shaping, then supporting the programme of learning for professionals delivered via CARE, reflective of new opportunities and evaluation and feedback on past events
- Guiding the work of Delivery Team members as they plan and evaluate specific events, courses of on line offers
- Proposing developments of technological and other infrastructural developments that facilitate and ensure high quality learning
- Advising internal committees and leaders regarding education related advancements related to workforce development at St Christopher's

To succeed in this role

- You will be educated to degree level or equivalent, with a qualification as an educationalist, in addition, a health and social care qualification is desirable
- You will have extensive experience of delivering a variety of education and training
- You will have experience of co-designing education and training

- You should have experience of guiding and supporting other people in the design and delivery of education and training offers
- You will need to be an excellent communicator, both written and verbal with strong interpersonal skills
- You will have high levels of IT competency

Closing Date: Sunday 21st December 2025

Interview Date: Monday 12th and Wednesday 14th January 2026

In the event we receive a high amount of applications, we reserve the right to close the job earlier than the initial closing date.

Link to application process is [here](#).

Contact Us

Email: cdas@bath.ac.uk

Web: www.bath.ac.uk/cdas

Facebook: www.facebook.com/centrefordeath

Linkedin: <https://www.linkedin.com/groups/13222099/>

Twitter: [@cendeathsociety](https://twitter.com/cendeathsociety)

CDAS Videos:

The History of CDAS: <https://vimeo.com/1092402543>

The CDAS Community: <https://vimeo.com/1092402369>

Doing a PhD with CDAS: <https://vimeo.com/1092402245>

The future: <https://vimeo.com/1092402630>

To unsubscribe, please email cdas@bath.ac.uk

