

CALL FOR PAPERS

The 19th Congress of the International Society for Folk Narrative Research

Folk Narratives in the Changing World

June 17–21, 2024

Riga, Latvia

The **International Society for Folk Narrative Research (ISFNR)** and **Institute of Literature, Folklore and Art of the University of Latvia (ILFA)** are delighted to announce the call for papers for the 19th ISFNR Congress “Folk Narratives in the Changing World” to be held from June 17 to 21, 2024 in Riga, Latvia.

Over the past decade, the world has undergone constant transformation due to a multitude of social, economic, geopolitical, technological, and environmental processes. The COVID-19 pandemic, the Russian-induced war in Ukraine, the revolution of artificial intelligence, and the increasingly noticeable impact of climate change are some of the factors that have significantly changed our lifestyle, daily behaviour, thoughts and communication in recent years. These profound changes have influenced society, encompassing migration and urbanisation, polarisation and radicalisation, digitalisation and virtualisation, and much more. The impact of these processes has reverberated through folk narratives, leaving a discernible imprint on their form, content, functions, performance, circulation, and beyond. Both historically and in the present day, the approaches to documenting, archiving, and studying folk narratives have evolved in response to these shifts, underscoring the pivotal theme of change at the upcoming ISFNR Riga Congress. Throughout its century-long existence, these changes have also affected the Archives of Latvian Folklore, which will celebrate its centennial anniversary in 2024.

In this congress, our aim is to foster a dynamic exchange of ideas, insights, and scholarly research that illuminates the intricate tapestry of folk narratives within diverse changing contexts. Therefore, for the 19th ISFNR Congress, we invite participants to consider the following topics:

- *Shifting Theoretical Paradigms in Narrative Research: Past and Present*
- *Digital Approaches in Narrative Research: Opportunities and Challenges*
- *Oral vs Online: Narratives in the Digital Age and Social Media*
- *Narratives of Crisis and Change*
- *Narratives in (and, of) Changing Environment*

Alongside the congress events, participants will have the chance to immerse themselves in the enchanting atmosphere of the Latvian Summer Solstice traditions. In Northern European traditional culture, the longest day and shortest night of the year have immense significance. While originally celebrated as a pivotal moment in the rural ritual calendar, the Summer Solstice has also seamlessly adapted to the urban environment of Riga, offering a captivating experience for attendees.

ISFNR Committee Panels

The Committees of the ISFNR will be holding their sessions within the congress.

The **ISFNR Folk Narrative, Literature, and Media Committee (FNLM)** will be holding its panels around the congress theme and pay particular attention to oral and literary tales as well as wonder tales across media forms, from graphic novels and film to painting and fashion. Themes may include how various types of wonder texts engage with crises and change, past and present, including climate change, pandemics, political crises, and the rise of dictatorial regimes, among other possible topics.

About the FNLM. The ISFNR Committee on Folk Narrative, Literature, and Media supports, recognises, and extends the work and achievements of scholars and practitioners who create, perform, and study folk narrative in relation to literature and media, widely conceived. This committee gathers scholars and practitioners to encourage the study of folk narrative including wonder tales, folktales, fairy tales, legends, and myths as they are performed, transmitted, and transformed through different media forms, including: oral tales and their transcription, literary texts, graphic novels, film, radio, television, painting, illustration, photography, design, fashion, sculpture, architecture, music, choreography, theater, video, gaming, fandoms, podcasting, and all varieties of social media and digital culture. Some related scholarly fields include, but are not limited to, adaptation, comparative, critical race, decolonial, disability, ecocritical, gender, intermedial, intersectional, labour, queer, reception, and translation studies.

The **ISFNR Belief Narrative Network (BNN)** will be holding its panels in line with the congress theme and with particular focus on recent scholarly debates about the content and use of the concept of belief narrative. We invite proposals covering how belief narrative is applied either as a genre category or as an analytic tool to explore non-religious (secular, disenchanted) traditions, non-Western contexts, or realistic (non-supernatural) stories. We also welcome theoretical or empirical inquiries on the “belief”-content of belief narratives, on the changing belief traditions, about the performative practices and social interactions related to belief narratives, and on any related topics.

About the BNN. The ISFNR Belief Narrative Network was established in 2009 at the 15th congress of the ISFNR. As a voluntary association (working group) of the ISFNR it facilitates creative cooperation within folk narrative scholarship focusing on the genres of belief. Since its foundation it has held twelve symposia from St. Petersburg (2010) to London (2022), and as of 2023 September it has 146 members worldwide. During the pandemic (in 2020) the series of BNN Online Lectures was initiated to keep our members connected and updated on the newest achievements of belief narrative scholarship. Since 2020 September there have been 25 talks delivered and the series is to be continued. For more information on the lecture series and the upcoming talks please check the website: <http://isfnr.org/online-lectures/>.

Local Organiser

The **ILFA** is a research institution focusing on the historical and contemporary processes of Latvian traditional culture as well as literature, theatre and music. Recently the ILFA's expertise has considerably expanded to include the innovative, interdisciplinary fields of digital and environmental humanities, gender and queer studies, and autobiographical memory studies. Concurrently, the ILFA's research is strongly oriented towards societal impact.

As the host of the **Archives of Latvian Folklore (ALF)**, the ILFA is also a cultural memory institution, specialising in heritage studies. The 19th ISFNR congress will be one of the events of the centenary celebrations of ALF, tracing its roots back to 1924.

Conference Venue

The old Hanseatic League city of Riga displays a wild array of historical changes that have occurred over the course of eight centuries. The cobblestone streets whisper tales of its medieval origins, while the large suburbs testify to the recent legacy of Soviet modernism. The majestic flow of the Daugava River separates the green vistas of the serene *fin de siècle* wooden housing quarters and the famous Art Nouveau district, remembering the city's pioneering role in the industrialisation of Baltic Sea littoral and the revolutionary storms that brought about the country's independence in 1918. More recent changes have led to a plenitude of dining options ranging from global street food to Nordic haute cuisine, a rich musical life and a diverse artscape.

Applications for Participation in the Congress

Deadline: December 15th, 2023

To apply for participation in the 19th ISFNR Congress, please fill out the form available at this link: <https://en.lfk.lv/isfnr2024-application> Participants are kindly asked to submit an abstract for their planned presentation (length up to 300 words or 2500 characters) and to its relation to indicate one of the above sub-topics. Congress sessions and panels will be structured according to topics (with a maximum of four participants per session). Presentations should not exceed 20 minutes followed by 10 minutes of discussion. You will be notified about approval of your submitted abstract by December 22nd, 2023.

Registration for the Congress and Participation Fee

Regular registration until January 31st, 2024:

- ISFNR members: 280 EUR
- ISFNR non-members: 330 EUR
- Reduced fee for students and accompanying persons: 200 EUR

Late registration after January 31st, 2024 or on-site registration:

- ISFNR members: 330 EUR

- ISFNR non-members: 380 EUR
- Reduced fee for students and accompanying persons: 230 EUR

Researchers residing and working in Ukraine are eligible for free participation in the Congress. For more information about this opportunity, please contact us: isfnr.congress.2024@lulfmi.lv

Before registering, ISFNR members should verify their membership status. In case of doubt, please contact the ISFNR treasurer Ave Goršič: avegorsic@folklore.ee

The Local Organising Committee

Chair:

Sandis Laime, ILFA leading researcher and Head of the ILFA Digital Archive.

Members:

Dace Bula, ILFA leading researcher; *Eva Eglāja-Kristsons*, ILFA director and leading researcher; *Ieva Garda-Rozenberga*, ILFA leading researcher; *Rita Grīnvalde*, ILFA leading researcher and Head of Archives of Latvian Folklore; *Toms Ķencis*, ILFA leading researcher and Head of the ILFA Scientific Council; *Aigars Lielbārdis*, ILFA researcher; *Guntis Pakalns*, ILFA researcher.

Further Information

Regularly updated information regarding the Congress, the next circulars, registration procedures, etc., can be found on the following website: <https://en.lfk.lv/isfnr2024>

More information about Institute of Literature, Folklore and Art and the Archives of Latvian Folklore can be found on the respective websites: <https://lulfmi.lv/en/news> and <https://en.lfk.lv/news>

Should you have any questions, please e-mail: isfnr.congress.2024@lulfmi.lv