

CALL FOR PROPOSALS

Theme: “Enacting Social Change Through Storytelling”

**11th Emerging Scholars Symposium on
Oral History, Digital Storytelling, and Creative Practice**

Thursday, March 21 and Friday, March 22, 2024

The Centre for Oral History and Digital Storytelling at Concordia University invites graduate students and recent graduates to submit paper and research-creation proposals for our 11th Emerging Scholars Symposium on Oral History, Digital Storytelling, and Creative Practice. This hybrid two-day event will offer emerging scholars an opportunity to present their work at any stage, to exchange ideas, and to connect with other researchers and creators.

This symposium is an interdisciplinary gathering that invites proposals from emerging scholars in oral history, digital storytelling, and creative practice. Scholars in related fields, including museum studies, education, documentary filmmaking, memory studies, literature, creative writing, new media arts, geography, sociology, anthropology, etc. are encouraged to submit proposals.

The title and main theme of this year’s Emerging Scholars Symposium is *Enacting Social Change Through Storytelling*. Oral histories serve as tools for public and private social change, as well as building blocks for connecting communities and bearing witness to lived experiences. We acknowledge the power of sharing stories in transforming social spaces in the academy and beyond. We recognize that oral history is a community-building practice situated within a given social context, place and time, allowing us to assess and engage community needs in the moment. But what happens after these interviews are archived? What relevance do these stories have when taken out of said context? Can storytelling be a bridge between the moment that was and currently is? Situating these stories in relation to how it feels in our bodies to listen, share and receive stories from others is just as important as the topic. Storytelling is also as much an embodied, affective experience as it is a social process. How do these feelings affect us and our communities?

The Organizing Committee of this year’s symposium invites emerging scholars to think about how storytelling can be used to enact social change in our communities in various spheres: micro/macro, local/global, private/public, and individual/community. We invite you to consider how we can more deeply engage with the communities that we work with and who share their stories with us. What does creating and activating the archive look like in practice, and how does the scholar’s humanity and care fit in this milieu? How can we hold ourselves and our work accountable to the communities who allow us to use their stories in our research? Understanding the affective nature of oral history, in what ways do emotions surface in such an embodied

practice? Since emotions such as discomfort, anger, and reticence are more often discussed, what place do feelings of joy hold in the practice of oral history and as a potential tool for activism? What does this work look like? We encourage you to share your research while thinking through the varied approaches to oral storytelling that exist, the politics of distinguishing between oral history and oral tradition, and the various differences and similarities between them.

We look forward to accepting proposals that engage with the conference theme in creative ways and also those that take us into unexpected directions. While your proposal may present finished works, we strongly invite proposals of works-in-progress.

Emerging scholars are encouraged to submit proposals on the following themes:

- Embodiment
- Re-defining/re-thinking the boundaries of activism
- What social change looks like
- Place/space/stories
- Storytelling ecosystems
- What happens after the archives?
- Sustainable practices of oral history and storytelling
- Communities of storytellers
- Ethics of storytelling
- Relationship between emotions, storytelling, and social change

How to apply

Participants may present their work in a variety of formats, including research-creation projects and paper presentations. In order to be able to showcase a broad range of projects, presentations will be limited to **no more than 15 minutes**, followed by time for questions and discussion. We particularly encourage creative forms of expression other than papers (e.g., poetry, fiction, video/audio submissions, artwork, etc.). While we ask that papers and presentations be in either French or English, creative projects and performances may be carried out in any language. This year's symposium will be hybrid with both in-person and online presentations.

To submit your presentation proposal, please email us at: **cohds.chorn.symposium@gmail.com** with the subject line "2024 Emerging Scholars Symposium Proposal" along with the following documents:

- Abstract with short statement of how your research engages the conference themes (300 words), and up to 5 keywords
- Your CV (2 pages max)
- A brief bio (70 words)

- Technical specifications: please tell us if you will be presenting in person or online, and if you need to play audio or video as part of your presentation.

As this year's symposium will be taking place in a hybrid format, we welcome you to consider innovative approaches for presentation while keeping in mind that your audience will be both in-person and online. If you have creative ideas for a conference session beyond a talk or webinar-style presentation – especially those that inspire interaction and active engagement – we encourage you to submit!

We get how overwhelming it can be to submit a proposal, especially for the first time. We're here to help! If you have any questions, please email cohds.chorn.symposium@gmail.com.

The deadline for submissions is January 12th, 2024.