

CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

eBook: *Tales We Were Told*

An edited collection of creative works on oral storytelling, remembrance, and inherited narratives

Funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council (UK) through the South, West and Wales Doctoral Training Partnership 2 (SWWDTP2)

To be potentially published by the University of Southampton Press (UoS Press)

Submit here → <https://forms.gle/skWuMpyiNeGtwpWx9>

We are delighted to invite submissions to *Tales We Were Told*, a forthcoming diamond open access edited volume of creative works exploring the living, breathing world of stories passed between people, told at kitchen tables, carried across borders, whispered in the dark, and remembered differently every time.

This collection is an act of listening (and reading) to the stories that outlive the people who first told them, to the narratives that shape how we understand who we are, where we come from, and what we carry forward.

About the Project: What is a tale we were told?

It is the folktale your grandmother told you in a language you half-understood. The myth you grew up believing until someone laughed at it. The family story that changes every time it is told – and is true every time. The absurd saying that made no sense and perfect sense at once. The story that was supposed to disappear and did not. The story that was supposed to survive and almost did not. *Tales We Were Told* is a collection for all of these, and for what our generation does with them now.

It is a curated collection of original creative works (**short fiction, creative non-fiction, and graphic fiction**) centred on oral storytelling, re-storying, remembrance, and the transmission of knowledge, memory, and identity across generations.

This collection asks: what happens when our generation inherits these tales? Do we retell them faithfully, or with a twist of new spices? Do we debunk them, satirise them, grieve them, or quietly let them go? Do we choose silence? Do we re-story them entirely, making something new from what we were handed?

What We Are Looking For

We are looking for works of graphic fiction, fiction and creative non-fiction that re-story or re-tell oral stories you have heard, inherited, or encountered, works that take the raw material of what was passed to you and do something with it on the page.

This might include:

- Folktales retold, subverted, or questioned
- Myths (alternate, new, debunked, or defiantly alive)
- Family stories that shift every time they are told
- Intergenerational memories (the ones that travel and the ones that stay behind)
- Everyday anecdotes and the absurd, untranslatable idioms of a community
- Baseless beliefs that turned out to be true or beliefs that weren't baseless at all
- Stories that were overwritten, erased, or forgotten, and the act of returning to them

We are interested in the **full tonal range**, from satirical and comical retellings to contemplative, serious, or elegiac works. We want work that explores how oral tales endure, transit across times and milieus, accumulate new layers, lose old ones, and arrive, changed or unchanged, in the 21st century.

We are especially drawn to work that is honest about the act of re-storying itself: the writer's own position in the chain of transmission, the choices made in the retelling, the things added and the things left out.

This list is suggestive, not exhaustive. We welcome work that finds its own path into these questions. However, **please note** that submissions that do not have a clear thematic connection to oral (re)storytelling, remembrance, or inherited narrative will not be considered.

What we are not looking for: work that treats oral traditions as static or finished; work that romanticises or exoticises communities without critical awareness; or work without a clear connection to the themes of oral storytelling, re-telling, and inherited narrative.

Who Can Submit?

We invite submissions from all **doctoral researchers** currently enrolled in a PhD or equivalent programme, and **early career & independent creative writers/artists**¹ worldwide, particularly those whose work is in active conversation with research, community practice, or oral history.

There is no nationality or geographical restriction. We actively encourage submissions from writers across the world and from communities whose storytelling traditions are underrepresented in mainstream publishing.

Accepted Forms

Please submit **one piece only** in any of the following forms:

Form	Length/Format
Short fiction	2,500–3,000 words
Creative non-fiction	2,500–3,000 words
Graphic fiction (for example, <i>comics</i> , <i>textile art narrative</i> , <i>collage art</i> , and/or any sequential visual narrative)	5 – 10 pages

¹ We define early-career and independent creative writers/artists as new and emerging writers/artists with no more than one full-length published work already out in the world or forthcoming at the time of submission. If that work was self-published, contributors remain eligible as long as it sold fewer than 500 print copies.

File formats accepted: .doc, .docx, or .pdf

For graphic fiction: high-resolution PDF preferred. If submitting multiple image pages, please compile them into a single PDF.

Font style for textual works: Times New Roman, 12 pt., double-spaced, centre aligned

Referencing: All references must follow **MHRA referencing style** only.

Please name your file as “Title_Of_Your_Work” only. **Do not include** your name anywhere in your submission.

We cannot accept submissions outside these formats or word/page limits. Please do not submit excerpts from longer works.

Language and Code-Switching

Submissions must be written **primarily in English**. Code-switching is welcome where it is integral to the work, especially where certain words, idioms, or cultural meanings do not translate easily. Where languages other than English are used, contributors are kindly requested to provide English translations in footnotes. We ask that non-English material be used sparingly and that the piece remains largely in English.

Originality, AI Use, and Prior Publication

By submitting to this call, contributors must confirm that:

- The work is their own original creation
- The work has not been generated by AI tools (text or image generators), in whole or in substantial part. Limited use of AI tools for proofreading or minor spelling and grammar assistance is permitted, but must not replace the contributor’s own creative work
- The work is not plagiarised and does not infringe third-party copyright

- The work has not been previously published, including in full on publicly accessible websites, blogs, or social media platforms

Selection Process

Each submission is read and assessed by our editorial team of seven members, in a **blind review** process in which the identities of contributors are withheld from reviewers. Each team member independently selects or rejects a piece, and this is followed by active deliberation and discussion. We disagree often. We debate. We work until we arrive at a list that the majority of the team is satisfied with.

Please note that all editorial decisions are final. A rejection is not a judgement on the quality of your work; it reflects the thematic needs and scope of this collection.

Please also note that the completed manuscript, once assembled, may also undergo blind peer review as part of the formal publication process.

Key Dates

Submission deadline	15 November 2026, 11:59 p.m. (UK time)
Reading period	16 November – 30 January 2027
Notification of results	First week of February 2027
Anticipated publication	2027

The submission form will **close automatically** at the deadline. Late submissions cannot be accepted.

After Submission

- Submissions are final once submitted. If you need to make a correction or resubmit your file, please contact us at swwdtp.tales@gmail.com before the deadline of 15 November 2026. We are unable to accommodate changes after this date.

- Due to the anticipated volume of submissions, we are unable to acknowledge receipt of individual submissions or provide editorial feedback.
- We will only contact contributors whose work has been selected. If you have not heard from us by **15 February 2027**, please consider your submission unsuccessful for this volume.
- Do not send additional pieces unless requested by the editorial team.

Publication and Open Access

Tales We Were Told will be published as a **diamond open access** digital volume, freely available and readable online, with a DOI and ISBN assigned. The volume is anticipated to be published by UoS Press, and hosted on both SWWDTP2 and UoS Press websites. The possibility of a print edition is being explored but not confirmed.

Contributors retain copyright in their own work. The volume will be published under a **Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International (CC BY 4.0)** licence. Under this licence, readers are free to share and adapt the work, including for commercial purposes, provided appropriate credit is given and any changes are indicated. Further details will be provided to selected contributors at the time of agreement signing.

How to Submit

Submissions are accepted **only** via the online form linked below. Submissions sent by email will not be considered.

Submit here → <https://forms.gle/skWuMpyiNeGtwpWx9>

Please read this call carefully before submitting, and ensure your work meets all eligibility, format, and originality requirements before completing the form. By submitting the form, you confirm that you have read and understood this call for submissions.

Contact

For queries, please email: swwdtp.tales@gmail.com

Please do not use this address to ask whether your submission has been received (the form will confirm this automatically) or when the results will be announced (the dates above apply to all submissions). We are unable to respond to individual queries of this nature.

We look forward to your submissions!

- Editorial Team