



Australasian Association of Writing Programs' 26th Annual Conference

In partnership: Central Queensland University and University of the Sunshine Coast

USC Sunshine Coast Campus, Sippy Downs

24-26 November 2021

THEME: *Fire Country*

Cool burning. Flames lower than knee height. Smoke white and wispy. To support and care for Country, Tagalaka man, Victor Steffensen, author of *Fire Country*, says we should burn as if we're 'gardening for food', as if we're 'living off the land to survive'. This wisdom is borne of and speaks directly to Indigenous practices, conceptions of land that acknowledge more than human agency. His book sits like a firebreak, between discerning regenerative methods and those well-intended though ill-informed practices that lead increasingly to tragedy and environmental devastation.

In this year of recovery, with the conference scheduled to coincide with preparations for bushfire 'season', as we seek to situate traditional practices, pedagogies and conceptions, we take Steffensen's book, its guidance and wisdom as our theme.

As creators, researchers, teachers and publishers of creative writing operating within and across the blurred lines of local, regional and national territories, we invite you to participate in the 26th AAWP conference.

Hosted by the University of the Sunshine Coast and Central Queensland University, the 2021 conference will be held at Sippy Downs, USC's Sunshine Coast campus, situated on the unceded lands of its traditional owners, the Gubbi Gubbi people, land known for its' beaches, lakes, rivers, creeks, mountains and forest.

We ask you to help us share collective and collected impressions of the periods before, during and after, of cleared land and friable soil, of dry creek beds, blackened hillsides, and the verdant forest floors of our personal, cultural, social, or geographic experiences, of the lucky, the burnt out and the contentious.

We ask you to consider the ways the sparks, the heat and the ashes spill over our literal and figurative environments. Presentations might consider...

- regrowth and renewal
- Indigenous practices, concepts and experience
- firebrands, backdrafts and ignition
- minority writing (disability, LGBTIQ, refugee...)
- firebreaks: literal and figurative
- exegetical friction

- burnings – cool, mosaic, and cultural
- collaborative writing
- critical and ‘burning’ questions
- storying regions
- ecologies and crises (climate, literary and other)
- writing from and to boundaries, edges and limits
- fire sticks/fire stick farming
- performance and performative writing
- combustion, crises, firestorms

We invite presentations – 15 minutes in duration – from practice, research, industry and pedagogy – and pre-formed collaborative discussion panels (three panellists only) that reflect consideration of a **‘fire country’** and the ways we enable and disseminate those marginal and mainstream voices that contribute to its discourse.

Deadline for abstract submissions is **16 April 2021**. This deadline is final. These should include your name, abstract (200 – 250 words max), university affiliation, e-mail address, the title of your proposed paper, and a short bio (100 words max). Only AAWP members are eligible to present. You can find membership details, prices, and online sign-up options [here](#).

Professional development sessions for postgraduate candidates and ECR colleagues will be offered in association with the main conference program.

Queries to: AAWP Conference aawpconf2021@gmail.com. The 2021 conference website to submit abstracts and proposals (200-250 words max) will be live soon. Conference Committee: Dr Elizabeth Ellison; Dr Lee McGowan; Dr Nicole Anae; Dr Ross Watkins; Dr Eileen Herbert-Goodall; Tash Turgoose; Ali Hickling; Amanda Fiedler; and Lonnie Gilroy.