

The 2026 International Conference of the Syrian Academics and Researchers' Network in the UK (SARN UK)

Call for Papers

17–18 September 2026 | University of Cambridge, United Kingdom
Hosted in partnership with Margaret Anstee Centre for Global Studies, Newnham College
Theme: Syria in Transition – Knowledge, Memory, and the Everyday Aftermath

The Syrian Academics and Researchers' Network in the UK (SARN UK) is pleased to announce the Call for Papers for its 2026 international conference, co-hosted with the Margaret Anstee Centre for Global Studies (MAC) at Newnham College, University of Cambridge.

This year's theme, **"Syria in Transition: Knowledge, Memory, and the Everyday Aftermath,"** invites Syrian and Syria-focused scholars to reflect on the evolving role of academic, cultural, and intellectual work in shaping Syria's futures. At a moment marked by deep political uncertainty, contested narratives of reconstruction, and widening gaps between exile and those inside the country, the conference offers a space to come together in critical solidarity.

We welcome papers that explore how Syrian scholars, artists, and practitioners — wherever they are — engage with the complex legacies of violence, displacement, and resistance, and how their work contributes to imagining more just, plural, and inclusive futures. We are particularly interested in proposals that bridge disciplines and challenge inherited binaries of inside/outside, past/future, victim/agent, or state/society.

We accept individual as well as co-authored paper proposals.

Conference Themes

Papers may address (but are not limited to) the following themes:

- Knowledge production in exile and the politics of legitimacy
- Memory, archive, and the struggle over narrative
- Everyday aftermaths: displacement, return, and survival
- The futures of education and higher learning in Syria
- Cultural resistance: art, music, performance and storytelling
- Transitional justice, impunity, and fragmented sovereignty
- Gender, sexuality, and embodied experience in times of transition

- Local governance, grassroots initiatives, and civic imaginaries
- Comparative perspectives on authoritarianism and post-conflict reconstruction
- Diasporic belonging, transnationalism, and intergenerational transmission

While this year's theme foregrounds questions of transition, memory, and the aftermath, we also welcome paper proposals on any topic related to contemporary Syria. We particularly encourage work that brings new empirical, theoretical, or methodological insights to bear on Syria's evolving realities — whether from within the country, in exile, or across transnational contexts.

Submission Details

Please submit your paper proposal by **23:59 BST on 15 May 2026** via this form:

<https://forms.gle/CYxwrgtDs9RHrxwn8>

If you have any questions, feel free to contact the conference organisers at za268@cam.ac.uk

Notes on Access and Support

There will be no registration fee. As in previous years, we ask participants with institutional affiliations to seek support for travel and accommodation where possible. While transport costs will not be covered this year, a limited fund is available to support unaffiliated or precariously employed UK-based participants. This will cover one night of accommodation for up to 18 participants.