

SLAS 2025
University of Bristol, 10-11 April 2025

Conference Report

A. Conference Finances & Participation Overview

1. Conference Fees:

We did not do Early Bird Registration. We built in a buffer period after registration had officially closed during which we wrote to people who had not yet registered and gave them an opportunity to do so. We also accepted other late registration requests during that period.

	SLAS Member Student /Unemployed/ Retired	Non SLAS Member Student /Unemployed/ Retired	SLAS Member Delegate	Non SLAS Member Delegate
Full Conference Rate	£170	£190	£210	£245
Day Rate	£90	£100	£110	£130

For the full conference rate, we used the same rates charged at SLAS Belfast 2023. As at the Amsterdam and Belfast conferences, the conference dinner at Bristol had an additional cost (in this case, £50) and had to be booked/paid for separately.

We offered a day rate, since Bristol is easily accessible from London and other major UK cities, and in order to facilitate participation by delegates for whom the full conference rate was unaffordable.

All conference fees also included lunch, coffee breaks, two drinks receptions, wifi, and the costs of the various amenities in each of the conference rooms.

We provided a list of hotel options to delegates, who made their own accommodation arrangements.

2. Income and Expenditure:

INCOME	
Registration fees	£39,415
Dinner tickets	£5,050
Bristol University Press	£240
Iberoamericana Vervuert	£170
Boydell and Brewer	£240
Liverpool University Press	£170
Intellect	£270
Duke University Press	£70

TOTAL	£45,625
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EXPENDITURE	
Room hire / UoB conference team fee	£6,500
Kate's Kitchen delegate day rate (£26.34 x 424)	£11,168.16
Thursday drinks/nibbles	£1,368.42
Friday drinks/nibbles	£1,368.42
Conference dinner (£71.58 x 110)	£7,873.80
Conference dinner entertainment	£4,900
Drinks for conference dinner	£1,590
External AV equipment (conference dinner)	£374.40
AV support for keynote livestream + extra hybrid kit	£4,586.16
4 x student helpers for 2 days	£595.25
Owls (for hybrid sessions)	£400
Social media support – Javier Pérez-Osorio	£320
Keynote speaker travel and accommodation	£1,617.95
Keynote speaker honorarium	£571.88
Keynote speaker misc. (taxi, Wednesday and Friday dinner)	£211.10
Conference badges and printing costs	£364.70
TOTAL	£43,810.24

3. Final Conference Profit:

INCOME £45,625 – EXPENDITURE £43,810.24	£ 1,814.76
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4. Registration Figures & Fees

We had 226 delegates registered of whom:

- 101 paid for the conference dinner
- 51 paid a day rate
- 92 were not members of SLAS
- 43 paid a student / retired / unemployed rate for non-SLAS members
- 53 paid a student / retired / unemployed rate for SLAS members

B. Conference Planning & Organisation Overview

5. Conference Theme and Ethos

The conference theme was 'Alternative Futures in Latin America and the Caribbean'. This theme was chosen in order to highlight areas in expertise in Latin American Studies at the University of Bristol, but also to remain open to the full range of disciplinary and intellectual approaches found in contemporary Latin American and Caribbean studies (see call for papers [here](#)).

We accepted proposals for individual papers, pre-formed panels, and 'alternative formats' (e.g. roundtables, readings, screenings, workshops – we were open to any suggestions!). The conference organisers' desire to encourage creative approaches to the theme was reflected in our choice of keynote speaker, Edmundo Paz Soldán, who is an internationally renowned novelist and short story writer, as well as a literary critic.

We applied a rule that each delegate could participate **once** as a paper presenter and **once** as a discussant, panel organiser, or in an alternative format.

6. Keynote Speaker

Discretion in deciding the keynote is left to the local organising committee. As noted above, we were keen to invite a speaker who could combine a critical, academic approach with an established creative practice relating to the conference theme. We were therefore delighted that Professor Edmundo Paz Soldán (Cornell University) accepted our invitation. Edmundo's keynote lecture was titled 'Narrating Environmental Disasters Today' and was livestreamed for free via Zoom. A recording of the lecture is available [on the conference website](#).

The keynote was very well attended, though there were just a handful of attendees online. At the time of writing (January 2026), the recording has been viewed 84 times.

7. Call for Papers, Creating Panels, and Final Programme

We issued a call for papers and panels on 31 July 2024 with a deadline of 15 October, which was extended by around two weeks to 31 October. We used an online system for receiving proposals (Microsoft Forms) which worked reasonably well.

We received 179 proposals for individual papers, 25 proposals for pre-formed panels, and 17 'alternative format' proposals, including workshops, film screenings, and roundtables.

The organising committee reviewed all proposals, with the assistance of UoB colleagues working in relevant areas of Latin American studies. We offered these colleagues free conference registration in return for their valuable assistance.

We accepted all proposals on topics related to countries typically considered part of Hispanic and Lusophone Latin America including the languages, cultures and politics of indigenous peoples across the continent. We also accepted papers with a comparative and/or transnational focus (if they maintained a strong focus on Latin American contexts). We directed one proposal author to submit to the PILAS conference instead, in view of their early career stage and the early development of their ideas. We also requested clarification on several short or unclear proposals, giving people the opportunity to resubmit or provide more detail.

Paper submissions were put into panels using only the titles, so panels were produced without regard to the gender, location, or career stage of the author. We accepted papers in Spanish, English and Portuguese.

We notified submitters of proposal acceptance in the final week of November. Conference registration was open from December 2024 to 28 February 2025 (with a two-week extension for any stragglers). We shared a draft programme with delegates in early February, and published the final programme in the last week of March (though, as is often the case, a few minor tweaks were needed in the days leading up to the conference).

When drafting the final programme, we were careful not to change the day of papers/panels that had already been communicated to delegates wherever feasible, and we tried as far as possible to accommodate a request to present on a particular day and/or at a particular time. Nevertheless, some changes were necessary, not least because there was a drop-out rate of approximately 25%.

We broadly followed the same programme outline that operated in previous conferences including morning coffee, breaks, lunch and a conference dinner on the first evening. The AGM was scheduled to avoid clashes with any panels during a longer break. The drinks receptions for all delegates on the Thursday and Friday evenings were well attended.

The organising committee decided to offer limited hybrid participation, assessing requests on a case-by-case basis. This decision was made both in response to limited facilities at the University of Bristol, and in view of the additional financial and administrative burden that running hybrid sessions imposes. The University's Venue and Events team sourced Owls to run hybrid panels in two conference rooms, with the team from Evans AV (who were running the livestream of the keynote) providing equipment to support hybrid panel sessions in a third room.

The hybrid sessions were undoubtedly the most administratively complex aspect of the conference, but the team felt that it was important to offer this option to some participants, not least because in the run-up to the conference, several delegates who were due to travel from the United States found themselves unable to do so owing to changes in the political situation.

All parallel sessions, refreshments, and other conference events such as keynote, AGM etc took place in in the Arts Complex on Woodland Road. This provided a hub for the conference delegates in which they could easily interact and meet between sessions as well as communicate with the organising committee if needed. The exception was the conference dinner, which was hosted in a suite on the top floor of M Shed, a Bristol city museum on the harbourside (a 25-minute walk from the conference venue).

The programme was hosted online, rather than being sent out as an attachment by email, in line with the SLAS Climate Action Plan. This also avoided any confusion that might have resulted from the circulation of different draft versions given the number of changes that were made in the final stages.

8. Publishers' Fair

We received a list from the previous SLAS conference organisers with suggestions of who to contact regarding participation in this event and complemented this with further ideas from the organising committee. We contacted the following publishers regarding participation in the publishers' exhibition and advertising in the conference pack and programme:

Alborada, AMDigital, Berghahn, Bloomsbury Academic, Boydell & Brewer, Cambridge University Press, Gale/Cengage, Combined Academic Publishers Ltd, Duke University Press, Edinburgh University Press, European Review of Latin American and Caribbean Studies (ERLACS), Legenda, Gazelle Books, Gwasg Prifysgol Cymru – University of Wales Press, Iberoamericana, ILAS book series, Intellect Books, Liverpool University Press/Modern Languages Open, Manchester University Press, Nomos Verlag, Oxford University Press, Palgrave Macmillan, Pathfinder Books, Peter Lang, Pluto Press, SAGE, SUNY Press, Taylor & Francis Group (Routledge), Thompson Henry, UCL Press, University of Florida Press, University of Pittsburgh Press, WordPower, Zed Books

We were pleased with the overall engagement (see below for a breakdown). It was good to have a strong presence from our own Bristol University Press, and to see Iberoamericana Vervuert becoming a regular attendee after first participating in Belfast in 2023.

Publishers were happy with the service provided and the publishers' exhibition was well attended. When planning the conference organisers should give consideration as to where books sent by publishers might be stored securely before and after the event – communication between the conference organising committee, the University's Venues and Events team, and the porters proved a little challenging.

Due to the SLAS Climate Action Plan, we did not offer the option of inserting a flyer into the conference bag.

Charges / uptake were as follows:

Exhibition single table (£170+VAT): Iberoamericana; Boydell & Brewer; Intellect; Gale; Liverpool University Press; Bristol University Press

Full-page advert in pdf programme (£100+VAT): Intellect

Logo and listing in programme and on website (£70+VAT): Duke University Press; Bristol University Press; Intellect; Boydell & Brewer (Tamesis)

9. Website and Social Media

The conference website was hosted via Wix, and linked to existing UoB information about travel and accommodation. We purchased the domain name slasbristol2025.com for the period of organising the conference and for some months thereafter. The website is now available at <https://epteichert.wixsite.com/mysite>.

Javier Pérez-Osorio, who in recent years has done excellent social media work for the SLAS Committee, provided social media support (for a charge of £320). We did not use dedicated social media accounts or hashtags, opting instead to use existing personal and institutional accounts for dissemination.

We used the conference website to provide documentation of the conference for future reference: this includes an image gallery, the video recording of the keynote lecture, and blog posts by organisers and other delegates (see [here](#)). This material includes reflections on the PILAS conference, which was held immediately before the SLAS conference on 8-9 April.

10. Special Events & Catering

On the evening before the conference (Wednesday 9 April), East Bristol Books, an independent bookshop that supports Latin American literature in translation, located in the Old Market area of the city, held a Multilingual Poetry & Translation Evening. Bristol-based Chilean poet Andrés Anwandter, Brazilian poet Rosane Carneiro, US poet and scholar Rebecca Kosick, and British poet Dan Eltringham, all of whom are also translators, read from their work and discussed the craft of translating poetry. The event was extremely well attended, with the audience spilling out on the pavement outside the bookshop.

Among the panels at the conference was a roundtable on journalism and media in Latin America that was organised and chaired by two undergraduate students in the Department of Hispanic, Portuguese and Latin American Studies (HiPLA), Ciara Grout and Lily Wheeler. Júlia Belas Trindade, PhD student in HiPLA, also took part.

The entertainment at the conference dinner on Thursday 10 April was curated by Tamsin Hurtado Clarke, the organiser of the Bristol-based Anglo-Latinx theatre festival Papaya Fest. It included a performance titled '50 Ways to Kill a Slug' by Dre Spisto and Joana Nastari, followed by music and dancing courtesy of Indira Román and Ají Pa' Ti, and the DJ Panther Panther.

The conference dinner was provided by M Shed's catering team. Wine was included (2 bottles of red and 2 bottles of white per table of 10 people). The venue also had an open bar. All other conference catering was provided by Kate's Kitchen (coordinated by the University of Bristol's Venues and Events team).

We planned for food and drink at the conference to follow the stipulations of the SLAS Climate Action Plan, namely that the SLAS conference and committee meetings 'should offer vegetarian and vegan food only, unless special dietary requirements preclude this'. Unfortunately a miscommunication between the UoB Venues and Events Team and the caterers meant that this wasn't carried out. Alternatives to dairy milk were however offered for tea and coffee, and single use plastic was avoided. Provision was made for delegates who had notified us of special dietary requirements, including allergies, in advance.

11. Organisation

Organising Committee:

Professor Edward King, Professor of Latin American Studies

Dr Carlos Fonseca Grigsby, Lecturer in Latin American Studies (Spanish)

Dr Paul Merchant, Associate Professor in Latin American Film and Visual Culture

Dr Erika Teichert, Lecturer in Latin American Studies (Spanish)

Conference Support:

Rose Kingsley-Jones (UoB Venues and Events team)

UoB School of Modern Languages: Corrie Barker (School Manager)

A brilliant team of undergraduate student ambassadors, coordinated by the School of Modern Languages:
Sophie, Sophia and Rosie

Hayley Skelly (UoB Finance Services)