



DOCTORAL SYMPOSIUM 18th ESSE Conference

31st August – 4th September 2026
Santiago de Compostela, Spain

1. PURPOSE

A key feature of the 18th ESSE Conference is the **Doctoral Symposium**, continuing a tradition established in 2012. It provides young scholars with the opportunity to present their research and receive valuable feedback, while being **seamlessly integrated into the main conference programme**.

The 2026 Symposium will take place in **Santiago de Compostela** (Galicia, Spain) during two consecutive days of the ESSE Conference, which will run from **31st August to 4th September 2026**. The Symposium itself will last for **two consecutive days**; the exact dates will be provided as soon as the conference programme has been set.

The Symposium is open **without charge** to **PhD students in English Studies** who are in at least the **second year** of their doctoral research at the time of submitting their application.

Eligible students (see Section 2 of this call) can apply to give a brief presentation of their work-in-progress in **one of three strands**:

- 1) **English Language and Linguistics**,
- 2) **Literatures in English**, and
- 3) **Cultural and Area Studies**.

Each presentation will be limited to **10 minutes**, followed by a **15-minute discussion**. These presentations should **focus on** the issues or hypotheses explored in their doctoral research, the results achieved so far, and, most importantly, **the methodology used**, with the aim of receiving feedback from both peers and established scholars in the field. There will be ample opportunities for informal interactions with fellow participants and attending academics throughout the course of the conference.

Each strand of the Symposium will be led by two experts who will serve as **Convenors**. They will review the applications, lead the discussions, and provide feedback on the presentations. **Participants are expected to be**



present for the entire Symposium, attend all presentations within their assigned strand, and actively engage in the discussions.

Eligible students can **submit** an application **to only one strand of the Doctoral Symposium** and should specify in the application which strand they wish to be placed in.

2. ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible, the **applicant** or their **supervisor(s)** must be recognised by the ESSE Treasurer as a **member** of an **ESSE-affiliated national association** (or, in applicable countries, a department that is part of an ESSE-affiliated national association) **at the time of application**. If there are multiple supervisors, at least one must satisfy the criterion.

Students who have attended the Doctoral Symposium before need to demonstrate clear progress from their previous participation. In the event of a shortage of places, preference will be given to candidates who are applying for the first time.

Applicants can attend the Doctoral Symposium without registering for the ESSE Conference. If they wish to participate in both the Doctoral Symposium and the ESSE Conference, possibly presenting a paper in one of the regular seminars, they will receive a **50% discount** on the conference fees and will also have the **option of applying for a fee waiver**. In some cases, since, as already noted, the Doctoral Symposium is embedded in the Conference programme, it may not be possible to avoid scheduling conflicts.

3. FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Applicants can apply for financial support to a maximum of €500 per applicant. Eligible expenses include travel, accommodation and subsistence costs in accordance with the ESSE Budget and Reimbursement Guidelines (see Section 4 of this call). **Applicants for financial support must themselves be members of their national associations affiliated to ESSE**. In the event of a shortage of funds, preference will be given to candidates who are applying for the first time. Applications for financial support will be considered by a committee consisting of the Coordinator of the ESSE Doctoral Symposium and the Convenors.



4. APPLICATIONS

The application should provide information on the following four points:

- the main topic and issues, including the thesis proposed or hypothesis defended;
- the methodology, theoretical perspectives and standpoints;
- the data/corpora/materials under consideration;
- the results obtained so far.

Applications must include a letter from (one of) the student's PhD supervisor(s) giving the (provisional) title of the dissertation and confirming that the student is working under their supervision and has completed at least their first year of PhD studies.

In the case of students who ask for financial support, this letter should also include a declaration that it is impossible for the applicant to draw on other sources of funding, including funding earmarked for the ongoing doctoral project, for the purpose of participating in the ESSE Doctoral Symposium. In addition, the application of students who ask for financial support should include:

- information on the applicant's eligibility and a full explanation of the need for financial support;
- the applicant's CV;
- a provisional budget proposal. Please use the [ESSE Expense Form](#), and check the [ESSE Budget and Reimbursement Guidelines](#).

All applications must be submitted via the form provided [here](#).

Questions about the Doctoral Symposium and the application procedures can be sent to the Coordinator of the ESSE Doctoral Symposium, Professor J. Lachlan Mackenzie, at lachlan_mackenzie@hotmail.com.



DATES

- The application deadline is **31st January 2026**.
- The eligibility check and the selection of submissions by the Convenors will be completed and announced by **28th February 2026**.
- The Committee's definitive decision on financial support will be communicated to all applicants by **31st March 2026**.

PLEASE NOTE

Please note that **ESSE's decisions** regarding selection for participation and financial support are **final** and **cannot be appealed**.

