

CALL FOR PAPERS – BY THE BOOK11



Minds, Myths and Machines
Rewiring the Publishing Industry

Johannes Gutenberg-Universität Mainz
24–26 June 2026

Minds, Myths and Machines

Rewiring the Publishing Industry

Conference Dates: 24-25 June 2026

Location: Johannes Gutenberg-Universität, Mainz, Germany

Submission of proposals: By Friday 16 January 2026

The By the Book conference, now in its eleventh edition, serves as a nexus for industry experts, educators and researchers to explore key aspects of book publishing and to advance the discipline of publishing studies. By the Book integrates academic insights with industry perspectives. Contributions can take different forms to accommodate for the range of academic and industry voices that make By the Book such a unique conference. In past years, our discussions have covered themes from the art of curation to the intricate dynamics within the publishing sector.

The publishing industry stands at a critical juncture where technological advancement and evolving reader expectations present unprecedented challenges for publishers. By the Book11 focuses on the necessity for publishing infrastructures to adapt in order to support new forms of storytelling and reader interaction, whilst preserving the role of publishers as content curators and maintaining profitability. The conference will explore how digital transformation, in particular the growth of artificial intelligence, and new business models are reshaping editorial processes, content creation, book marketing and reader engagement, while also examining some common industry myths.

Possible topics for discussion

Papers may address, but are not limited to, the following areas:

Reader behaviour and content consumption

- Format preferences including print, ebook and audio
- The impact of social media
- The power of fandoms

- Reading events
- Cultural policy and diverse voices
- The role of libraries
- The future for book reading

Automation and the human

- The power of algorithms
- Privacy and data ethics
- Cultural diversity
- Role of the author
- Role of the translator
- Role of the editor
- Accessibility

Rewiring the industry

- Platformization
- Sustainability
- Publishing ecosystems
- Communities
- Innovations in educational and academic publishing
- Sustainable business models
- Public-private partnerships

Industry myths and market realities

- Debunking common myths: from the death of print to the stereotyping of each generation
- Media politics: truth, populism and public policies
- Media policies: the two-way interaction with AI

We also welcome contributions that address publishing pedagogy and best practices in teaching publishing studies.

Contribution Formats:

We invite contributions in the following formats:

1. **Research Paper** (20-minute presentation) – Academic or pedagogical research relevant to the conference themes.
2. **Poster Presentation** (Digital or A3 print poster with a 5-minute introduction) – Visual representation of research or an industry case study.
3. **Roundtable Discussion** (1-hour sessions) – Group-led discussion on key industry or research challenges. Please note that applications are to be submitted by groups, rather than by individual participants.
4. **Best Practice in Teaching** (15-minute case study presentations) – Examples of innovative approaches to teaching publishing studies.

Submission of Proposals:

Proposals (as a separate file in Word or as a PDF) should consist of a 250-word abstract together with a 100-word biography for each participant. Submissions are subject to peer review, with selected papers published in a special issue of *Logos*. Keep in mind that no paper has to be submitted ahead of the conference.

Important Dates:

Submission deadline for abstracts: Friday, 16 January 2026

Conference dates: 24 and 25 June 2026

Abstracts should be submitted to mihael.kovac@ff.uni-lj.si

For further information, please contact us at christoph.blaesi@uni-mainz.de (Christoph Bläsi) or angus.phillips@brookes.ac.uk (Angus Phillips).

Conference Fee:

The conference fee is 275 euros, with a reduced rate of 125 euros for PhD students.

Committee members:

Kamila Augustyn, University of Wrocław

Christina Banou, Ionian University

Christoph Bläsi, University of Mainz

Jaka Gerčar, Publishers Association at the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia

Miha Kovač, University of Ljubljana

Angus Phillips, Oxford Brookes University

