

Call for Papers

Drawing Connections

– The Stories We Tell

The 4th International Comics Conference at Malmö University (12) 13–14 November 2026 Deadline: 15 April 2026, Notification of acceptance: no later than 30 April 2026.

How is narrative constructed and negotiated through the material forms and practices of comics? Building on Malmö University's strong focus on *storytelling* and *comics research* this conference invites scholars, practitioners, and reflective creators to explore what it means to craft narratives that participate in the construction of social, political, or emotional realities. How do storytelling strategies in comics (sequencing, stylisation, visual rhythm) interact with material choices, identity, and imagination?

Possible questions include (but are not limited to):

- How can the tactile and physical engagement with comics as objects foster a unique sensory, emotional, and intimate connection between reader and creator?
- How do reader interpretations, participatory practices, fan engagements or living narratives shape the storytelling in comics?
- What responsibilities do comics creators hold when representing contested histories, identities, or traumas?
- How do the material forms of comics differ across cultural contexts, and what can these differences teach us about diverse storytelling traditions?
- What ritualistic or performative elements emerge in the making, reading, or sharing of comics?
- How can we preserve the material legacies of comics for future inquiry, ensuring that the physical dimensions of the medium remain accessible for analysis and inspiration?
- In what ways do the stories we, as researchers, tell about the pioneers or "the most influential" creators shape the discourse of comics studies? How do these academic narratives influence the future of the comics medium itself?

In line with the current public discourse, we also encourage reflections on canon formation, not only in academic discourse but also in publishing, teaching, curation, and practice. What comics do we preserve, study, translate, or showcase, and what falls through the cracks?

Submissions may take the form of academic papers, practice-based presentations, or hybrid formats. The first day (12 November) will serve as a pre-conference day in collaboration with the Comics Archive in Malmö, offering participants the opportunity to visit the archive and/or engage in focused research on specific materials. Pre-registration is required for this day.

Abstracts (max 300 words) and a short bio (max 100 words) should be submitted by 15 April 2026. Notification of acceptance will be sent out by 30 April 2026. The conference will be held on-site at Malmö University, Sweden. Further details including keynote speakers, registration, and programme will be announced during the summer of 2026.

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