

Call for Papers

EFACIS 2025: “Attending to Ireland”

European Federation of Associations and Centres of Irish Studies Conference

Åbo / Turku, Finland, 8–11 May 2025:



In an ever bustling, ever hurrying world, the concept of “attention” has become increasingly important. As Jonathan Crary observed in *Suspensions of Perception: Attention, Spectacle, and Modern Culture*, the “contemporary experience [...] requires that we effectively cancel out or exclude from consciousness much of our immediate environment”.¹ At the same time, the contemporary society, in Ireland and elsewhere, has been shaped by seemingly conflicting forces and paradoxical processes of attention and distraction in various institutional, cultural, and technological contexts. The focus of this conference will be on any of the many ways in which the field of Irish Studies – and disciplinary perspectives from literature, culture, and history to linguistics and education – addresses and is shaped by various aspects of attention. These range from tensions between mediated experience and phenomenal perception to how political and cultural narratives direct our attention to some aspects of society while creating blind spots elsewhere.

Themes for discussion include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Attending to Ireland as/and island(s): culture, geography, and the state
- Surveillance, control, and the politics of attention
- Technology and the media: forms of attention and inattention
- Borders, surveys, and mappings and the 100th anniversary of The Irish Boundary Commission
- Irish Studies and attention in education
- Local, global, and transnational attention – place, mobility, and migration
- Hotspots and blind spots: geography and the environment
- Attention, crisis, and catastrophe: personal and social perspectives
- Attention and the phenomenology of perception
- The aesthetics and poetics of attention in literature and the arts; authorship, narrative, perspective
- Generational and societal changes in attention
- Religion, politics, and social groups
- Ageing and attention in Ireland
- Attending to language: linguistics, translation, and the multilingual society
- Diachronic and/or synchronic approaches and methods

¹ Jonathan Crary, *Suspensions of Perception: Attention, Spectacle, and Modern Culture* (The MIT Press, 1999), p. 1.

Proposals for individual 20-minute presentations or panels/roundtables (3 speakers) should be sent by email to info-efacis@abo.fi by 16 December 2024.

Proposals should include: name(s), institutional affiliation(s), paper title(s), a 250-word abstract and a brief biographical note of up to 50 words for each participant. (Three speaker panels may allow 200 words for the overall proposal, 200 words for each speaker's abstract, and 50 words for each individual biography.) Panel/roundtable proposals should also identify the contact person for the entire session. Speakers should be fully paid-up members of EFACIS.

The organisers accept proposals and papers in either the Irish or English language./ *Cuirtear fáilte roimh pháipéir i nGaeilge nó i mBéarla.*

Hosted by Åbo Akademi University and the University of Turku, the conference is organized in collaboration with the Nordic Association for English Studies (NAES) whose concurrent annual conference in Åbo / Turku is titled "Attending to the Islands: Archipelagic Perspectives on Anglophonia".

Conference Web page: <https://blogs2.abo.fi/naes-efacis2025/>

Åbo / Turku (the former capital of Finland) is usually very pleasant at the beginning of May. And as the city is situated on the edge of the Finnish archipelago, we envisage that the conference programme will include an optional boat trip through the islands, a visit to Turku Castle, poetry readings, a musical entertainment, and more ...

– KEYNOTE SPEAKERS –

Fiona Farr

Christopher Morash

Lorna Hutson

Andrew Newby

Invited Poet: Desmond Egan

Information on Werner Huber grants for EFACIS PhD students may be found at: <https://www.efacis.eu/content/werner-huber-grants>.