



International Conference TU Dresden, Germany | 22–24 July 2024

Extended deadline for submissions: **5 February 2024**

Recent years have seen a boom of newly published manifestos that seek to convey their authors' various agendas in highly effective ways. These new manifestos cover a broad range of themes and seek to forcefully address pressing concerns such as political authoritarianism, social antagonism, and affective discomfort, among others. Visibly located in the polarized landscapes of current discursive dissent in the United States and beyond, these manifestos mobilize political activism, social advocacy, and cultural critique, as well as creative group empowerment and self-care.

The international conference interrogates this recent manifesto boom as an index of the fraught discursive state of the present moment as well as of the affordances of the manifesto as a distinct genre of discursive intervention. In order to gain a better understanding of the current purposes and potential effects of the form, not least to reassess its workings more generally, the conference proposes that contributors address the following questions, among others:

- What themes and discursive realms does the present manifesto boom engage? How does it link sociopolitical, artistic, and other agendas?
- How do the structures of address of specific manifestos shape their agendas; how and why do manifestos call readers to action?
- How are the agendas of these manifestos transnational in scope?
- Where can specific texts be located on a spectrum between utopian and pragmatic programs? What is their transformative scope and the degree to which they demand change? What is their modality?

- How does a manifesto relate to a preface, petition, advertisement, essay, treatise, brand statement, memoir, social media post? How does it explicitly engage these forms and what does that say about uses of genre?
- What are the media of the manifesto? How are specific instances of the form transmedial? What role do paratexts play in the manifesto boom?
- How do manifestos take up the history of the form and expectations associated with it? How does the canon of the genre and how does memorialization need to be reassessed in light of the recent upsurge of the form?

The conference approaches these and further questions from a literary and cultural studies perspective, but wishes to invite researchers from all fields in the humanities and social sciences as well as artists to contribute to disciplinary and interdisciplinary discussions. The program will include presentations and informal discussion formats. Early-career scholars, senior researchers, and graduate students are all welcome to contribute and participate. Panel proposals and group presentations are welcome.

The language of the conference is English. Please send your paper title and abstract (max. 300 words) for a 20-minute paper, as well as a short biographical note and institutional affiliation as one PDF file to Laura Handl <laura.handl@tu-dresden.de> no later than 5 February 2024. Successful applicants will be notified by 15 February 2024. Select papers will be published in an edited volume based on the conference.

The conference is part of the project "The Upsurge of the Manifesto in Contemporary Debates on Diversity in the United States," funded by the German Research Foundation (Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft, DFG), at the Chair of American Studies with a Focus on Diversity Studies, TU Dresden, Germany. For further information on publications and other activities in the framework of the project, please visit our website at tu-dresden.de/diversity-studies/manifesto.

Organizing team
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