



Costume Society of America's 53rd Annual National Symposium 2027 Call for Submissions

A watershed is a point where direction changes—where water, ideas, and movements break away from the familiar and flow toward something new. The term describes moments of significant, often momentous, change.

In 2027, the National Symposium will be held in Burlington, Vermont. This vibrant city overlooks the shores of Lake Champlain and sits at the base of the Green Mountains, a major watershed and part of the backbone of the Appalachian Mountain Range.

Historically, remote locales such as Burlington were considered backwaters where the fashions of society took years to root and grow. Today we navigate an increasingly interconnected and cosmopolitan world filled with rapidly accelerating watershed moments that reshape how we create, wear, and understand dress. In 2027, let us gather to examine work which touches on the deep cultural currents percolating through the lives of those inhabiting the smaller as well as larger communities in North America and around the world.

Themes may include: technological accelerations in production; digital design and emerging technologies; production techniques that encapsulate a moment of cultural shift; global trade and supply-chain shifts; sustainability and circular practices; accessibility; case studies in war-time rationing; dress as identity in mass migration and displacement; gender and race movements; countercultural revolutions; practice-based research from costume designers, makers, and reenactors; case studies of historical garments; community-centered, curatorial, and museum-based approaches.

Vermont is a state of firsts, from banning slavery in 1777 to being the first to legalize same-sex marriages through legislation in 2009. The state continues to be known to the Abenaki people as N'dakinna, with a reputation for being independent and progressive, and for nurturing many notable people. The city of Burlington, and state of Vermont, offer many opportunities to explore the past, present, and future of clothing. Come and enjoy!

Areas of investigation can include topics that are aligned with the theme, but all topics related to dress and appearance will be considered. Possible areas of investigation include, but are not limited to:

- Sustainability in costume, fashion, and textiles
- The artists and stories of communities impacted by textile waste and how they manage
- Technological accelerations in production
- Advancements in conservation techniques, innovation, and/or technology
- Sustainable museum practices in all areas
- Sustainable fashion in the classroom
- Countercultural revolutions
- Theoretical frameworks and design for first-person and/or costumed historical interpretation
- Dress as identity in mass migration and displacement
- Object-based research illuminating historical recutting of clothing to contemporary use
- Advancements in and usages of fiber technologies and science
- Recycling, up-cycling, and sustainability in all types of design practice, including costume for performance
- Dress as a cross-cultural and/or global commodity
- Production techniques that encapsulate a moment of cultural shift

Details for submission, including rubrics and instructions for each type of submission, can be found below. While individuals are encouraged to send multiple submissions in any or all categories, each *first author* may present *two (2) accepted* submissions to permit the greatest number of participants. If you are an award presenter or winner, this does not count toward your two-presentation limit. If you are listed as a secondary author on other accepted work, but not the first author, this will not count towards your two-presentation limit. The presentations will take place in person in Burlington, Vermont, from June 7 through 9, 2027. All submissions and presentations must be in English.

QUESTIONS?

Abstracts administrator: abstractscommittee@costumesocietyamerica.com.

Reach out to symposium@costumesocietyamerica.com for general questions.

TYPES OF SUBMISSIONS

1. *Research Presentations*
2. *In-Process Research Presentations*
3. *Panel or Discussion Sessions*
4. *Creative Works Exhibition*
5. *Professional Development Workshops*

1. Research Presentations: This is a traditional podium-presentation style for research. Choose the subcategory that your research best fits. *All chosen research presentation abstracts submitted by members of CSA will be considered for the Betty Kirke Excellence in Research Award.*

Standard Research Presentation subcategory

- Description: Includes qualitative and quantitative methods including historical research.

Design-Based Research Presentation subcategory

- Description: Includes the work of designers and researchers who are considered to be moving their practice forward by presenting on a topic that other designers will learn from, such as presenting how to solve a problem based on one's approach to the problem and the successful or unsuccessful outcome.

Project-Based Research Presentation subcategory (previously called "Armchair Tour")

- Description: Must be presented by creator(s) of the exhibition, project, or production. The idea behind these presentations is to give attendees a chance to virtually attend an exhibition, project, or production that has already taken place. Presenters at all levels of expertise are welcome to submit. Desired content includes museum exhibitions; digital projects; film and stage productions; collections, archive, and library management projects; re-enactor/living history projects; and designed fashion collections.
- Format at the Symposium for all Research Presentations: Strictly limited to 20 minutes with visuals in PowerPoint or another appropriate delivery platform for all Research Presentations.
- Submission for Research Presentations: Abstracts (to be uploaded in one PDF document under 100MB and to include all abstract text and images) should clearly and concisely discuss contributions to the field and define the problem, purpose, thesis/argument, framework/methodology, and results/conclusions. Abstracts will be graded on how the submission: aligns with the CSA mission of fostering an understanding of appearance and dress practices of people across the globe through research, education, preservation, and design; advances the CSA strategic goal of welcoming all members' contributions to increase diversity in subject matter and research, including hidden, overlooked, and/or marginalized topics, methods, or perspectives; demonstrates rigorous research; and demonstrates written, visual, and organizational clarity. [The rubric for research presentations can be found here.](#)

2. In-Process Research Presentations: This is an opportunity to share works-in-process. We seek submissions from emerging scholars as well as scholars with new ideas. Choose the subcategory that your presentation style best fits. Thesis and dissertation topics also are encouraged.

Short slide presentation subcategory

- Description: Offers scholars an opportunity to share works-in-process through a short verbal and visual presentation style.
- Format at the Symposium: Presentations will be no more than ten minutes long.

Poster presentation subcategory

- Description: Offers scholars an opportunity to share work-in-process in poster format and talk one-on-one with symposium attendees about their research during a scheduled session.
- Format at the Symposium: One poster, three feet tall by four feet wide. This is a static exhibit that will be on display at the symposium site, with scholars presenting their poster during the symposium during a designated time. Presenters must ensure their poster is mounted/thick enough to stand in an easel or on a tabletop.
- Submission for In-Process Research Presentations: Abstracts (to be uploaded in one PDF document under 100MB and to include all abstract text and images) should discuss contributions to the field, thesis/argument, methodology, and current process. Abstracts should

clearly define 1) the stage the research is at and 2) what the submitter hopes to gain by presenting it at this stage (e.g., recruiting collaborators, seeking guidance on next steps, making connections with relevant collections, practice presenting research, etc.). Abstracts will be graded on how the submission: aligns with the CSA mission of fostering an understanding of appearance and dress practices of people across the globe through research, education, preservation, and design; advances the CSA strategic goal of welcoming all members' contributions to increase diversity in subject matter and research, including hidden, overlooked, and/or marginalized topics, methods, or perspectives; demonstrates an original subject or approach; demonstrates the potential for continued research; demonstrates written, visual, and organizational clarity; and demonstrates strong potential for a quality presentation. [The rubric for in-process research presentations can be found here.](#)

3. Panel or Discussion Sessions

- Description: A panel or discussion session is a presentation centered on a common theme or project, proposed by a member of the panel.
- Format at the Symposium: Strictly limited to a 90-minute session, including question time. It will consist of one moderator and no more than four presenters (which can include the moderator). Abstracts submitted as part of a panel presentation may not be submitted in any other category.
- Submission for Panel or Discussion Sessions: Abstracts should discuss contributions to the field, thesis/argument, methodology, and conclusions. Abstracts will be graded on how the submission: aligns with the CSA mission of fostering an understanding of appearance and dress practices of people across the globe through research, education, preservation, and design; advances the CSA strategic goal of welcoming all members' contributions to increase diversity in subject matter and research, including hidden, overlooked, and/or marginalized topics, methods, or perspectives; demonstrates an original subject or approach to a timely topic; demonstrates rigorous research; and demonstrates cohesive writing, visual, and organizational clarity. [The rubric for panel or discussion sessions can be found here.](#)
- Note about Word Count for Panel or Discussion Session Submissions: abstract of 500 words, excluding references, for the entire panel, as well as 500-word (excluding captions and references) abstracts for each paper. Individual titles and abstracts are required for each paper. Abstracts will be uploaded in one PDF document under 100MB and to include all abstract text and images.

4. Creative Works Exhibition

- Description: All types of creative work submissions may be considered including (but not limited to): theatrical costume design, reenactment garb, reproduction, cosplay, and dress and/or conceptual design, etc. One object/ensemble, to be displayed on a single mannequin/dress form/display stand, is allowed for each submission. *All chosen creative works abstracts submitted by members of CSA will be considered for the [Betty Kirke Excellence in Research Award](#) and the [Creative Work Honor](#).*
- Format at the Symposium: This is a static exhibit, installed with labels. Creators will present their design during the symposium during a designated time. Further details regarding the exhibition, delivery, and pick up of work will be provided to participants upon notification of acceptance. Designers are responsible for transporting the final design product to and from the exhibition location. Please note that no additional material will be displayed with the work. If the object or ensemble is not available for display at the symposium, the abstract must explain the reason for its

unavailability (e.g., it was created for a theater production and is not owned by the creator) as well as the planned alternate means of presentation. If a digital image will be shown instead of the physical garment, presenters must supply their own technology to display it. While we cannot guarantee the availability of mannequins/dress forms, a display stand of this type will be available for each accepted work: <https://www.amazon.com/dp/B0FFSVHYJ3>. If a different display method or a specific form is required, submitters must be prepared to provide and transport their own.

- Submission for Creative Works Exhibition: The work must be completed at time of submission. Abstracts (to be uploaded in one PDF document under 100MB and to include all abstract text and images) should discuss inspiration, process, and techniques/materials used, and include an explanation of how the creative work advances the field or design process. Submission can include up to eight images and must include front, back, and side views on a form or on a body.
- Abstracts will be graded on how the submission: aligns with the CSA mission of fostering an understanding of appearance and dress practices of people across the globe through research, education, preservation, and design; advances the CSA strategic goal of welcoming all members' contributions to increase diversity in subject matter and research, including hidden, overlooked, and/or marginalized topics, methods, or perspectives; demonstrates an original concept, process or technique; demonstrates high aesthetic impact; demonstrates a high quality of execution; and demonstrates written, visual, and organizational clarity. [The rubric for Creative Works Exhibition can be found here.](#)

5. Professional Development Workshops

- Description: Professional Development Workshops introduce attendees to new topics and content that furthers growth in one's field or enhances current knowledge. CSA seeks to provide sessions to symposium attendees that address one of the four CSA mission topic areas: education, preservation, research, and design. Topics could be developed for students (selecting a research topic, the job application/hiring process), museum professionals (display, storage, conservation), or researchers (how to find and use various types of primary resources).
- Format at the Symposium: Workshops may be formatted as how-to discussions delivered as a lecture demonstration, a make-and-take or hands-on session, or a roundtable discussion, and can either be 90, 120, or 180 minutes long. Sessions may be composed of a single presenter or a group of presenters. Workshops may include a participant fee for supplies, if needed. Participatory sessions are highly encouraged.
- Submission for Professional Development Workshops: Abstracts (to be uploaded in one PDF document under 100MB and to include all abstract text and images) should discuss inspiration and purpose of the workshop, a brief schedule of events/topics or plan of action, a budget, and any workshop needs for facilitation. Abstracts will be graded on how the submission: aligns with the CSA mission of fostering an understanding of appearance and dress practices of people across the globe through research, education, preservation, and design; advances the CSA strategic goal of welcoming all members' contributions to increase diversity in subject matter and research, including hidden, overlooked, and/or marginalized topics, methods, or perspectives; demonstrates a subject or approach; demonstrates a clear and well-planned purpose; and demonstrates a clarity of organization. [The rubric for Professional Development Workshops can be found here.](#)

SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

The form for all submissions, regardless of type, can be found by clicking here:

[2027 CSA Symposium Submission Form](#)

While individuals are encouraged to send multiple submissions in any or all categories, each *first author* may present *two (2) accepted* submissions to permit the greatest number of participants. If you are an award presenter or winner, this does not count toward your two-presentation limit. If you are listed as a secondary author on other accepted works, but not the first author, it will not count towards your two-presentation limit. A single presentation may be submitted to only one category. If it is entered in multiple categories, it will be reviewed solely in the category associated with the earliest submission. The presentations will take place in person in Burlington, Vermont, from June 7 through 9, 2027.

The form is set up to allow multiple submissions—just click the link again. The form includes areas to enter the following information:

- Submitter's Name (NOTE: the submitter must be the main presenter/author.) You will be asked for additional author and presenter information if the abstract is accepted for presentation. If your abstract is accepted, it will be the submitter's responsibility as the contact person for this submission to provide the details of additional authors and presenters)
- Affiliation
- Email address
- Phone number
- Submission title
- Submission Category
- Abstract, to be uploaded in one PDF document under 100MB and to include all abstract text and images.
 - Files should be named the abstract title, excluding subtitles (ex. "BeadsofNavaho.pdf"). Do NOT include author names in file name; doing so will disqualify the entry.
 - Abstract text and images should NOT include any identifying information (i.e. do not put your name at the top of the document) that could nullify the anonymously juried process. Those that include this information will be disqualified.
 - The following format guidelines must be followed:
 - Text:
 - Up to 500 words, excluding references and captions (see above for Panel or Discussion Session Submissions)
 - Use Chicago Manual of Style, with references cited as in-text citations in the author-date format—more information on this can be found here
 - Single space text, left-justified, space between paragraphs
 - Text should be 12-point Times New Roman
 - Images:
 - You may include up to 8 images (*note*: see more specific requirements for Creative Works submissions).
 - Images must be copyright cleared.

Need help with PDFs? Do a search on the Internet for "free PDF converter." Multiple options will come up for you to select. Choose the best one for you and look for online tutorials about that specific software.

CSA MEMBERSHIP AND SYMPOSIUM REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS

Submitters and presenters are *not* required to be members of CSA. Everyone presenting at the 2027 CSA annual meeting and symposium must pay the registration fee and attend the symposium in person on the day on which they present. An author is someone who has made a substantive intellectual contribution to the project and is therefore eligible to present it. A mentor or professor provides guidance or support but is not considered an author unless they have directly contributed to the project's conception, research, analysis, or writing. Mentors/professors who are not authors may be acknowledged but may not present the work.

Symposium registration information will be available sometime in early March 2027. Discounted registration fees will be available for CSA members. For membership information, please visit:

<https://www.costumesocietyamerica.com/membership-benefits>.

TIMELINE FOR ABSTRACT SUBMITTAL, CONFIRMATION, AND PRESENTER REGISTRATION

Call for Submissions release date – August 1, 2026

Abstract Submission Deadline –October 15, 2026

Notification of Acceptance – December 15, 2026

Deadline for Presenters to Confirm Participation in Symposium by Submitting Final Abstract and Image* – January 30, 2027

Deadline for Presenters to Register for Symposium – TBD (most likely in April, 2027)

ABSTRACT SELECTION

All abstracts will be peer-reviewed by specialists in the area of submission, utilizing a standard rubric for each category. The identities of both the submitters and reviewers will be hidden, with the exception of the Project-Based Research Presentation category, in which anonymity of the submitter cannot be maintained due to the requirement that the creator(s) present their own work. Reviewer identities remain anonymous. There is no minimum number of rubric points that must be met for acceptance of a paper. Total points are guides to acceptance, but the acceptance cut-off varies each year based on the overall quality of submissions. Costume Society of America does not discriminate on the basis of race, creed, color, ethnicity, national origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender expression, age, or ability.

*Please note: The original abstract is submitted for adjudication purposes and therefore allows more information. The final abstract is for publication purposes, and to keep the proceedings document affordable to print, presenters will be required to submit a strictly limited 500-word maximum abstract in Chicago-style (with references cited as in-text citations in the author-date format) and one image for the proceedings. Word count for the proceedings includes endnotes (used for substantive comments) and reference list. Accepted abstracts will be edited and published in the symposium program. Only copyright-cleared images will be accepted for publication.

NOTE TO STUDENT MEMBERS

If your proposal is accepted, you will be eligible to apply for the [CSA Adele Filene Student Presenter Grant](#). This award is to assist you with your symposium registration and travel expenses.