

Call for Papers

“Stitching Stories”

7 March 2025

University of Exeter,
Streatham Campus



This symposium invites papers that explore stories inspired by and woven through fabric. From the fibres turned from fabric to paper, to the conception of story as the weaving of narrative threads, textiles have been the matter, material and metaphor upon and through which stories have been told. In a material and a metaphorical sense, textiles share a long history with text, and it is this relationship that we wish to investigate.

This event marks the end of [The Art of Fiction](#) project and celebrates the completion of the Patchwork Object, an artwork composed of 148 individual patches sent in by contributors from around the world. For this project, participants were invited to send us patches on the theme of ‘women’s creative identities/lives’, along with a story of 300 words, to be incorporated into a single work of art by artist Ruth Broadway. The call for contributions asked the questions: What inspires you to stitch and craft? Which creative women inspire you? And contributors from around the world answered with a diverse and inspiring range of stories of women’s creative lives and beautiful and meaningful patches.

To conclude the project, we invite researchers working on the storytelling potential of textile to join us to investigate a tapestry of narratives that are at once handmade and industrialised, local and global, and which together offer an account of how fabric tells of stories which have shaped and continue to shape individual, local, national, and global identities.

Topics can include:

- Text and textile
- Stories of history
- Stories of industry
- Personal stories and life-writing
- Crafting and community
- Reuse, repurposing of and re-storying of textiles

- Global circulation of fabric and story

To submit:

Send an abstract for a 20-minute paper (of c. 300 words) and a bio note (of c. 100 words) to Tricia Zakreski at p.zakreski@exeter.ac.uk by Jan 22nd 2025.