# Call for artistic contributions in connection to Eco-Emotions conference ‘On Air’, 11-15 November 2024, University of Oslo

Organized by the research initiative [Eco-Emotions: Affective Response to Environmental Change in and through Literature **(**2024-2028, University of Oslo)](https://www.hf.uio.no/iln/english/research/projects/eco-emotions/).

The main aim of the research initiative Eco-Emotions is twofold: first, we examine how literature from the Middle Ages to the present day, in the North and globally, thematizes and describes people’s affective responses to changes in the environment, and second, we investigate whether and how writing and reading of literature may serve as coping strategies, on emotional and cognitive levels, in times of environmental transformations.

**Eco-emotions** will organize one yearly conference the next four years, each focusing on one of the four elements: Air, Earth, Water, and Fire. The theme for the 2024 conference is **Air**:

Air is life-essential and life-bringing, and it can be life-threatening and menacing.

Air is what we breathe in and breathe out and how we literally connect to our environment, constantly and inevitably.

Air is winds, storms, fogs, and the weather.

Air is the skies and the cosmos.

Air is the spirit and God.

Air has its hierarchies – in science and in culture.

Air is the atmosphere where the average CO2-level is the highest in 14 million years.

Air is essential for technology (windmills, valves and breaks, flying, sailing, trains).

Air transmits and transforms the sounds of the world, the human voice, and musical instruments.

Air can trigger and obstruct the senses with its clarity (or lack of it) and its smells.

Air is a powerful tool for the body and mind, through meditation and breathing exercises.

Air can be polluted and bring sickness and death.

Air has historical and cultural connotations.

Air is gendered.

Air is in our language – on air; in the air; full of hot air, lighter than air, etc.

Air is silence and breaks.

Air is the mind, memory, mental capacity, and imagination.

Our invited speakers are London-based American journalist [**Beth Gardiner**](https://www.bethgardiner.com/bio), author of [*Choked: Life and Breath in the Age of Air Pollution*](https://www.bethgardiner.com/choked) and Professor [**Corinne Saunders**](https://www.durham.ac.uk/staff/c-j-saunders/) (Durham University), who specializes in medieval literature and the history of ideas, and has particular interests in romance writing and in medical humanities.

In addition to the academic papers, the Eco-Emotions conference on Air aims to include collaboration with artists in two different ways.

**First,** we envisage artistic contributions, thematizing any of the above-mentioned topics, or other aspects and features of air. The projects could be within visual arts, music, dance, performance, installation, film, theatre, or they could be collaborative and interdisciplinary. Such artistic contributions may be explorative or based on related on-going PhD or other artistic projects.

**Second**, the conference will include an open plenary conversation between academics and artists, the aim of which is to discuss how cultural expressions of different mediums reveal, represent, and/or trigger our affective responses to our environmental contexts in different ways. How are verbal, visual, material, embodied responses alike, and how do they differ? Does one medium allow for expressions and responses that are not possible to communicate through another medium? What role does the production and consumption of art of various mediums play as a response to environmental transformations? These and other related questions will be discussed at the plenary conversation, organized in conjunction to the artistic contribution.

We call for interested artists and groups of artists to submit proposals for art projects on Eco-emotions and Air. Each proposal should give:

- a comprehensive outline of a creative work/project that can be performed/installed/exhibited in connection to the conference. The duration can be flexible but should not exceed one hour. The proposals should specify what kind of space is necessary to ‘exhibit’ the proposed project (describing the necessary technical characteristics of the space, including sound, light, etc), or propose a specific space.

- an account for how the creative work aims to engage with the proposed interdisciplinary conversation.

The proposal is to be of maximum two A4 pages, and is to include name, a short bio and contact information of the participant(s), and a specified budget.

We can offer:

- financial support that can cover various expenses, such as materials, travelling expenses, honorarium, of up to 50 000 NOK.

- an interdisciplinary network of scholars working on Eco-emotions and the prospect of new collaborative events the next five years.

- a well-advertised and an actively promoted event, which aspires to create new synergies between public, scholarly, and artistic voices in order to highlight the existential significance of topics such as Eco-emotions and Air.

For any further questions, reach out to the organizers Stefka G. Eriksen and Inger Østenstad. Please send your proposal to <s.g.eriksen@iln.uio.no> and <i.b.ostenstad@ilos.uio.no> **by June 1st, 2024.**