

Iaclals

IACLALS



(Association for Commonwealth Literature and Language Studies in India)

Annual Conference 2026

on

Food and Food Cultures in the Global South:

Aesthetics, Intersections and Mediations

12–14 February 2026

co-hosted by

**The Department of English, Bangalore University,
Jnanabharathi Campus, Bengaluru-560056**

Food and food cultures serve as crucial sites for performance, story-telling, memorialization, identitarian politics, ritualistic practice and assertions of power and cultural capital. They also facilitate a fertile field of critical inquiry in terms of intergenerational trauma, ecological ethics, colonial and postcolonial structures and resistance, migration and connectivity. The multiple ways of thinking, preparing and consuming food enable one to understand it as a site mediating complex social relationships and self-representation in diverse cultural and literary texts and contexts. Food and foodways symbolize types of cultural capital which in turn influences larger concerns of identity and identity formation that define large and small societies and communities by means of complex matrices. Food is a part of rituals and ceremonies that span almost all occasions of human existence – whether as offering or for consumption. Processes of resistance and resilience also find reflection in multiple food representations and materialities associated with food. Within an expanding food literacy, both public and domestic spaces highlight the historical politics of food and eating. Food pathways also reflect anxieties about modernity and draw attention to tensions inherent in diverse colonial, agricultural and industrial scenarios. The realpolitik of food production also narrates tales of exploitation, appropriation and marginalization. Moreover, understanding “gastro semantics,” culinary cosmopolitanism and gastro-tourism enable both, an informed understanding, and a systematic rethinking or reworking of one’s relationship with food at local and global levels. Theorizing food or engaging in food studies requires an interdisciplinary approach involving ethnographic, historical, geographical, political, literary, aesthetic, gender, ethnic, agricultural, economic, nutrition and cultural studies – disciplines which bring into play multiple logics and a range of methodological approaches in understanding food, food culture and associated dynamics. Ailments, disease epidemics and pandemics have the power to radically alter food consumption and food cultures and foreground moments of crisis and disruption. Food activism focuses on seed sovereignty,

farmers' markets, and eating disorders. An epistemology of embodiment and hierarchy can be constructed in the politics of who cooks, who serves and who eats. Dalit autobiographies foreground food and food cultures as sites of exclusion, humiliation and insurgent agency. Queer narratives interrogate and subvert gender roles by reimagining culinary spaces and performances.

Given the complex cultural matrix of the global south, the conference will trans-contextualize food and food cultures in terms of their aesthetics, intersections, representation and mediation in the burgeoning area of food studies. The conference requests contributions that interrogate the role of food and culinary practices that traverse diverse geopolitical spaces. It seeks to address questions such as: How do multicultural and multilingual literary and cultural narratives use food to epitomise a sense of belonging, displacement, nostalgia or rupture? How have foodscapes been altered by forces of colonialism, neo-imperialism, climate change, environmental justice? How does "food ekphrasis" transform the fluid relation between the author, 'text' and the reader/spectator/listener? How does food mediate memory, gender, class, race or caste in cultural productions? How does one surmount or respond to changing health dynamics?

Original, unpublished papers centring the global south are invited for presentation on the following sub-themes:

- Digital gastronomy and food aesthetics
- Food practices: rituals, ceremonies and offerings
- Food, faith and taboo: religious laws and transgressions
- Gastronomic and taste philosophies
- Gastro-feminism and masculinities: gender, food and culture
- Disability and Food practices
- Food and food culture in cinema, literature and art
- Culinary colonialism and the decolonial palate
- Food as semiotic system
- Kitchen as archive
- Kitchen as domestic, commercial, trans or queer performative space
- Carnavalesque food and food practices
- Food sovereignty: hunger, memory, famine, starvation
- Indigenous foodways
- Food writing: culinary histories, recipes, menus
- Food and human rights
- Food distribution and public health
- Food activism and advocacy
- Urban food practices, diet and nutrition
- Food porn and food exotica

Submission Guidelines

● Abstracts of 250-300 words with a bio-note of no more than 50 words may be submitted using the submission link at the latest by **18th September 2025**.

Acceptances will be conveyed by **18th October 2025**.

● **Abstracts submission link:** <https://forms.gle/nJ3eNEMGZyCdnK8i7>

CDN Prize 2026:

If you wish to participate in the “C.D. Narasimhaiah Prize” for the Best Paper Presented at an Annual Conference, kindly type “Submission for CDN Prize” in the subject line of the email, when you send in the full paper to iaclalsbuconference2026@gmail.com.

The last date for the submission of complete papers: **24th November 2025**.

For details of the CDN Prize, visit: <https://iaclals.in/cdn-prize/>

MMM Prize 2026:

IACLALS also announces the next edition of the “Meenakshi Mukherjee Memorial Prize” for the Best Academic Paper published by a member during the previous block of two years (2024 & 2025). IACLALS Members can submit their published paper for consideration using the **Google Form:** <https://forms.gle/bHbF7ZWYM1yWnHoV8>.

The last date for submission: **18th September 2025**.

The author(s) should have been a member of IACLALS at the time of publication of the paper.

For MMM Prize submission guidelines, visit: <https://iaclals.in/mmm-prize/>

The conference is open **only to members of IACLALS**. Participants are encouraged to become members before sending abstracts for the conference. Membership at the time of participating in the conference is essential.

IACLALS Membership:

- 3-year Membership: Rs 1500
- Life Membership: Rs 5000
- Students/Research Scholars may also avail of an Annual Membership for Rs 1000.

NB: IACLALS Membership is not available for students below Postgraduate level. For IACLALS membership details and payment options, contact the Treasurer, IACLALS on: treasurer.iaclals@gmail.com

Registration Fee for the Conference:

(Includes Lunch, Refreshments on Conference Days, and Conference Kit)

- Faculty: Rs. 3500/-
- Research Scholars: Rs. 2500/-

Mode of Payment (for payment of Conference Registration Fee): To be announced

Registration: Open from 15th November–15th December 2025

For all conference-related queries please write to: iaclalsbuconference2026@gmail.com.

Accommodation:

Participants will make arrangements for their own stay. The conference organizers will suggest a list of nearby hotels/guest houses/ home stays at a later date.

About the Department of English, Bangalore University, Jnanabharathi Campus, Bengaluru

Established in 1964, Bangalore University is one of the prestigious public state universities in Karnataka, India, with the NAAC accreditation of grade A++ in 2023, and NIRF ranking of #81 under the category 'University.' Located on the sprawling Jnanabharathi Campus, it offers a wide range of Under Graduate, Post Graduate, Integrated, diploma and doctoral programmes across multiple streams including Science, Law, Engineering, Teaching and Education, Humanities and Social Sciences, and Commerce. It is a matter of pride that Bangalore University is the only public state university in Karnataka that has been officially selected as the Nodal Institution for the prestigious Prime Minister Professorship programme under the Anusandhan Foundation (ANRF). This honour marks a major milestone in the University's journey towards becoming a national hub for innovation, research, and knowledge exchange.

The Department of English which has had an illustrious history from colonial times in the then Central College, became part of Bangalore University in 1964. Luminary teachers like Prof. L.S. Sheshagiri Rao, Prof. S. Ramaswamy, Prof. Lankesh, Prof. Vimala Rama Rao, Prof. M.A. Yadugiri, Prof. Hasan Mansoor and Prof. T.G. Vaidyanathan, along with several batches of committed students have shaped the department. Several alumni of the department have since become well-known names, such as Paul Zachariah, Prema Viswanath, H.S. Shivaprakash, S.N. Sridhar, Stan Thekekara, and Brinda Chary, to mention a few. During the six decades of its growth as a department in Bangalore University, the Department of English has oriented itself through constant rethinking towards a broader vision of English Studies and has opened its doors to interdisciplinarity. The Department of English continues to strive for both academic and intellectual excellence, and social responsibility. It remains committed to fostering a holistic approach to the growth of its learners.

Important Dates and Deadlines for the Conference:

- Submission of Abstracts: 18th September 2025.
- Confirmation and Acceptance of Abstracts: 18th October 2025
- Submission of entries for the MMM Prize 2026: 18th September 2025
- Submission of entries for the CDN Prize 2026: 24th November 2025
- Receipt of Complete Papers: 31st December 2025