

NEKST 2026

13th International Conference of NextGen Korean Studies Scholars May 8–9, 2026 | Ann Arbor, MI

Call for Papers

We invite graduate students in Korean Studies across all disciplines to participate in the 13th International Conference of NextGen Korean Studies Scholars (NEKST) at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. The NEKST conference provides an opportunity for graduate students to share their research, receive feedback from faculty members and other graduate students, and participate in an interdisciplinary community of future and present scholars in Korean Studies.

Since its inception, the NEKST conference has been a forum for centering interdisciplinary collaboration around a common interest in Korean Studies (i.e., the practice of Korean Studies as an ecumenical dialogue) and for staging Korean Studies's varied and potentially disputed implications for different scholarly approaches (i.e., the practice of Korean Studies as an essentially contested concept). We welcome papers that tap into Korean Studies's established strengths and also papers that call into question the prevailing terms of Korean Studies as a discursive frame.

NEKST 2026 is scheduled to be an in-person event. The two-day conference will feature panel presentations, workshop sessions for dissertation chapters, and roundtables devoted to critical issues in Korean Studies. Partial travel grants and lodging stipends are available for participating graduate students. Meals will be provided to participants during the conference.

Confirmed faculty respondents include Jean Hong (Michigan), Hayana Kim (OSU), Chungjae Lee (Bucknell), Namhee Lee (UCLA), Yumi Moon (Stanford), and Youngju Ryu (Michigan).

Submission Guidelines

Current graduate students as well as those holding a terminal master's degree are eligible to apply. We welcome submissions on research topics related to Korea from all disciplines.

To apply, please submit a 250-word abstract via the link below. Abstracts should clearly state your research question, main argument, methods, and conclusions. The deadline for submission is **January 30, 2026**. The results will be announced by late February.

Applicants can apply to participate in one of two formats:

1. Panel paper presentation:

The panel paper presentation format is open to all graduate students. Please submit an abstract for an individual paper to be given as a 15-minute presentation. The conference program committee will create panels for presenters to receive comments from an assigned faculty discussant and to participate in a Q&A session around the topic of the panel. If accepted, completed papers will be due by **April 24, 2026**. Papers should closely reflect points made in the presentation.

2. Chapter workshop:

The chapter workshop format is open to PhD candidates writing their dissertation. When applying for this format, please submit an *abstract for the chapter* (not for the entire dissertation project) and add a note that explains how the chapter fits within your dissertation project. Each 45-minute workshop will be dedicated to the discussion of a single manuscript, and an assigned faculty discussant will provide feedback on the manuscript. Manuscripts will be precirculated to all faculty and graduate participants of the conference, who will also be invited to provide comments. If accepted, completed manuscripts will be due by **April 10, 2026**. Dissertation chapter manuscripts should be no more than 10,000 words.

If you have questions, please contact nekst2026@umich.edu.

To apply, please submit your abstract through EasyChair at [this link](#).

About the Conference

The 13th NEKST conference is sponsored by the Nam Center for Korean Studies at the University of Michigan, with support from the Academy of Korean Studies. The conference organizing committee is composed of graduate students at the University of Michigan.

NEKST Organizing Committee

Graduate Students:

- Yuyao Cheng (Asian Languages and Cultures)
- Elizabeth Jeffery (Microbiology and Immunology)
- Hanna Lee (Political Science)
- Remi Lee (Comparative Literature)
- Jace Jung (English Language and Literature)
- Seohyung Kim (Anthropology)
- James Kiselik (English Language and Literature)
- Kunwoo Kwon (International and Regional Studies)
- Subin Min (Social Work and Sociology)
- Sonia Singh (Asian Languages and Cultures)
- Gerald Sutton (Asian Languages and Cultures)

Faculty and Staff Advisors:

- Juhn Ahn (Asian Languages and Cultures and Nam Center)
- John Grisafi (Nam Center)
- Jean Hong (Political Science and Nam Center)
- Minyoung Song (Nam Center)