



HEIDELBERG
CENTRE FOR
TRANSCULTURAL
STUDIES



UNIVERSITÄT
HEIDELBERG
ZUKUNFT
SEIT 1386

CALL for PAPERS

19th International Conference of the
German Association for Australian Studies / Gesellschaft für Australienstudien (GAST)

“It’s Time! Australia and the World at the Crossroads”

Ruprecht-Karls-University Heidelberg (Germany)

9-12 October 2025

It was 50 years ago that Gough Whitlam – leader of arguably Australia’s most reformist government to date – was sacked by the Governor-General. Labor’s campaign slogan for its election victory in 1972 was “It’s Time!” With this rallying call, Whitlam convinced voters to approve a radical agenda for effective, wide-ranging political, economic, social and cultural change.

Under the theme “It’s Time! Australia and the World at the Crossroads,” the 19th conference of the German Association for Australian Studies will examine ideas of reform in the context of political, social, economic, ecological and cultural transformations facing Australia today. We will do so in interdisciplinary discussion across the fields of cultural studies, history, political science, geography, literary and film studies, linguistics, anthropology and ecology, to address challenges related to climate change, Indigenous rights, geopolitics, cultural transformation and more.

We welcome **proposals for 20-mins. presentations** that speak to any of the following foci.

Voices: First Nations voices, past and prospective constitutional reform, the failure of the referendum on a “Voice to Parliament,” and wider debates about treaty and truth telling. Questions of gender, queerness and intercultural dynamics will play a role in considerations of belonging and representation. What voices might be needed to help reshape the Australian nation state or future sovereign states in Australia? What political, cultural and artistic voices remain underrepresented, silenced or otherwise unheard?

Places: Land (Country) and space in Australia, whether urban or rural, below or above ground, off-shore or onshore, remain hugely contested. We welcome examinations of human and more-than-human connections to place that focus on ideas of belonging, identity, spirituality and the environment. First Nations connections to and representations of place as well as analyses of non-Indigenous/diasporic communities’ interactions with belonging, movement and space – material, political or symbolic – are also welcome.

Temporalities: Diverse levels and perceptions of time are ever-present, as it were, in debates about Australia’s history, its contemporaneity and possible futures. “Deep Time,” ancient and modern, old and new, cyclical and regenerative, memory and forgetting, traditional and novel, colonial and postcolonial are among the terms used to contextualise Australian senses of time. We invite reflections on the role of temporalities in shaping identities, societies and environments and in opening up new perspectives on Australia’s past, present and future.

Conference organisers: Carsten Wergin (Heidelberg), Susann Liebich (Heidelberg) and Geoff Rodoreda (Stuttgart)

Please submit your **Abstract (ca. 250-300 words)** and a **Bio Note (ca. 100 words)** by **30 June 2025** to the following email address: **GAST2025@australienstudien.org**

Decisions on accepted papers will be communicated by late July 2025.