

The 35mm filmstrip, which showed a series of still images often with an accompanying commentary, was one of the most versatile, popular and well-travelled media forms in the mid-20th century. Whether deployed by government, industry, or religious groups, for use in schools, churches, or public spaces, the filmstrip represented a low-cost, resilient alternative to portable film and slide projectors and a significant, if ephemeral, precursor to such contemporary digital formats as PowerPoint and TikTok videos.



Over the past two years, the RSE network, “The Lost World of Filmstrips,” has sought to relocate filmstrips, both across British archives and within media history. Following previous workshops at the NLS, Edinburgh and The National Archives, London, this third, and final, in-person event brings together archivists and scholars from across the UK and Europe both to reflect on the findings of the network – the rediscovered materials and archival connections – and also to look forward, to imagine and map possible futures for this obsolete media form.

SCHEDULE

24 / MAY

10:00-10:30

ARRIVAL/INTRODUCTION

tea/coffee

10:30-11:40

MATERIAL HISTORIES

In this session we examine histories of, and through, the filmstrips. Drawing on examples from the project, from specific archives and collections, the session reflects on what the network has (and hasn't) discovered so far.

Introduced by Tom Rice with short contributions from network members, including Alison Metcalfe (NLS) and Sharon Maxwell (MERL).

11:50-12:45

THE EUROPEAN CONTEXT: THE JÖRN NAPP-BILDBANDARCHIV

Led by Dr Anke Napp (University of Hamburg), in this session we consider what we can learn from other case studies and projects.

12:45-14:15

LUNCH

at The Dook, St Andrews Beach café

14:15-15:45

MAKING FILMSTRIPS VISIBLE

In this session, we consider how best to present filmstrips and their related materials today. Questions here might concern the metadata for historical material, access to obsolete media forms, the digitisation of multimedia items, their place within archives and the ethics of reuse.

With short contributions from network members, including Matthew Lee (Bill Douglas Cinema Museum) and Giorgia Tolfo (TNA).

16:00-17:00

WHAT NEXT?: IDENTIFYING FUTURE PROJECTS AND WORKS

This final session aims to identify future projects, collaborations and partners and also considers the next steps for the network.

19:00-21:00

DINNER

at The Niblick Restaurant & Bar