

Call for Papers

Life Writing and Holocaust Literature Conference

When: May 5, 2027

Where: Toronto, ON

Subject Fields: Holocaust Studies, Literature, Memory Studies, Life Writing, Gender Studies

Keynote Address: Prof. Sara R. Horowitz (York University)

The Azrieli Foundation's Holocaust Survivor Memoirs Program invites proposals for a one-day conference to be held in Toronto on May 5, 2027. The conference is open to scholars at all career stages, and early career researchers and PhD candidates are especially encouraged to apply.

The conference will explore themes of life writing and Holocaust literature in the broader context of Holocaust studies. Personal narratives such as memoirs, letters, diaries and journals have formed the basis of traditional life-writing sources. Life writing, however, is much more than simply the recorded narrative of one's experiences — it encompasses the ways in which lived experiences are remembered, interpreted and given meaning by the authors. Consequently, life writing plays a crucial role in shaping nuanced understandings of the Holocaust and how it was experienced, remembered and narrated.

Themes such as love and loss, trauma and resilience, and the dynamics of memory — what is recalled, emphasized or omitted — frequently emerge in life writing about the Holocaust. Proposals may focus on individual case studies or use a collective or comparative approach and may include a gendered analysis, analysis of theoretical frameworks of discourse or another methodology that examines how life writing intersects with Holocaust literature.

Proposals that examine the relationship between the life-writing form, memory and literary representation are encouraged.

Proposals **must** engage with at least one publication from the Azrieli Foundation's Holocaust Survivor Memoirs Program. For a curated collection of literary works, visit [here](#).

Timeline:

- Send 250-word proposal and 50-100-word bio to carson@azrielifoundation.org by October 31, 2026
- Applicants will be notified by December 30, 2026

Proposal Review Committee:

Carson Phillips — Azrieli Foundation, Gratz College

Ariela Freedman — Concordia University

Ariane Santerre — Collège Jean-de-Brébeuf/Université de Montréal

Travel Bursary:

Two-night hotel accommodation will be provided by the Azrieli Foundation; travel bursaries available for successful applicants residing outside of the Greater Toronto Area.