History of Women Religious of Britain and Ireland | 25 YEARS

H-WRBI's 25th Anniversary Conference will be on the theme of

VOICES AND SILENCES IN THE LIVES AND HISTORIES OF WOMEN RELIGIOUS

KADOC/KU Leuven (Belgium), 17–18 June 2027

CALL FOR PAPERS

A central concern in the study of women religious across historical periods and transnationally is understanding whose voices are heard in historical sources and seeking out marginalised or absent voices. For its 25th Anniversary Conference, H-WRBI invites submissions – case studies or theoretical contributions – that reflect on methodologies for doing this, addressing questions such as:

- How can dominant voices be contextualised?
- What sources contain 'subaltern' voices?
- What marginalised or absent voices might be included in the analysis – such as those of lay sisters or other non-dominant voices within orders and congregations, or those of former patients and pupils/students?
- What methodologies can help to read sources for the hidden presence of marginalised voices?
- Who has written about women religious, who is writing about them now and who can write about them?
- What dominant and what absent voices can be discerned in scholarship on women religious, and how can these presences and absences be contextualised?

The conference also invites reflections on silence, both as absence of voice and as a purposeful act.

- How can silences in sources be negotiated?
- Can silence itself be meaningfully thematised or integrated into historical analysis – for example as the result of strategies of silencing women, or as a practice that women religious themselves embraced purposefully?
- What silences exist in scholarship? What silences might scholars seek to dispel or respect?

The conference welcomes 20-minute papers on these and related questions from historians, archivists and all others working on women religious, in all periods and geographical areas.

Please send abstracts (max. 250 words) and a short bio to
hwrbi.conference@gmail.com by Friday, 29 January 2027

A conference fee will apply, and travel, accommodation and the conference dinner will be at attendees' own expense. Limited bursaries will be available for speakers with little or no institutional funding – please indicate in your abstract/bio if you wish to be considered for this.

KU LEUVEN KADOC CRIID HISTORY OF CONTEMPORARY RELIGIOUS IDENTITIES AND IDEAS

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