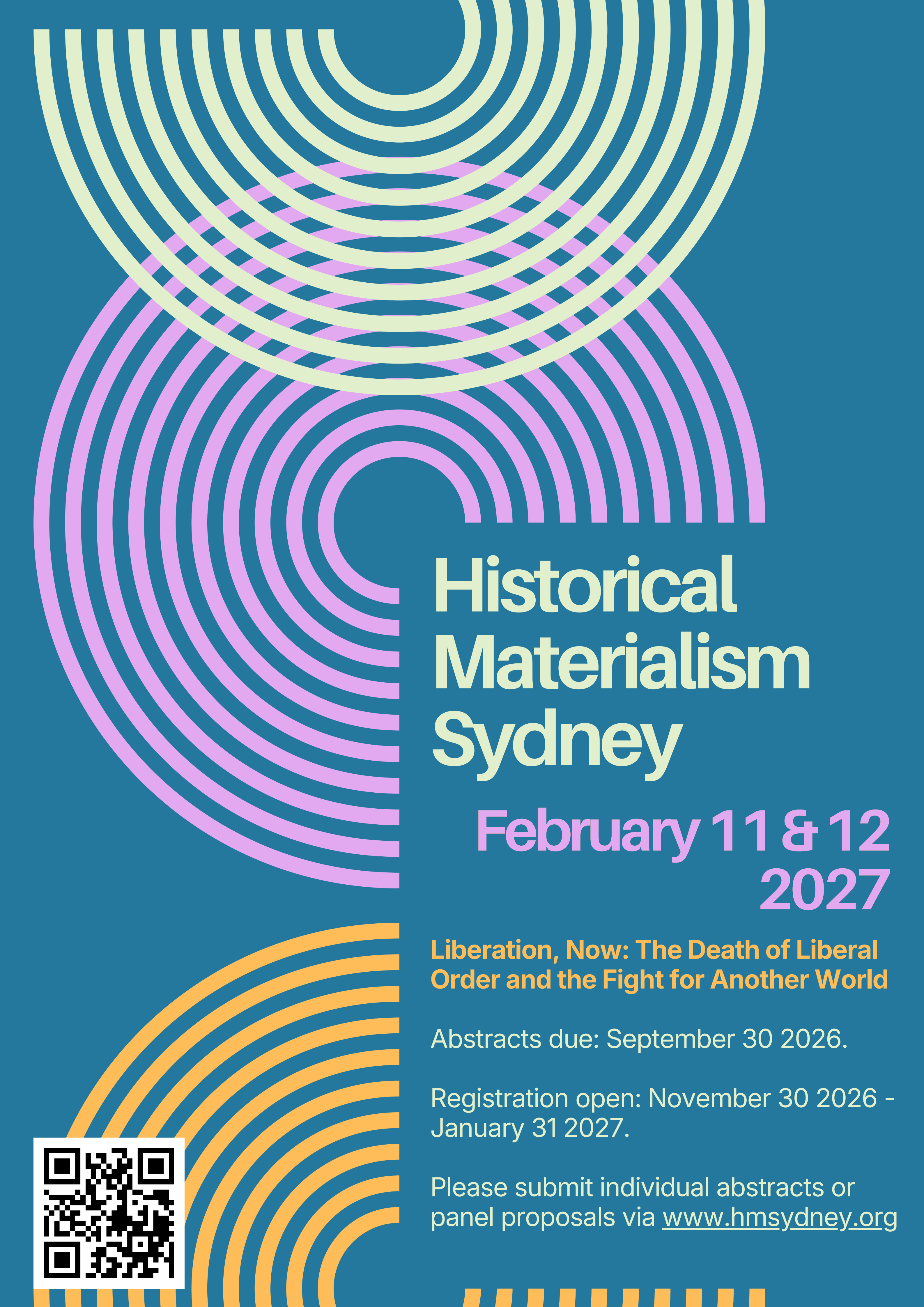




Historical Materialism Sydney

February 11 & 12
2027

**Liberation, Now: The Death of Liberal
Order and the Fight for Another World**

Abstracts due: September 30 2026.

Registration open: November 30 2026 -
January 31 2027.

Please submit individual abstracts or
panel proposals via www.hmsydney.org



Liberation, Now: The Death of Liberal Order and the Fight for Another World

Liberalism is dead. In Australia and elsewhere, the social contracts, agents, and institutions of capitalism formed in the early 20th century are collapsing under the weight of contradiction. The temporary shackles and shock stabilisers have lost their hue of permanence. In the imperial core the morbid symptoms grow. Governments determinedly fail to square the circle of genocide in the name of freedom. Ecological disaster forms the backdrop to growing indignities for an ever-increasing proportion of the population. Naming and understanding this conjuncture is a fraught process; we appear to be adrift within a newly unfolding and not yet solidified political-economic order. But one thing is clear: the authoritarian wing of capital is ascendant. The world historical defeat of labour that defined the neoliberal counterrevolution has resulted in a steady decline in the old institutions of the left. Progressive forces across the world are fragmented, defensive and struggling to mount a meaningful challenge to capitalism and imperialism.

And yet liberation cannot wait. Ruthless critique must be accompanied by praxis. Actions speak louder than words. We invite participants of Historical Materialism Sydney 2027 to consider action, agency and new forms of struggle in their analysis of this conjuncture. How do we take action even in moments of extreme uncertainty? Which tactics, strategies, cultural and institutional forms are emerging, and what can we learn from past failures of the socialist left? How do we build sustained solidarity, political commitment and ethical protocols for action in an era marked by social fragmentation, political nihilism, and widespread indifference? What does it mean to 'show up' even as the bases of socioecological reproduction are steadily eroded? How can we build counter hegemony in the face of state repression and a media landscape flattened by the concentration of capital and the dehumanising effects of AI? And how might we maintain our movement histories and aspirations, safeguarding them for a future where other possible worlds may be even harder to imagine than they are now?

In short, what can be built from the expanding wreckage, in this place and elsewhere?

Questions for consideration include but are not limited to:

- What is this current political economic order? Where in history are we? How useful are historical analogies for making sense of the current conjuncture?
- How do we fight? What are the tactics, organisational forms and goals of socialist strategy in the 21st century?
- What kind of internationalist visions does this moment demand of us, and how might we actualise it in an age of bordering and resurgent nationalism?
- Where are the key agents and sites of social transformation emerging in an era marked by climate breakdown, war, genocide and rising authoritarianism?
- How do we build new and defend existing progressive cultural institutions from attacks by the state and the far right?
- How can we shape, in turn, the production of culture, art, and literature towards the ends of liberation rather than the end of liberation?
- What can we learn from the successes and failures of socialist revolutions (in the past and ongoing)?

The HM organising committee is committed to an inclusive conference experience for all participants. Please get in touch with us about any accessibility needs you have, via the form or via email.