LITERACY RESEARCH ASSOCIATION

Manifesting *Quantum* Imaginaries: Re-searching Literacies as a Transcontextual Enterprise

"You never change things by [only] fighting the existing reality. To change something, build a new model that makes the existing model obsolete."
—Buckminster Fuller

The LRA 2026 conference cover art, designed by University of South Florida Ph.D. student of Literacy Studies, Darlshawn Patterson, with alterations by ChatGPT, is a symbolic representation of literacies as a transcontextual

enterprise, constantly in motion and connecting across a global network. The design's colors were specifically selected to manifest the symbolism found in the Literacy Research Association (LRA) logo, the St. Lucian *flag*, and the St. Lucian *parrot, Amazona Versicolor*.

The globe calls us to envision a world of literacies in motion. The yellow-orange human figure on the left, together with the similarly colored illuminated small area on the globe, serves as a distinct point of entry into this world of literacies, symbolizing unique modes of engagement. This similarly yellow-orange glow is inspired by the St. Lucian flag where yellow represents the sun. The glow is symbolic of how the sun's light often appears to tropically illuminate certain areas of the world such as St. Lucia all year round, suggesting that certain humans often encounter literacies that travel in uniquely focused ways across time.

In contrast, the aqua-blue human figure on the right, and the similarly colored vast area on the globe, serves as another designated point of entry into this world of literacies, symbolizing what are often described as normative modes of engagement. This suggests that humans also often interact with literacies in ways that are designated as the norm. Like the yellow-orange glow referenced above, the similarly colored aqua-blue glow in the LRA 2026 conference cover art is inspired by the St. Lucian flag, representing the sky, and symbolic of how it consistently reflects water bodies such as the Atlantic Ocean and the Caribbean Sea. This suggests that a vast number of humans encounter literacies that travel in normatively focused ways, which mirror the surrounding systems within which we operate, requiring them to honor their responsibility and privilege (*kuleana*).

Beyond the two main human figures and the glowing areas of the globe described above, the cover art reflects other human figures (e.g., pink, purple, green) who engage with literacies in motion and whose colors are inspired by the vibrant and diverse hues of the St. Lucian parrot, *Amazona Versicolor*. The engagement of these humans is presented metaphorically as a quantum act, suggesting that their interaction has the power to invoke and introduce new color representations into the foundational color scheme–whether unique or normative–of the global network. Subtle circular markings near the bottom of the cover art, emphasize the constant, flowing motion of both the literacies and the humans across the landscape.

The words of the conference theme, etched in white, and of the literacies and humans in motion against a broad black landscape, distinctively invoke the central triangular emblem of the St. Lucian flag, which is designed to (re-) instantiate harmony between Majority World peoples racialized as "Black" and "Brown" and Minority World peoples racialized as "white".

The LRA 2026 cover art, through this representation of literacies in motion as metaphorically quantum, is an indelible call to pursue unity by igniting the potential for just imaginaries which signal our shared human destiny to define limitless possibilities, all-at-once.

Patriann Smith, LRA 2026 Conference Chair *Rahat Zaidi, LRA 2026 Associate Conference Chair*

Note

To submit a proposal to the Literacy Research Association (LRA) 2026 conference, see here. For additional information, access the video, infographic, and long form version of the LRA 2026 conference theme.

Acknowledgements

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