



VCU
Libraries

Call for Contributions: Imagining Black Futures

VCU Publishing is seeking contributions for a curated open access online multidisciplinary anthology, tentatively titled "Imagining Black Futures in Richmond," that imagines and explores futures for Richmond, Virginia through an Afrofuturist lens.

Richmond, a medium-sized southern US city with a significant Black population and an increasing number of new immigrants, continues to grapple with past and present racism and inequality. We believe that a multidisciplinary approach will reveal these legacies of harm and envision new futures. As the publishing arm of the library of a major urban research university that is woven into the fabric of Richmond, [VCU Publishing](#) is also interested in works that embrace or challenge Virginia Commonwealth University's (VCU) position in the community. We hope to receive works from diverse authors, disciplines, and perspectives.

Journalist and filmmaker Ytasha Womack has defined Afrofuturism as "an intersection of imagination, technology, the future, and liberation" that "redefines culture and notions of blackness for today and the future" while combining "elements of science fiction, historical fiction, speculative fiction, fantasy, Afrocentricity, and magic realism with non-Western beliefs." Building on the aspirations and explorations of W.E.B. Du Bois's scholarly work as well as his speculative fiction and moving forward to encompass popular culture in its broadest sense, Afrofuturism offers a conceptual springboard for an imagined future for the greater Richmond area that can be expressed through essays, scholarly studies, and creative works, a future where, in the words of Du Bois, all are judged "by their souls and not by their skins."

The work will be edited by [Dr. Grace D. Gipson](#) of the Department of African American Studies at VCU, where her areas of research include Black popular culture, digital humanities, representations of race and gender within comic books, Afrofuturism, and race and new media. For more details about the project, please see [here](#).

We invite contributions from any discipline and in many forms, which can include: scholarly essays, poetry, fiction, non-fiction, visual media (for example, photo-essays or comic/graphic art), and interviews.

Authors do not have to reside in the Richmond area, but the work must address the locality in some way. Authors will retain copyright for their work but must be willing to have the work shared and preserved by VCU Publishing.

We cannot publish materials that have been previously published, or are under consideration elsewhere.

The deadline for entries is July 1, 2021. Please [submit your work online](#) (Gmail account required). Alternatively, attach your file in email to publishing@vcu.edu, including your name and the title of your contribution. No mail contributions will be accepted. Please note that the size limit for contributions is 10 MB. If your contribution is larger, please consider sending a representative sample, or contact us.

Prospective authors will receive feedback on their contributions by November/December 2021. We anticipate the book to be published in late spring 2022. For further inquiries please contact us at: publishing@vcu.edu