PESGB Group Writing and Reading Retreat 2019

Notes for Applicants

**What’s the idea?** Recognising that many academics have little research, the PESGB is pleased to be able to offer funds for a limited number of Retreats, the purpose of which is to enable small groups of researchers to begin, develop, or complete projects, and to do so in a congenial and scholarly atmosphere. Research has suggested that such retreats can be helpful in providing space and time for academics to reshape their work and to share ideas, insecurities and strategies for effective writing (Murray, 2008); we’ll see if we agree with that research!

**Practicalities:** The Retreat will be held at Madingley Hall in Cambridge, from Monday 2 September (starting after lunch from 2 pm) until Wednesday 4 September (lunch will be provided and delegates are welcome to stay on site until around 5 pm, but will need to check out of their bedrooms by around 10 am).

**What’s included:** All meals and refreshments; en-suite accommodation with a desk and ample space for working; a conference room will be at our disposal the whole time to be used as suits participants; a lounging/library area should be available to us, as well as further tables and chairs in other common spaces.

If the weather is kind, we could also make use of the outside space with tables, plus the extensive gardens with rolling lawns, lovely vistas and well sited benches.

**What’s not included:** There’s a bar on site but you’ll have to buy your own drinks (we have budgeted modestly for some wine with dinner). You will have to fund your own travel to and from Madingley. There is ample parking at the venue and we can help arrange taxi sharing from Cambridge train station. We can’t pay any cover for your work, but we have tried to arrange the dates outside of most GB-based people’s teaching commitments (as far as we know). (If you would have liked to apply, but would be teaching, please let us know so that we can see if the timing of the next Retreat can be arranged to allow for wider participation.)

**Who should apply?** We are aiming (loosely) at mid-career academics with heavy teaching commitments and management responsibilities, and independent researchers without institutional affiliation/support. If you have very little research time on your timetable (if any) and too much teaching, marking and managing to get any research done, this Retreat is for you. We are not targeting academics on probation who have just started since they are (supposed to be) supported by their institutions. Similarly, professorial level colleagues (should) have research time on their workload. We are not aiming at postgraduate students either, since they have other sources of directed funding, but if you are a student and also a mid-career academic, get in touch anyway.

**What’s expected of you:** The idea is to try and progress some work that has been sitting on your desk or in your mind for some time and needs some dedicated time that you can’t easily find. In terms of the Retreat itself, we ask that all delegates are together for the initial lunch and the two dinners, but beyond that, your time is your own. We’d like
participants to commit to the whole Retreat (Monday to Wednesday) since that will have been paid for fully.

As a group, we can choose to meet at various points through the day, or just in the evenings for example, or people are welcome to find a bolthole and just do their own thing. After a long discussion among PESGB executive council members it was decided that we wouldn’t require any specific outputs, simply a short email summary of what people felt were the benefits or problems with the Retreat. While concrete progress/outcomes can’t be guaranteed and are neither required nor expected, we have found that the previous Retreats have helped delegates in clear and (dare we say it) measurable ways. We hope this trend continues.

We’d also like people to have undertaken preparation for the Retreat so that they are ready to work on arrival (or after tea at least!). It is usually better to have clear ideas about how the time could be used and even if this shifts, a good sense of what could be achieved will help you make the most of the time. We’d also expect people to acknowledge the support of the society in any publications or other items that might arise from the experience.

How will people be selected? All we need to see is how you hope to use the time and what you feel you would gain from the experience. There are seven spaces on the Retreat. The selection panel will be made up of three members of the PESGB Executive Council. The criteria for selection are noted below. The panel’s decisions are final.

Criteria for Selection

➢ Does the participant demonstrate a high level of commitment to making the best use of the time?
➢ Are they willing to engage in preparatory work to make the most of the experience?
➢ Does the participant have realistic aims for what could be accomplished over two-three days?
➢ Does the area of research fall within the remit of the PESGB?

How do I apply Use the link from the main page to access the application form, and in no more than 300 words say what you hope to gain from the experience. You also need some proof of where you work and a short reference (a paragraph will suffice) from a manager, Head of Department, or Research Mentor, who should support your contention that you will benefit from participation. You need to have been a PESGB member for at least 12 months prior to application. Any member can apply but preference will be given to those who are based in the UK.

Send your application, together with the reference to: pesgb@sasevents.co.uk.

The closing date for receipt of applications is: Friday 31 May 2019, 5.00 p.m.

Applicants will be informed of the outcome by the week beginning 24 July 2019.