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Hochschule für nachhaltige Entwicklung

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Planning a Series of Writing Retreats

HNEE Seminar. 3rd April 2019

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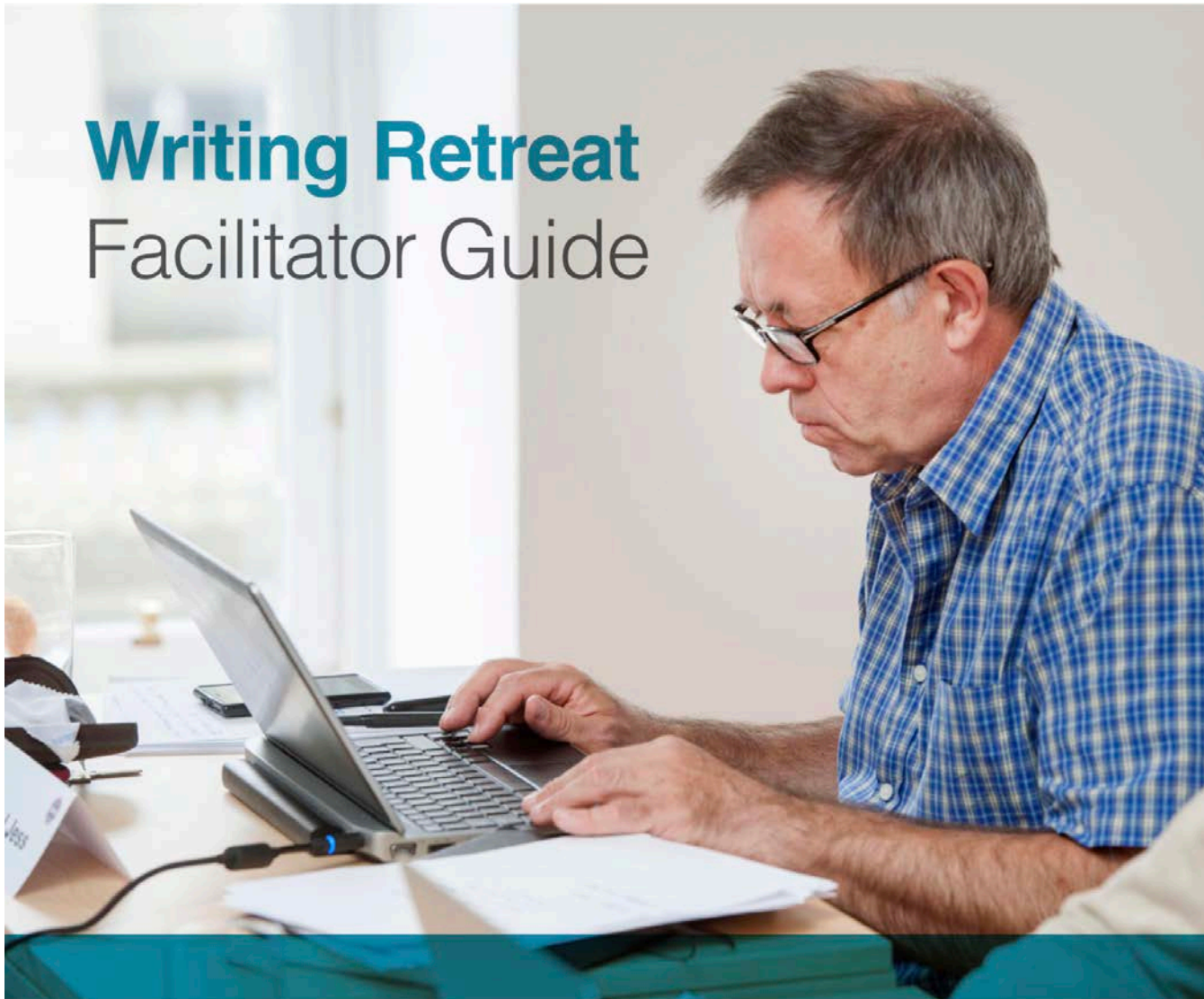
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- What is a writing retreat, and why do people come?
- The aim of a structured writing retreat is to give dedicated writing time to participants for the purpose of progressing their writing projects in a supportive environment.
- It allows participants a distraction-free setting to write, as well as the opportunity to speak to and seek feedback from other writers.
- Build confidence in writing and research and create cross-disciplinary research conversations.

“I tend to put off writing in favour of other research-related activities, and having an environment where there’s strong pressure to just sit down and write was very useful.”



Writing Retreat Facilitator Guide



“I got started on tackling revisions for a manuscript that had got pushed to the side lines for months. The writing workshop gave me the structured space to work on the manuscript revisions without distractions and to finish a task which was long overdue.”

What is your starting point?

- Where are you coming from?
 - Time available for writing.
 - Institutional support (time, resources, etc.).
 - Writing experience.
 - Why do colleagues want to write / write more?
- What is it that you want to write?
 - Drawing on project reports – policy-focussed reports?
 - Academic publications – usually – or something else?
 - Book chapters.
 - Journal papers.
 - Developing research proposals.

Where do you want to end up?

- What is the point of writing / writing retreats?
 - To increase the ongoing academic output of colleagues.
 - To influence policy.
 - To produce quality not quantity.
 - To improve the quality over time.
 - To increase the quantity over time.
- Personal, institutional, both?
 - Career development.
 - Training.
 - Institutional profile.

Designing a retreat strategy

- Depends on the answers to the previous issues raised [?]
- Where should the retreats be held?
 - On campus?
 - Away from the campus?
- How long should they be?
 - Half day; whole day; two days?
- How often should they be held?
 - Twice a year – it depends on their purpose.

Designing a retreat strategy - suggestion

- Retreat 1.
 - Half day meeting - on campus.
 - To discuss the principles of holding retreats.
- Retreat 2.
 - Full day meeting - on campus.
 - Potential co-authors meet to develop writing ideas.
- Retreat 3.
 - One or two day meeting – off campus.
 - Dedicated writing.

Retreats work best when you:

- Focus exclusively on writing.
- Do not check emails, use the internet for purposes other than writing your paper(s).
- Keep to the schedule.
- Discuss your writing-in-progress – seek out mutual peer support.
- Breaks are scheduled to give the opportunity to seek feedback and advice from others/co-authors and reflect on progress.

Preparing for a retreat

Writing retreat intentions													
Name of Retreat Participant	Institution	Paper title	Co-authors	Target Journal / other output destination	Current Status	Retreat Target	Days attending	Planned submission date		Case studies included	Progress at the writing retreat	Any other comments	Date Published and Journal / output
Damian Maye	UK: CCRI	Agricultural commodity markets and the role of contractualisation and cooperative governance to manage market uncertainty	M Vigani (UK: CCRI), Hannah Chiswell (UK: CCRI), Erik Mathijs (BE: LUV), Isabelle Bonjean (BE: LUV), J Kirwan (DE:HNEE)	Environment and Planning A	Abstract for AAG	First draft of introduction and outline (for AAG)	Mon, Tues, Wed.	Oct. 2019		Dairy; Cereals; Fruits (countries still to be finalised)	Didn't do much new writing but managed to focus the analysis more in terms of SC arrangements;	good discussion with Zaklina re wheat cases, which was v useful	
Hannah Chiswell	UK: CCRI	Neoproductivist agriculture and the restructuring of the UK dairy sector	D Maye and M Vigani (UK:CCRI)	Journal of Rural Studies	First draft of paper	Receive comments from SUFISA colleagues; work on revisions	Mon, Tues, Wed.	June 2019					
Mauro Vigani	UK: CCRI	Food supply chain arrangements in the EU: a survey based analysis	D Maye, Hannah Chiswell (UK: CCRI), Erik Mathijs (BE: LUV)	Food Policy	Data analysis	first draf paprer	Mon, Tues, Wed.	Oct. 2019					
James Kirwan	DE:HNEE	The ability of primary producers to develop new markets and add value as adaptive resilience	D Maye (UK:CCRI), S v Munchhausen (DE:HNEE), P Prosperi (IT: UNIPi), D Vergamini (IT: UNIPi), T Pinto-Correia (PT:ICAAM), J Muñoz-Rojas (PT:ICAAM)	Journal of Rural Studies	Initial discussion of possible paper, by Skype	Discuss with co-authors, assign writing roles, work towards an overall outline and first draft of introduction	Mon, Tues, Wed	April 2019		DE: RAS, Carp; IT: Aq; PT: Olive oil	Writing roles assigned. Case studies and overall outline agreed. Olive oil added. Timings agreed for submission by end of April 2019.	Would have been very difficult to achieve so much by Skype. Making time to develop the paper face-to-face was very helpful	
José Muñoz-Rojas	PT:ICAAM	Exploring the role of territorial conditions in influencing farming systems across Europe	Teresa Pinto-Correia (PT:ICAAM), Fabilio Bartilini (IT: UNIPi) Martin H. Thorsoe (DK: UA) Egon Noe (DK: SDU)	Agricultural Systems/Ecology & Society	Second interactive draft ready by when the workshop starts	Finalise version for submitting to journal soon after the workshop	Mon, Tues, Wed	April 2019					
Mikelis Grivins	LV: BSC	Lending to a farmer: a comparative analysis of frames banks use to interpret agriculture	M. Hvarregaard Thorsøe (DK:AU),D Maye (UK:CCRI)	Final decision yet to be made	First draft partially competed	Tighten up the first draft and discuss with co-authors	Mon, Tues, Wed.	Mid 2019		Dairy Latvia, Dairy the UK, Dairy Denmark	I didn't manage to actually advance the text, however, the retreat was very helpful in terms that it allowed to focus the paper. Now, after returning home I am using every free moment to follow up on the rediscovered focus and come up with the text	The atmosphere was really inspiring.	

Preparing for a retreat

- Goal-setting and planning are important. Review your plans for the retreat and set yourself goals with your co-author(s).
- Review the retreat programme: begin to plan writing tasks for timeslots in each day.
- Do as much of the reading and other preparation as you can.
- Gather necessary notes, plans, reports, outlines etc.
- Download / print what you need before leaving home.
- Fill in the retreat Excel sheet.

Monday 11th February:

3.00 – 4.00pm	Introductions, writing warm up, setting goals, planning. PIP discussion.
4.00pm – 6.00pm	Writing
6.00pm – 6.30pm	Break
6.30pm – 7.30pm	Discussion about converting a report into a journal paper, or perhaps a panel.
8.00pm	<u>Dinner</u> – Ristorante Alle Bandierine, Via Mercanti 4

Tuesday 12th February:

8.30am – 9.00am	Breakfast
9.15am – 9.30am	Re-cap, aims for the day and planning
9.30am – 11.00am	Writing / PIP / paper-feedback session
11.00am – 11.15pm	Coffee break
11.15 – 1.00pm	Writing
1.00pm – 2.00pm	Lunch break
2.00pm – 4.00pm	Writing
4.00pm – 4.15pm	Coffee break
4.15pm – 6.00pm	Writing
6.00pm – 7.00pm	Developing key messages across the papers – special-issue? Any interest?
8.00pm	<u>Dinner</u> – Pizzeria da Martino, Piazzetta del Crocifisso 4

Wednesday 13th February:

8.30am – 9.00am	Breakfast
9.15am – 9.30am	Re-cap, aims for the day and planning
9.30am – 11.00am	Writing
11.00am – 11.15am	Coffee break
11.15am – 12.30pm	Writing
12.30pm – 1.15pm	Lunch
1.15pm – 3.00pm	Writing
3.00pm – 3.30pm	Discussion about next steps and wrap up

Monitor progress

- Someone needs to be responsible for keeping the momentum going.
- Take minutes of discussions.
- Monitor the outputs from the retreats.
- Ensure that the Excel sheet is kept updated.
- Make sure another retreat is scheduled / considered.
- Discuss what participants would like / need in the future.

Thank you!

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