

March 18-22, 2018

The Historic Glasbern Inn

2141 Packhouse Road  
Fogelsville, PA 18051

# A PROPOSAL WRITING RETREAT IN THE PENNSYLVANIA COUNTRYSIDE



*MQC will host grantseekers at an intensive, all-inclusive, five-day writing retreat on the historic Glasbern Inn's 150-acre property March 18-22, 2018.*

Apply to attend: <http://www.mqcconsulting.com/upcoming-events.html>

Request additional information: <http://www.mqcconsulting.com/contact.html>

Contact: Megan Queen Cantwell

[meg@mqcconsulting.com](mailto:meg@mqcconsulting.com)

202.250.0813

## KEY INFORMATION

**Application Deadline:** Applications will be accepted and reviewed on a rolling basis; however, applicants are encouraged to submit as soon as possible. The nature of the retreat calls for no greater than a 5:1 ratio between participants and facilitators, with the final number of participants determined by the scope and complexity of the proposed projects.\*

**Cost:** The registration fee of \$1,998 includes four nights' lodging in a Glasbern suite, along with all meals, beverages, workshop materials, and individual consultation.

**Additional Fees:** The registration fee does not include transportation to or from the retreat, incidental expenses, or off-site activities.

**Participant Eligibility:** Any individual who is qualified to pursue competitive grant funding is eligible to attend the MQC Proposal Writing Retreat. The application process is designed to ensure that each participant is at a stage of proposal development that will benefit from the immersive retreat format: sustained periods of writing; daily editing consultation; individual and group critique; and morning and afternoon professional development seminars. Except for applicants who will be paying their own participation costs, a letter of support from an organizational leader familiar with the applicant's areas of interest and grant-readiness is required.

**Arrival and Departure:** The retreat will begin with a welcome reception at 7:00 p.m. Sunday, March 18, and will conclude with a final seminar ending at noon on Thursday, March 22. Glasbern offers MQC retreat participants a late checkout of 1:00 p.m. to enable full participation in the final session.

**Daily Schedule:** Morning seminars will convene after breakfast, at 10:00 a.m. Monday through Thursday, and afternoon seminars will begin at 2:00 p.m. Monday through Wednesday. Individual consultations may be scheduled each day Sunday through Thursday. Brief, evening/overnight writing activities will be requested to ensure steady progress on proposal drafts throughout the retreat. Each participant will be invited to present a proposal draft for group review during one morning or afternoon seminar during the retreat. For these mock reviews, MQC will facilitate according to the relevant agency's practices; unlike an anonymous review, participants will have the opportunity to deliver an oral introduction in advance and to field questions and feedback afterward to maximize the usefulness of the group's feedback. This activity is optional but strongly encouraged; previous participants have viewed it as an especially valuable component of the retreat.

**Meals:** All meals are included in the registration fee. A cooked-to-order breakfast will be available Monday through Thursday from 7:00 to 9:30 a.m. Participants should plan to attend group lunches and dinners Monday through Wednesday, along with an evening reception Sunday; these events allow participants to regroup, enjoy Glasbern's easy elegance and award-winning food and wine, and continue the day's discussions in an informal atmosphere.

*\* Eligible applicants not selected for the March 2018 session will receive first consideration for July or November. For January 2018, one in three applicants were invited to participate.*

## THE FORMAT

*"It's none of their business that you have to learn to write.  
Let them think you were born that way." -Ernest Hemingway*

In the tradition of writers' workshops, which carve out weeks of time not only for writing itself, but also for education and progressive critique, the MQC proposal writing retreat series is designed to give busy academics the time and support needed to create competitive grant proposals.



Over the course of five days, you will have structured time to convert your project idea into a

competitive grant proposal. Program officers', peer reviewers', and fellow applicants' feedback will support your efforts to develop a strong grant proposal.

Daily morning and afternoon seminars will provide you with knowledge that will not only help you to situate your project within the broader field of fellow applicants, but also enable you to return to campus with the authority to brief colleagues on the federal budget and individual agencies' priorities.

Amid solid blocks of uninterrupted writing time, the agenda will also support these objectives:

- **Learn to write with confidence** - Develop a proposal backed by data and a demonstrated understanding of your field.
- **Learn to write with style** - Present proposal drafts for critique to experts in your field and to the ubiquitous "well-informed generalists" who will round out every review panel.

### January 2018 Retreat Feedback

*Kristen Pergolino, Deputy  
Director, Office of Minority  
Health and Health Disparities  
Prevention, New York State  
Department of Health*

#### **On the format...**

"...The structure of the workshop was strong in that it provided for informative sessions from consultants, collegial dialogue, and individual reflection and development."

#### **On the agenda...**

"...The agenda for each day was clearly communicated and followed...Flexibility was built in to allow for individual needs to be met...Group activities and individual consultations provided participants with opportunities to discuss projects in multiple settings and glean input from experts and colleagues."

- **Learn to write convincingly** - Use feedback from excellent writers who are, and aren't, peers in your discipline.
- **Learn to write relevantly** - Synopsise recent grant-funded research by your competitors, and make your specific case for funding.

## FOOD AND LODGING

*"A cynic is the man who knows the price of everything and the value of nothing." -Oscar Wilde*

### January 2018 Retreat Feedback

*Denise Davis-Cotton, Ed.D., Florida Center for Partnerships for Arts Integrated Teaching, University of South Florida Sarasota-Manatee*

#### **On the format...**

"The mock peer review activities were particularly rewarding."

#### **On Glasbern...**

"The beautiful retreat venue was private and free from distraction. The meals, service, accommodations, and landscape were amazing!"

#### **On the MQC team...**

"Meg and Fred were extremely knowledgeable about the variety of federal, educational, scientific, and foundation grants available. They provided useful information and resources that could be shared with others at [my] home institution, provided feedback, offered focused guidance, and answered questions that were unique to each individual grant application."

#### **Overall...**

"This was an exceptionally rewarding experience. I could not be happier! I left [the retreat] feeling more motivated and confident. Meg and Fred had a wealth of experience. They were attentive, patient, accessible, hands-on, personable, supportive, and professional. In a word, brilliant!"



Importantly, you will not have to spend time thinking about or calculating the cost of sustenance during your retreat time. MQC and Glasbern have collaborated to offer you an exceptional experience throughout your stay, at a single price.

Your guest suite will be spacious, with room to spread out your materials, write, and truly retreat. Light a fire, run a hot tub, and brew a coffee in your room. Join in three farm-to-table meals per day, and gain inspiration during evening receptions with your fellow writers.

## STRUCTURE

*“So the writer who breeds more words than he needs, is making a chore for the reader who reads.” -Dr. Seuss*



Morning and afternoon seminars will offer you insight into the broad funding landscape and agencies' peer review processes. You will also be invited to schedule time each day for individual critiques of your proposal drafts; taken together, these activities will comprise a progressive developmental path, both for your proposal and for you yourself as an effective proposal writer.

Throughout, you will be asked to serve as a mock review panelist, providing detailed feedback on fellow writers' proposal drafts, according to the relevant agencies' review criteria. Just as real-world agency reviewer experience is vital to your understanding of the path your application will eventually take, so is your contribution to reviewing your fellow retreat participants' output.

### January 2018 Retreat Feedback

#### Highlights...

*Juris Pupcenoks, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Political Science, Marist College*

“The fact that the retreat took place in such a secluded place, and that I was surrounded with fellow grantseekers, inspired me to be productive and focused on my own work. The sessions that you and Fred conducted were helpful, and I learned a number of things about where to search for what kinds of grants, and how to improve my own [proposal writing skills]. I absolutely loved Fred's frank and realistic insights into how the grant funding process works, and how political it can be. One-on one sessions were fantastic, and the opportunity to present on my own working grant proposal/ideas was invaluable. The overall environment really inspired me, allowed me to be extremely productive, and to learn quite a bit.”

*Yi-Pin Lin, Ph.D., Research Scientist, Wadsworth Center, New York State Department of Health*

“I learned a lot during the retreat, especially the mock reviews. The talks opened my eyes. Further, the opportunity to review other people's applications and evaluate them based on the guidelines from federal agencies gave me reviewer perspective, which will help me judge my own grant applications in the same way.

Staying in a beautiful meeting site for five days of intense writing and getting the feedback from you, Fred, and other colleagues is absolutely an efficient way to get proposal writing done.”