

Writing for Change: pursuing social science in times of transition in Nepal

A seminar workshop

January 30, 2014

Time: 9:30 am - 5:30pm

Venue: Yala Maya Kendra, Patan Dhoka, Lalitpur

Supported by a British Academy International Partnership and Mobility Award

Speakers: Andrea Nightingale, University of Gothenburg, Sweden

Krishna K Shrestha, University of New South Wales, Australia

Hemant Ojha, Southasia Institute of Advanced Studies (SIAS)/ University of New South Wales, Australia

Hari Dhungana, Southasia Institute of Advanced Studies, Kathmandu

Hari Sharma, Alliance for Social Dialogue, Kathmandu

Ajay Dixit, Institute of Social and Environmental Transition (ISET) Nepal

Jhalak Subedi, Nepal South Asia Centre

Deepak Thapa, Social Science Baha, Kathmandu

Naya Sharma, Forestaction Nepal

Netra Timsina, ForestAction Nepal, Kathmandu

Participants: young generation and emerging scholars based in Nepal

Why this workshop?

As Nepal struggles for political changes and post-conflict state restructuring, the role of critical research, reflections and writing has become crucial in informing policy debates, political discourses, and everyday deliberation. In such situations, social science researchers are facing challenges to effectively communicate their research to political actors, community activists, and the wider public. Innovative approaches to writing are also emerging to tackle such challenges, yet there has rarely been an effort to bring such innovations together in a learning forum for the benefit of young generation and emerging scholars, researchers and writers in Nepal.

Purpose

This workshop is a collaborative effort of various institutions in Nepal, the UK, Sweden and Australia, sharing a common vision to promote science communication and writing for change. It provides emerging scholars based in Nepal a world class opportunity to reflect upon and learn issues, principles and strategies for quality of writing in relation to the evolving political agenda and proliferating practical discourses of change. In particular, the workshop aims to foster an innovative approach to research writing that has an explicit goal to contribute to progressive social change. The workshop will showcase innovative thinking and strategies to frame and organise writing for transformative impact in the realms of conceptual and practical understandings of Nepalese society as it moves through a process of change.

The one-day seminar workshop will feature presentations by noted scholars with substantial research experience, writing and policy communication on various issues related to environment and development.

Sessions

There will be an introduction followed by 3 seminar sessions and a concluding plenary:

Introduction (30 min): the importance of writing for different audiences, writing issues providing a framework for the whole day – clarifying aims, objectives, expectations, key themes, outcomes and learning processes, ground rules.

1. **Writing for Science (2 hrs):** the politics of international vs. local publication
2. **Writing for policy makers (2 hrs):** the politics of evidence and an approach to critical action research.
3. **Writing for the media (2 hrs):** using the media for social change in Nepal
4. **Concluding plenary (1 hour):** reflections emerging themes, facilitation of on-going work groups, brief wrap up.

Workshop method

- Each session will be 2 hours: a key presentation, and commentary presentation, with plenty of time for small and large group discussion.
- As the workshop progresses we will stay open to changing the format of the discussion. For example, themes may build during the day and rather than a Q & A session to kick off the small group discussions, we may want to identify key emerging themes to organise our thoughts.

Organisers/Collaborators:



Southasia Institute of Advanced Studies, Kathmandu



University of Edinburgh, UK



University of Melbourne, Australia