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# Writing Workshop for Early Career Scholars from the Global South

May 23, 2024 | In the News

From 6 to 7 May 2024, **APCEL** and the [Journal of Environmental Law](#) jointly held a writing workshop in Singapore for early career scholars from the Global South. The workshop was intended to create opportunities for such scholars to receive feedback on their scholarship, exchange ideas with other scholars, and to learn more about navigating the academic requirements of journals, and academic publishing more generally.

11 scholars from the Asian, African and South American continents spent two days workshopping with five seasoned academics in the environmental law field. The workshop comprised of four sharing sessions and draft paper discussions.

**On the first day**, the participants heard from **Dr Liz Fisher**, Professor of Environmental Law, University of Oxford and **Dr Jolene Lin**, Director of APCEL and Associate Professor, NUS Law in the first sharing session about “**The Writing Process**”.

**Dr Fisher** offered insights on how to use obsessive energy well to do a good job in writing. Drawing from Richard Sennett’s book “The Craftsman”, she shared tips ranging from managing projects to writing with a line of analysis and clarity to illuminate others. **Dr Lin** shared about her writing journey, including the joys of collaborative writing. She also emphasised that scholars should not think they must write something that will change the world, but instead, should adopt the mindset that they have a story to share, albeit as one small voice in the universe.

**Dr Lin** and **Dr Sanja Bogojević**, Professor of Law, University of Oxford, led the second sharing session on “*Why Publish?*”. **Dr Bogojević** talked about how scholarship is built on curiosity about the world, with the ideals of commitment to methods and investigation, a self-conscious and reflective open-mindedness, and the inclination to publish work to illuminate others. **Dr Lin** presented on how to publish, and how a scholar needs to be a good storyteller and change the framing and narrative in one’s work depending on the audience.





### *Sharing sessions in the Lee Sheridan Conference Room*

Participants were engaged, discussing the varying publication requirements in their institutions and the challenges they faced in writing.

The first day ended with the announcement of the Richard Macrory Prize winner for 2023, awarded each year for the most thought-provoking and innovative article published in the Journal in that year. The winner was Vilja Johansson for her piece on “Just Transition as an Evolving Concept in International Climate Law”.

**On the second day, Dr Duncan French**, Pro Vice Chancellor / Head of College of Health & Science, University of Lincoln, and **Dr Steven Vaughan**, Professor of Law and Professional Ethics, University College London led the third sharing session on “***Reviewing and Being Reviewed***”.

**Dr French** highlighted the importance of distilling journal reviewers’ comments, improving the writing, and showing the journal editor that improvements have been made. **Dr Vaughan** shared that as reviewers, it is important to keep a professional and kind tone, and provide comments that will help the author improve their writing as opposed to suggesting additional irrelevant topics





*Sharing experiences of the review process*

All the speakers – **Dr Fisher**, **Dr Lin**, **Dr Bogojević**, **Dr French** and **Dr Vaughan** – then led the fourth and last sharing session on “***The Importance of Community***” for fostering expertise through nurturing relationships, discussions, and co-authorship where there is justification to do so. Participants took the opportunity to express their gratitude for the opportunity to gather at the workshop.





*Building community over lunch*

**Across both days, participants also shared their draft paper in break-out sessions**, with other participants and the speakers, all of whom provided in-depth comments on how to improve the draft. Paper topics ranged from the regulation of genetically modified organisms (GMOs) to disaster risk management. The participants received valuable feedback that would enable them to finalise the paper for publication.







*Draft paper discussions in break-out rooms*


Throughout the workshop, both the speakers and participants shared honestly about the challenges and rejections they faced in their scholarship journey. The sharing made the atmosphere of the workshop very supportive, while at the same time providing critical advice for early-career scholars to progress in their scholarship and careers.


**APCEL** wishes to take this opportunity to thank all the speakers and the participants (below) for making the workshop an engaging and fruitful one:


- **Dr Ady Chinchay**
- **Dr Ancui Liu**
- **Dr Charlotte Kabaseke**
- **Dr Enam Antonio**
- **Dr Jawhar Cholakkathodi**
- **Dr Michael Addaney**
- **Dr Opeyemi Adewale**
- **Dr Phil Saengkrai**

- **Dr Shachi Singh**
- **Dr Sroyon Mukherjee**
- **Dr Tracey Kanhanga**

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