

Beyond Essentialism: Elevating Women's Scholarship in Southeast Asian Social Sciences

“Beyond Essentialism” provides training and mentoring of women early career researchers (ECRs) in the social sciences, with a focus on researchers from and working on Southeast Asia. Three interrelated activities form the basis for the program: 1) a virtual workshop where ECRs present early drafts of their work and receive feedback and guidance from journal editors and established scholars; 2) a physical workshop where the ECRs present revised drafts of their work and receive feedback and guidance from established scholars and peers; and 3) guided discussion during the workshops on research contexts, writing and publishing, and grant funding. By the conclusion of the workshops, each participant will have: 1) a piece of research ready to be submitted to a high-level journal, 2) improved writing and reviewing skills, and 3) new and stronger networks with other ECRs in Southeast Asia, established researchers and journal editors specializing in Southeast Asian social science research.

The first workshop will be held on June 27-30, 2021 in partnership with the University of Essex, while the second workshop will be held on September 13-15, 2021 in partnership with the University of the Philippines-Diliman. Convening both workshops will be Aries Arugay (University of the Philippines-Diliman) and Sarah Shair-Rosenfield (University of Essex). The convenors will cover participation costs (including airfare, lodging, and materials) for up to 16 qualified ECR applicants. The working language of the program is English.

Participants and Eligibility

The program is intended for early career researchers (ECRs) in the social sciences whose scholarship focuses on and advances research on Southeast Asia. ECRs are defined as any scholar preparing to defend their doctoral thesis within the next 2 years (by 2023) or who are no more than 5 years past the receipt of their doctoral degree (since 2016). ECRs who meet the following criteria are eligible to apply: 1) resident of any Southeast Asian country, 2) working in any social science discipline, 3) on any topic on Southeast Asia, and 4) female. Scholars should apply with a manuscript or research project in progress that they will present at the workshop. Professional fluency in English is required.

Workshop Theme

This program is designed to provide women ECRs working in the social sciences in Southeast Asia with opportunities to access feedback on early stage work, training in preparation for submission processes at scholarly journals, and a network of established scholars from whom to seek advice and mentorship. As such, there is no specific thematic topic or disciplinary preference within the social sciences. Women ECRs from the region work on a wide range of topics and we would like to encourage and highlight their scholarly contributions regardless of the topic under study.

Submitted manuscripts should be about 6-7,000 words in length and participants will be asked to identify one or two target journals (examples include Asian Politics & Policy, Journal of Asian Studies, Journal of East Asian Studies, Pacific Affairs and other journals that are indexed in the Web of Science or Scopus). Each participant's draft paper will receive comments before the first virtual workshop, and these written comments will form the basis for one-to-one writing sessions

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during the virtual workshop. Following the virtual workshop, ECRs will have the opportunity to make substantial revisions to their papers and submit revised drafts before the second workshop. Each revised draft will receive additional review comments at the second physical workshop, including one set of comments from a peer participant. In this way, each ECR participant now acts as both writer and reviewer. These written comments again serve as the basis for one-to-one writing sessions, where participants can reflect on their own writing and also on their own comments on the work of other researchers. Each workshop will be underpinned by sessions on the nature of research, expected structures and presentation of research papers, journal submission, review processes and challenges in peer reviewing. Following the workshop, the convenors expect to curate a special issue of *Asian Politics & Policy* featuring a set of pieces from the program's second workshop.

Contingency Plan

Due to the restrictions and ongoing uncertainty surrounding COVID-19, the second workshop may be rescheduled (to a later date in 2021) or shifted to a virtual format (at the scheduled date). The convenors will notify selected program participants of any updates or changes to the date and format of the second workshop currently scheduled for September 2021 in Quezon City, the Philippines.

How to Apply

To submit an application, please fill out the [application form](#) completely **by the deadline of Friday, May 14, 2021**. Make sure you answer all questions fully, attach your manuscript or research project as a PDF or Word file, and provide the name and email contact information for your reference. When we contact them, your reference will not be asked to evaluate your scholarship but instead will be asked to confirm your academic status (e.g. ABD and expected defense date, PhD viva completed, PhD within the past 5 years). If you have any questions about whether you meet the criteria to apply, please email the convenors at s.shairrosenfield@essex.ac.uk.