

The Experience of International Collaborative Writing Groups

Writing as part of an international collaborative writing group (ICWG) has become a signature pedagogy of the International Society for the Scholarship of Teaching (ISSOTL) (Healey and Marquis 2013; Matthews and Healey 2017). They adapted it from the International Network for Learning and Teaching Geography in Higher Education (INLT), and the practice of collaborative writing has since been taken on by others, such as the Society for the Learning and Teaching in Higher Education in Canada (Healey 2017). Despite challenges related to group size and diversity, ICWGs can enhance individual and collective scholarship of teaching and learning (SoTL) capacity through supporting relationships, community, multiple perspectives, and experiential learning (Marquis, Healey, and Vine 2014; 2016). A graduate student at the first ISSOTL ICWG summarized the benefits well. They included:

(a) receiving mentorship through the writing and publishing process; (b) networking, connecting, and exchanging ideas with people who have shared interests; (c) being able to strengthen my CV (this is important for me as a graduate student and aspiring academic); and, (d) being exposed to new ideas and literature that I might not have encountered otherwise. (Marquis, Healey, and Vine 2014, 10)

The leaders of each of the ICWGs were key to the success of the initiative (Marquis, Mårtensson, and Healey 2017). The experience was not, however, positive for all participants, and feedback led to the suggestion that to gain the most out of the experience, certain dispositions among the participants are desirable (Healey and Matthews 2017, 4-5):

1. Willingness to collaborate on a journey that has an uncertain outcome
2. Adventurousness that embraces a journey of co-creation with unknown, diverse scholars

From *Writing about Learning and Teaching in Higher Education: Creating and Contributing to Scholarly Conversations across a Range of Genres* by Healey, Matthews, and Cook-Sather. Elon University Center for Engaged Learning, 2020.
<https://doi.org/10.36284/celelon.oa3>.

3. Open-mindedness to question *what one thinks* SoTL is
4. Empathy for others from different cultures and contexts that affect how they collaborate
5. Willingness to make time and space for collaboration using online tools.

References

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