

THE QUEEN'S FOUNDATION FOR ECUMENICAL THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION

Selly Oak Centre for Mission Studies

Interfaith Visiting Scholarship (3 months)

The Scholarship

This Scholarship is awarded annually at the Selly Oak Centre for Mission Studies, based at Queen's Ecumenical Foundation, Birmingham, United Kingdom. (www.queens.ac.uk) The Centre carries on the ethos of the Selly Oak Colleges, with its long and distinguished history of enabling engagement between Christians and people of other religions, particularly scholars, in the context of the University of Birmingham and its multi-faith and multi-cultural context. Centres continue for the Study of Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations and Asian Religions and Interreligious Relations. The Scholar will belong to a religion other than Christianity and will have experience of inter religious dialogue.

The Selly Oak Centre for Mission Studies

The Selly Oak Centre for Mission Studies is the successor to the United College of the Ascension, and carries out its activities as part of the Queen's Foundation for Ecumenical Theological Education on its campus in Edgbaston, Birmingham. The SOCMS is sponsored by the Methodist Church in Britain (www.methodist.org.uk) and USPG, an Anglican mission society (www.uspg.org.uk). It focuses their work on preparing and receiving mission partners, engaging in mission education and research in global contexts, and developing a network of mission focused institutions. The Centre, within the Queen's Foundation, aims to form an international community of staff and students that reflects and embodies the diversity of the world church.

The Queen's Foundation

The Queen's Foundation is dedicated to excellence in theological education, ministerial training, mission studies and personal formation in the service of God. The Foundation incorporates four constituent groups – ministerial education in a residential setting (the Queen's college); ministerial education in a part-time non-residential setting (the West Midlands Ministry Training Course); research students and projects (the Research Centre); and global mission studies and training (the Selly Oak Centre for Mission Studies). Each constituency has its own distinctive identity and focus of activity, but each understands itself as part of a unitary body – the Foundation – and is committed to working in ways that are collaborative, supportive and self-critical. The Foundation and the Centre together aim to assist Christians and the churches in understanding how to engage in ministry and mission with integrity, in the light of Christian traditions, the many perspectives of the contemporary global Christian community and the challenges posed by the modern world. They both aim to maintain a learning and worshipping community that values diversity, dialogue and critical openness in pursuing education in mission and ministry and the promotion of research activities. The Centre within the Foundation builds on this, seeking to share in the mission of God in the world through helping the Church develop theologies and practices appropriate to the 21st Century.

A number of the courses that take place at the Foundation feature the relationship between Christianity and other world religions. The encouragement of interfaith dialogue and understanding in a spirit of commitment and openness, the pursuit of world peace and development and the enabling of Christians to witness with sensitivity among people of other faiths and cultures, are high in the priorities of the Centre. This is worked out through formal courses, short programmes for British participants and exposure programmes organised on request for groups of Christian leaders visiting Birmingham.

The Interfaith Scholar

The Scholar will belong to a religion other than Christianity and will have experience of inter religious dialogue. S/he should be able to communicate well in written and spoken English and should have a proven record of teaching and leadership in their own religion, as well as being conversant with Christianity and having experience of interfaith dialogue with Christians. As Interfaith scholar, s/he will be expected to

1. Contribute to courses within the Centre, Foundation and the University of Birmingham, as appropriate, as agreed on the basis of the experience of the Scholar and the needs of those courses. It could include leading some seminars.

2. Participate in the community life of the Centre, as appropriate. This will include community events and friendly interaction with staff and students. There is daily worship in the College chapel. This is Christian and the Scholar is welcome to attend, as they may wish or not.

3. Be available to Christians outside the Centre, where appropriate, to benefit from mutual interaction, and be available also, within appropriate limitations, to the staff of the Methodist Church and USPG.

In order for the scholar to meet these expectations, the scholarship will:

- Provide space for study and reflection in areas mutually agreed which are of particular interest to the Scholar and which can be shared with the community.
- Provide space for a writing project where the Scholar would value that. This could be a book or articles.
- Provide opportunities for the Scholar to be exposed to their own religion within the West Midlands and to offer what might be appropriate to local adherents. To provide exposure opportunities to whatever else may be of interest in the local context and beyond.
- Provide opportunities to engage in interreligious dialogue both in classes and in an informal way, through the life and work of the College.

Terms and conditions

The Interfaith Scholarship is offered annually for a period of one term, normally from September to December, or January to March/April. A scholar will be provided with full board and lodging, a return air fare and an allowance of £50 a week for other expenses. £250 is available for internal travel which furthers the aims of the scholarship. A book allowance of £100 is also available. The Scholar will be allocated a study/bedroom within the Foundation, with internet access. Every effort would be made to enable the Scholar to feel at home and to cater for any special dietary needs.

Applications may be submitted at any time of the year and should include:

- a detailed CV
- a plan of how you would use your time in Birmingham.
- the names and contact details of two referees

Successful applicants will be invited to an interview with a trusted friend of the Centre in the applicant's region.

Applications to:

The Director, Selly Oak Centre for Mission Studies

Queen's Foundation

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