

## **Application to host EASAS Doctoral Workshop 2017**

The School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) has long counted as one of Europe's leading institutions for the study of South Asia. Our application to host the 2017 European Association for South Asian Studies (EASAS) doctoral workshop has full institutional support and will work under the auspices of the prestigious SOAS South Asia Institute (SSAI) and the SOAS Doctoral School. In organising this workshop during the School's centenary year, we hope to reaffirm cutting-edge research on South Asia at the heart of its academic vision. This application is student-led but comes with the backing of Dr. Navtej Purewal, deputy director of the SSAI, Professor Edward Simpson of the department of anthropology and Professor Richard Fardon, administrative head of the Doctoral School. We are extremely enthusiastic to host this event and can assure conference space and accommodation throughout September 2017.

The SSAI brings together an extensive network of individuals and institutions engaged in quality research on South Asia. This will allow EASAS participants to enlarge the impact of their scholarship and increase possibilities for collaborative research. SSAI and the EASAS share a commitment to interdisciplinary approaches to the study of South Asia, a mutual convergence which underpins this application. The SSAI has organised graduate student workshops for the past three years, which have included students from Indian partner universities. For EASAS 2017, we propose to invite a small number of students from South Asia. Separate funding would be sought for this initiative. Extending the workshop in this way, we aim to broaden the scope of scholarly exchange between Europe and South Asia.

The local steering committee for EASAS 2017 will draw on the South Asian expertise that exists across SOAS's faculties and departments, and will strengthen the ties that the SSAI has already forged within the School. The committee will be led by two doctoral students and four permanent staff (all members of SSAI, with oversight from the Doctoral School). SOAS's reputation in the study of South Asia makes it an attractive location for gathering doctoral students working in this area, with the guidance of established faculty members. On the basis of this institutional support, we believe the pedagogical, mentoring and networking aims of EASAS will be fully realised.

At a time where links between British and European institutions are threatened by contemporary political events, we wish to reaffirm the importance of transnational collaboration between scholars. Moreover, by hosting a workshop which stresses the importance of continental scales of analysis, we hope to actively counter parochial nationalisms and rising xenophobia in Europe and beyond. London provides a particularly appropriate backdrop to this endeavour, being at the same time home to a variegated and long-established South Asian diaspora, as well as the political centre of current anti-European trajectories.

This workshop will allow early career researchers to share, critique and coordinate their on-going efforts to understand South Asia and its people. We see it as an invaluable opportunity to showcase the latest scholarship on the region, and strengthen links between young scholars as we seek to define and enrich our future research agendas. SOAS already houses various other doctoral networks, such as the Muslim South Asia Research Forum (MUSA), making the possibility of hosting EASAS 2017 all the more stimulating. Our hope is to use this event to collaboratively explore how South Asia might be imagined in more comprehensive geographical and thematic ways, thus fostering the continued development of a community of young scholars capable of addressing the complexities of this vast and rapidly changing continent.

Zoë Goodman and Michele Serafini, post-fieldwork PhD students  
Dr. Navtej Purewal and Prof. Edward Simpson

## **Budget**

- Venue: €0

- Accommodation: €3,600 (€100 x 2 days x 18 people, assuming that some London-based staff and students will not require accommodation)

- Food: €2,020 (€30 x 2 days x 22 people + €700 for conference dinner)

Total: €5,620, out of which:

€2,500 (EASAS) + €3,120 (with the SSAI and the Doctoral School contributing €2200 and €700 respectively)