

Walter Hines Page Scholarships

Oracy in Education



Notes for applicants

About

The English-Speaking Union is an international membership organisation and educational charity that promotes mutual understanding, and fosters friendship and exchange throughout the world, through the use of English. Walter Hines Page, the US Ambassador in London during the First World War, championed UK-US relations and helped found the ESU. The ESU's Walter Hines Page scholarships provide UK teaching professionals with the opportunity to research and exchange educational ideas in the field of communication between Britain and America.

The ESU works principally with young people, providing opportunities for them to develop their communication and critical thinking skills and, thus, encouraging them to realise their full potential. Across our programmes, there is a focus on oracy - the development of speaking and listening skills - ranging from formal public speaking and debate training in schools, or awards which recognise innovation in ELT resources, to professional development opportunities for people to share new ideas and articulate them with others. Through its Page scholarships, the ESU is seeking new and innovative research projects that can help inform our work in the field of oracy and contribute to the increasing evidence base and international recognition of the vital importance of quality oracy education.

Page Scholars travel to the US to study an aspect of oracy education in which they are interested and which aligns with the ESU's work. Thus, research proposals should focus on oracy education, and suggest how it might tie into the ESU's interests in this area.

The Walter Hines Page scholarships are sponsored by the ESU and supported by the Chartered College of Teaching. These organisations work closely together to ensure the research produced is beneficial to the wider profession and can be disseminated as extensively as possible.

In 2023, in celebration of 100 years since the first Walter Hines Page scholars embarked on their study programmes, we are delighted to be offering two places to teaching professionals who are members of the ESU or the Chartered College of Teaching.

What can I research?

We are open to a broad range of research areas, but all proposals should include an oracy dimension. The below list should act as a guide, and provides suggestions which you might like to consider, but is by no means exhaustive. New and amended proposals are also welcomed.

- Drama and interpersonal communication skills: an under-exploited relationship?
- Oracy and history: how do we talk about our past?
- The place of oracy in the US classroom. International contexts and considerations.
- Learning through debate.
- Communicating science: how can we engage young scientists through verbal work?
- Developing the verbal skills of SEN pupils.
- Speaking to the community: the importance of oracy for social cohesions beyond schools.
- Debating the statistics: communicating figures.
- Oracy outside the classroom.

Recent proposals undertaken include:

- How can Project-based learning support the development of young students' oracy and Communication skills?
- What communication strategies do adult educators utilise to manage and support children who present with challenging behaviour?
- Are there benefits to Dialogic Teaching in a Scottish and American Primary School System?
- Let's talk about race: how communication can challenge racism from within schools.
- How can the language and oracy skills of students be developed to enhance race equity and equality in schools?
- Girl Talk: Helping marginalized female students to find their voice

Guidelines for your research proposal

The research proposal (1000-1500 words) is the most important part of the application. In your proposal, please describe what aspect/s of communication in education you wish to study in the US, and how this research relates to your personal and professional development, and to the oracy work of the ESU. Please also describe the anticipated impact of your project upon your return. Please use the below questions as a guide of what to include:

- What are your reasons for applying for a scholarship in the field of oracy and communication in education?
- What are your aims and objectives for the scholarship?
- How will the research feed into the ESU's work in the field of oracy upon your return?
- What institutions, or types of institutions, do you hope to visit/conduct your research at? Please identify cities or regions which are central to your research, or schools and/or educational organisations you plan to reach out to. Please note that at this point you do not have to have made contact with potential host organisations, but this may support your application.
- How do you intend to carry out your research/what is your methodology? Do you already have professional/institutional contacts in the US? If so, how might you make use of them?
- How would your research be presented, initially in written form and subsequently through the further opportunities detailed above?

What makes a strong application?

The purpose of the scholarships is to encourage the exchange of educational ideas between Britain and America in the field of oracy in education, to help guide the work of the ESU and the other associated organisations, and in doing so, offer teaching professionals the opportunity for personal and professional development. In light of this, your proposed research, and overall application, will be assessed on the following criteria:

- Benefit to the candidate's personal and professional development.
- Applicability to the work of the ESU in the field of oracy and the development of communication skills.
- Benefit to education institutions in Britain and America, to the ESU, with a focus on a oracy, and to the wider work of the sponsoring union.
- Possibility to sustain cross-Atlantic relationships that might benefit your own school community as well as those you visit.
- Feasibility - can the research be completed within two weeks, and within the context of the American education system?
- Plans to disseminate and put into practice findings from the trip.

What does a scholarship cover?

The value of each scholarship is in the region of £2000-£2500. This is to go towards the cost of international and domestic travel, accommodation and other in-country expenses, and resources required to conduct the most appropriate research during your trip. Scholars are expected to make all their travel, visa and accommodation arrangements themselves, and to budget according to the grant received.

When can I take up my scholarship?

All scholarships must be taken up during the US academic year, October to May, and, ideally, whilst US educational institutions are in session. Scholars should visit the US for approximately two weeks. Scholars are welcome to stay longer, but are responsible for all arrangements and any additional costs.

Where possible, in partnership with ESU-US, scholars may be able to take up hospitality with ESU branches in the US, in particular if a scholar's research pertains to an area of interest of an ESU-US branch. However, this cannot be guaranteed and scholars should expect to have to make their own arrangements for accommodation. Please note also that the majority of branches are unable to host scholars in the autumn. Should a scholar hope to take up branch hospitality, the ESU recommends the trip takes place between November and May.

Over the summer preceding travel, scholars who would be interested in staying with ESU branches in the US should inform the Page contact at ESU Headquarters of their dates of travel and location preferences. ESU-US will then ascertain whether a branch within the relevant area(s) will be able to participate and whether it has availability over the proposed dates. Branches may be able to host a scholar for up to three to four nights each. Scholars remain responsible for planning their research, reaching out to relevant institutions, and setting up appointments.

Conditions of scholarship

Candidates must be a member of the ESU or the Chartered College of Teaching. Family members, spouses and partners may not be included in the travelling, accommodation or research arrangements.

Upon a scholar's return, to ensure that the influence of the scholarship can be as far reaching as possible, scholars are expected to:

- Submit a full and detailed research report within three months of their return to the UK.
- Give talks and presentations to conferences, ESU and Union branches and committees, and other relevant teacher groups and organisations. The sponsoring and affiliated organisations may be able to advise on the opportunities available in this regard but the scholar should also make suggestions and seek opportunities outside of those provided as part of the scholarship.
 - Please note that all scholars will be expected to present their research findings at the ESU's annual research conference, which will take place in the autumn term following completion of the programme.
- Submit articles and discussion pieces on the research findings for relevant publications, both at the scholar's initiative and as requested by the associated organisations.
- Create or contribute to relevant blogs or other social media outlets which can encourage the wider profession to engage with both the research and the Page scholarship as a whole.

It is the responsibility of the scholar to ensure that their research findings are put into practice within their own schools, the local school communities and for the benefit of the wider teaching profession.

Research Report

When you return from your time in the US, we would like to hear about what you have learnt from the experience. There are a few broad areas we would like you to address in your research report, which are outlined below. We have also given a suggested word count for each part of the report, to give you an idea of the depth we would like you to go into.

Introduction ± 300 words

What was your project about?

- Research question
- Location
- Duration of stay

Background to the question ± 500-800 words

Why did you research this?

- Is it a major issue in the UK?
- Do the US have a unique approach to this subject?
- Have you seen any articles or research about this issue?
- Is there a debate surrounding this topic?

Your methodology ± 500 words

How did you plan to research this issue?

- Observations? Of whom?
- Surveys? What type?
- Interviews? With whom? Practitioners? Parents? Pupils?
- How many schools did you plan to visit? How did you pick these establishments?

Results ± 800-1200 words

What did you find out?

- Refer back to your research question to frame your results.
- School by school description?
- Break your findings down thematically? E.g. use of resources, then role of volunteers, etc.
- Any facts or figures? Tables? Graphs?
- Pictures?

Discussion ± 500-800 words

Tie your results back into the bigger picture you described in your 'background to the question' section.

- New approaches we could bring to the UK?
- Wider insight into a significant issue?
- Contradicts other research?

Conclusions ± 300 words

- What are your overall impressions of the experience?
- What are your next steps with this research?

w: [esu.org/page](https://www.esu.org/page)

e: education@esu.org