

ConsultFest

We're so excited to have the second year of yet another benefit to aspiring writers during ThrillerFest week called ConsultFest! ConsultFest will be available throughout CraftFest and ThrillerFest where attendees can meet for 15 minutes, one-on-one with an industry leading expert. Recruiting the top acquiring editors and agents for this opportunity, writers will get instant feedback on his or her query letter or first two pages of a manuscript. The writer will be assigned a time with the expert who will read the writer's work, provide comments about first impressions, and offer feedback for improvements. The assignments for consults are randomly chosen with the following experts who've agreed to help us July 7th – 10th.

For 2020 – Virtual Consulting

We are so pleased to be able to offer Consulting Sessions virtually. What an opportunity! Talk about streams of light, the agents and editors are rearranging their schedules to meet with each of them through Zoom, a video conferencing platform.

Here's how the events will work...

Consulting Sessions

Purpose: Writers not yet ready to “pitch” a completed manuscript will be paired with agents and editors who have great information and advice to share but don't necessarily want to receive pitches. A Consulting Session allows new writers and emerging novelists access to industry expertise and receive advice on how to better prepare themselves for the presentation of their work—that ‘pitch’—and established authors to get advice on career path options and publishing from experts in the industry.

No pitching please.

Cost: \$75/Virtual Session lasting 10-15 Minutes

Dates: Wednesday July 8th – Friday July 10th

Times (EST): 9:00-11:00 am 3:00–5:00 pm

Experts: Experts listed below will offer advice on where they think they can be most helpful to you after reading your submittal, whether that be how to improve your query, where you might want to work on your manuscript, or with your overall synopsis.

Preparation: Submit immediately after registering to assure assignments:

- 7-pages in Word Document format titled with writer's name (ie: “Jane Smith”) to include,

- 1-page Query Letter addressed to “Dear Agent/Editor:”, single space, letter format, 12-point font, 1” margins.
- First 5-pages of manuscript (NOTE: only two-page- critique guarantee), double-spaced, 12-point font, 1” margins, noting writer’s name at top and working book title, and
- 1-page Synopsis of novel or non-fiction work, double spaced, 12-point font, 1” margins.

Only 1 submittal is required for any number of consultations you choose to purchase.

Requests: This year, we will accept the top five preferences of experts you’d like to be paired with and we will do the best we can to accommodate those requests on a first-come, first-served basis, but we cannot make any guarantees. Please study who the experts are before signing up and listing your preference. We have one editor who is requesting only YA/Middle School writers, so let us know if you are specifically requesting that editor by typing “YA/Middle School Editor” at the top of your priority list. **Again, we will do the best we can to pair you with the requested expert but no promises or guarantees.**

Below is a list of agents and editors who will participate in ConsultFest at ThrillerFest XV.

PUBLISHER

Lou Aronica, The Story Plant **SOLD OUT**
www.thestoryplant.com

Bio: Lou Aronica is President and Publisher of The Story Plant, an independent publisher focusing on fiction. Prior to that, Lou was Publisher of Avon Books and Deputy Publisher of Bantam Books. Lou is also a multiple *New York Times* bestselling author and a past president of Novelists Inc.

EDITOR

Susan Chang, Tor Books
www.us.Macmillan.com/torforge/

Bio: Susan Chang is a senior editor at Tor Books, where she acquires and edits for the Starscape middle grade and Tor Teen young adult imprints. She does not acquire picture books, new adult, or adult titles. Like many editors, she has eclectic tastes, and is open to be queried about anything and everything, not limited to science fiction and fantasy. For chapter books she is looking for high concept books or series with an educational hook; for middle grade, action and high-stakes adventure; and in young adult, stories that are thought-provoking and emotionally truthful. She is also interested in nonfiction in the areas of popular science, archaeology, anthropology, biography, and history.

Authors she is currently working with: Kathleen Baldwin, Alan Gratz, Daryl Gregory, P. J. Hoover, David Lubar, Sarah Porter, and Brandon Sanderson.

EDITOR

Bob Gussin, Oceanview Publishing **SOLD OUT**
www.OceanviewPub.com

Bio: Robert Gussin is the CEO of Oceanview Publishing and Oceanview Vineyards. Prior to that, he was Vice President and Chief Scientific Officer of Johnson and Johnson. Oceanview is a traditional publisher of thriller, mystery and suspense novels. Titles are published in all formats: hard cover, paper, digital, and audio.

Clients: Raymond Benson, Miles Corwin, Ward Larsen, Matt Coyle, and approximately one hundred others.

EDITOR

Stephanie Kelly, Dutton **SOLD OUT**
www.penguinrandomhouse.com

Bio: **Stephanie Kelly** is an editor at Dutton, an imprint of Penguin Random House, where she has worked since 2011. She acquires both fiction and nonfiction. She is interested in psychological thrillers, suspense, commercial fiction, women's fiction, and fresh, platform driven narrative nonfiction, especially with a pop culture, humorous, millennial, or feminist bent.

Authors: Her authors include *New York Times* bestsellers Tami Hoag, Eric Jerome Dickey, and Hannah Shaw, and national bestseller Fiona Davis. Recent and forthcoming titles include *Fifty Words for Rain* by Asha Lemmie, *Hush Little Baby* by R.H. Herron, and *Body of Stars* by Laura Maylene Walter.

EDITOR

Jaime Levine, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt **SOLD OUT**
www.HMHBooks.com

Bio: Senior Editor, joined HMH in April 2018; she primarily acquires upmarket suspense, mysteries, and thrillers and she is the editor for the estate of J.R.R. Tolkien. Some of her recent and forthcoming titles include the first novel and last creative act by American legend Stan Lee, a spy thriller by Oliver Harris, a home-invasion thriller by Bracken MacLeod, and a debut horror

novel by newcomer Jasper DeWitt. She previously worked at Thomas Dunne Books and Grand Central Publishing, where she edited the #1 best-selling duo Douglas Preston & Lincoln Child, the estate of Robert Ludlum, and the writers Julianna Baggott, Eric van Lustbader, Octavia Butler, and Jacqueline Carey.

EDITOR

Katie McGuire, Pegasus Books **SOLD OUT**

www.pegasusbooks.com

Bio: Katie McGuire is an editor at Pegasus Books, where she started her career in the summer of 2014. After graduating from Emerson College with a BFA in Writing, Literature, and Publishing, she returned to her native New York and is now happily settled in Queens with her cat, Miss Moneypenny. She is on the hunt for both fiction and nonfiction projects, and has a particular soft spot for crime fiction (almost every subgenre!), historical fiction, comic books, true crime, royalty, superheroes, and spies. You can find her on Twitter: @katiemickgee.

Current authors: William Boyle, Paul Vidich, S. J. Rozan, John Copenhaver, Jake Hinkson, John Woods, Casey Dunn, Jay Stringer, and Julie McElwain, among others.

EDITOR

Chantelle Aimee Osman, Agora Books

www.PolisBooks.com

Bio: Chantelle Aimée Osman is the editor of Agora, an imprint of [Polis Books](http://PolisBooks.com). The former Editor-in-Chief of RT Book Reviews Magazine and a freelance editor for over ten years, and she also co-hosts the [Crime Friction](#) podcast. She teaches writing internationally, including with the [Virginia G. Piper Center for Creative Writing](#), [Authors at Large](#) and [LitReactor](#). Chantelle is the author of the non-fiction series on writing [The Quick and Dirty Guides To...](#) and has also published numerous works of short fiction. She was named a Left Coast Crime Guest of Honor in 2016. Find her on Twitter [@SuspenseSiren](#).

Authors: John Vercher, Patricia Smith, Tori Eldridge, Gary Phillips, Silvia Moreno-Garcia, Gabino Iglesias

EDITOR

Alexandra Schulster, St. Martin's Group – **SOLD OUT**
www.stmartins.com

Bio: Alexandra started her career at Macmillan in the sales department, where she learned the beauty of an elevator pitch, how to position a book, and how to best reach the target audience. After three years in sales, she found her home at St. Martin's Group as an editor, committed to championing dynamic authors and publishing books that shatter expectations.

Alexandra edits predominantly in fiction and looks for that “can't-put-it-down” kind of read. She loves thriller/suspense/horror that subverts the current trend. She's an avid reader of books centered around the Woman's Journey, and all the ways that can manifest. Favorite hooks and tropes include sweeping love stories, novels that comment on the Millennial experience, horror elements that toe the line between the normal and the paranormal, enemies to lovers romance, and retellings of all kinds. In historical novels, she loves rich detail that blends seamlessly into the narrative, and while in the past, says a great deal about who we are today. Alexandra lives in Connecticut with a husband who avoids reading and a baby who can't sit still long enough to read a picture book. She loves them very much in spite of this.

Clients: She's had the pleasure of working with many incredible authors, including *New York Times* bestselling author Darynda Jones, award-winning author Alice Blanchard, *New York Times* bestselling author Kristen Ashley, and celebrated authors Jessica Strawser, Rea Frey, and Emma Lord, among others.

EDITOR

Anne Speyer, Ballantine Books **SOLD OUT**
www.penguinrandomhouse.com

Bio: Anne Speyer is a senior editor at Ballantine Books, where she has worked for the last seven years. She edits primarily fiction, with an emphasis on psychological and domestic suspense and thriller, as well as commercial fiction and women's fiction. She loves a distinctive, fresh, smart or funny voice and isn't afraid of unlikeable protagonists or fiction with a dark side.

Authors: Her authors include J. P. Delaney, Julia Heaberlin, Nina Sadowsky, C. J. Tudor, Lesley Kara, Lorenzo Carcaterra, and Matthew Norman.

EDITOR

Gretchen Stelter, Cogitate Studios

www.gretchenstelter.com

Bio: Gretchen Stelter began her career in publishing while she was still finishing her master's degree, helping launch the West Coast-based Baker's Mark Literary Agency and later moving to editorial director. In 2010, she started editing and writing full-time and has worked on over 500 traditionally published books, doing everything from proofreading and copyediting to developmental editing and ghost writing, as well as working with select self-published authors. She's a member of the Northwest Independent Editors Guild, Editorial Freelancers Association, and Sisters in Crime

Clients: ITW members Liv Constantine (sisters Lynne Constantine and Valerie Constantine, *The Last Mrs. Parrish*), Paige Dearth, Glenn Dyer, and Jerri Williams; as well as publishing houses Sourcebooks (including books by Marieke Nijkamp, Natasha Preston, Charles Belfoure, Nic Joseph, and Randall Silvis), Albert Whitman (including books by YALSA-honored Linda Joy Singleton), and others.

AGENT

Jess Taylor

Revizion Editorial Services

www.revision.net

AGENT

Nikki Terpilowski, Holloway Literary

www.HollowayLiteraryAgency.com

Bio: Nikki established Holloway Literary in 2011 after working in marketing communications as a writer and editor. Nikki is the senior agent at Holloway Literary and also handles all negotiations for the agency's film deals. She loves all types of fiction, but is particularly interested in finding interesting mysteries, fresh Southern voices, ethnically and culturally diverse fiction and culinary non-fiction. When she's not working or wrangling her three sons, she enjoys traveling to the beach, mountains and all historical sites in between.

AGENT

Jennifer Weis, Ross Yoon Agency – **SOLD OUT**
www.rossyoon.com

Bio: Jennifer is a Senior Literary Agent at the Ross Yoon Agency. Last year she left St. Martin's Press, where she was Executive Editor for 30 years, to move to the other side of the desk.

With bestsellers from her editor days including B.A. Paris' BEHIND CLOSED DOORS and the nationally bestselling BABY TEETH during the past few years, as well as critical successes like CLIMATE OF HOPE by Michael Bloomberg, and upcoming agented books including HAPPY NOT PERFECT by Poppy Jamie and THE GIRL AND THE BOMBARDIER by Susan Tate Ankeny, Jennifer brings to the table an ability to offer editorial guidance and development as well as an advanced understanding and knowledge of the inner workings of publishing houses and the publishing landscape today.

In her role as agent, the goal is to identify the stars of tomorrow and help to place them at publishers where they can attract attention, shine and grow. She is seeking high-concept, cleverly plotted bookclub fiction — all categories, including psychological and domestic suspense, women's fiction, and selected young adult, series and stand-alone. To grab her attention, a novel has got to have a hook, a compelling plot, and a distinctive voice that brings the reader right in.

Jennifer is the co-chair of Project Lyme, a non-profit based in NYC that focuses on Lyme Disease awareness, education, and advocacy. She also serves on the Leadership Council for the Yale School of Public Health and the UJA Executive Committee for Publishing. She is a graduate of Yale College and Yale University (M.A. in English) and lives in NYC, where she is based, with her husband and 4 children.

AGENT

Terrie Wolf, AKA Literary Management **SOLD OUT**
www.akalm.net

Bio: Terrie is CEO of AKA Literary LLC, a Colorado-based agency established in 2010. A full member of AAR (Association of Authors' Representatives), she has sold rights in more than 40 countries and represents an exciting group of authors who are at all stages of the writing journey, and an eclectic and unforgettable list of commercial fiction and nonfiction. With a background that spans nearly 30 years in publishing, international media, and large-scale events, this Emmy award-winning former broadcast special projects producer is also an accomplished speaker and frequent conference attendee.

Clients: Terrie's clients include Margaret Mizushima, C.C. Harrison, Jeff Nesbit, Maria Shriver, Toni Brattin, Bill Coors, and Celine Jacobson, among others. Please visit AKALM.net for more information.

Check back soon for more editors and agents participating in ConsultFest 2020.

ConsultFest sessions will be scheduled throughout CraftFest and ThrillerFest during which attendees can invest \$75 to meet for fifteen minutes, one-on-one, with a top acquiring editor or agent to get instant feedback on his or her query letter OR first two pages of a manuscript. The writer will be assigned a time with the expert who will provide comments and offer feedback for improvements. Opportunities are limited; sessions will be confirmed on a first-come, first-served basis. Two sessions may be purchased. Questions? Contact [Sandra Brannan](#), PitchFest Director.

Frequently Asked Questions About ConsultFest — Note that some portions of this are not applicable to Virtual ConsultFest and PitchFest, but they are included as good background on the event.

PitchFest and ConsultFest: Two of the Best Investments in your Writing Career



Sandra Brannan
PitchFest Director

Dear PitchFest and ConsultFest Attendees,

I'm **Sandra Brannan**, (Sandra@SandraBrannan.com) PitchFest and ConsultFest Director, and I'm here to answer your questions and guide you through two of the best tracks that ITW ThrillerFest has to offer. Whether you're a writer aspiring to become a published author or a published author seeking a new agent or wanting to meet editors (or even producers), each program is designed to assist both novice and experienced writers.

If You Are A:	Then You Should Attend:	
	<u>PitchFest</u>	<u>Consult</u>
Writer with Completed Polished Manuscript to Sell	X	
Writer Not Yet Ready to Sell a MS and want Advice		X
Writer Wondering if the MS is Ready to Pitch		X
Writer Seeking Help on Query Letter	X	X
Writer Wanting to Check Out the Process Before Pitching Next Year	X	X
Self-Published Author Seeking Traditional Publisher	X	X
Self-Published Author Seeking Advice on What to Do with Self-Published Work	X	X
Self-Published Author Seeking A Sale of Movie Rights (Producers don't always attend PF. Check website for confirmations)	X	
Self-Published Author Seeking Career Advice		X
Published Author Looking for A New Agent or Editor	X	X
Published Author Seeking Advice on a New Manuscript		X
Published Author Seeking A Sale of Movie Rights (Producers don't always attend PF. Check website for confirmations)	X	
Published Author Seeking Career Advice		X

Like you, I wanted to invest my money in a writing conference to make every penny count. PitchFest and ConsultFest make that happen. Uniquely designed to bring writers to NYC—the major hub of the American publishing industry—PitchFest is designed for writers with completed polished manuscripts and offers the best agents and acquiring publishing-house editors who are ready to listen to you pitch that novel you just wrote. I found my wonderful agent at PitchFest, and I'm here to help you find yours.

If you're a novice writer who may not be ready to pitch, or an experienced writer who might need advice with their career paths as established authors, ConsultFest is for you. Editors and agents are available to review a sample of your work—either a query letter or first 2-pages—and offer you personalized advice on how to improve your chances of getting published. These 15-minute sessions can also help better prepare you for PitchFest, improving your chances of making a best 'first impression' on that agent or publishing house you've been eager to meet. Or take the opportunity to express how your work has improved since the last time you met with that agent or editor and seek further advice on next steps.

We are here to answer questions, allay your fears, and pass on suggestions to conference organizers under the guidance of our lovely ThrillerFest Director, **Kimberley Howe**, at KimberleyHowe@ThrillerWriters.org.

To familiarize yourself with both events, please refer to [PitchFest FAQs](#) or [ConsultFest FAQs](#) (Frequently Asked Questions). If you can't find answers to your questions in either FAQs, we have a team here to help you.

For questions from writers, my Assistant Director for PitchFest and ConsultFest, **Jennifer Kreischer** can be contacted at JenKreischer@comcast.net.

Michael Bradley, Technical Assistant, has volunteered to help me behind the scenes, and his efforts will also benefit you during the events. michael@mbradleyonline.com

And I, **Sandra Brannan**, will be focused on finding the best agents and editors in the industry for you to meet at both events. I'm at Sandra@SandraBrannan.com.

Our team hopes to make your journey to success an easier one, so please know we're here to help. We'll do our best to find you an answer or connect you with the appropriate expert who can answer your questions. Let us know how we can help you!

Sandra Brannan, PitchFest and ConsultFest Director

CONSULTFEST

Q: What exactly is ConsultFest and when is it?

A: In 2019, we created ConsultFest for writers who weren't yet ready to "pitch" a completed manuscript, and for agents and editors who had great information to share but didn't want to receive pitches. (Similar to the "no pitch zone" with agents and editors we established to accommodate experts who didn't wish to receive pitches). ConsultFest allows new writers and emerging novelists to access industry expertise and advice on how to better prepare themselves for the presentation of their work—that "pitch"—and established authors to get advice on career path options and publishing from experts in the industry.

To more appropriately focus PitchFest towards its original intent—an opportunity for writers with a finished manuscript to pitch their work to an agent or editor for representation or sale—we created ConsultFest.

Q: Should I attend ConsultFest or PitchFest or both?

We know your time is valuable and advise all writers to balance their writing time with the many facets required in our industry, including marketing, selling, growing business, craft, brainstorming, and carefully choosing every turn in the career path. **PitchFest** offers to help you network with the industry's top selling agents and editors in very short bursts, hopefully making that special connection that will lead to a sale of your work. **ConsultFest** offers more time with the experts to perfect your manuscript or query letter, improve the marketability of your writing, or even answer career path questions.

Please see the [table above](#) for more specific guidance.

Q: How is ConsultFest different from PitchFest?

A: PitchFest is designed to connect writers who have a completed, polished manuscript with eager agents and acquiring editors and producers. With 4 rooms filled to capacity at 54-57 agents, acquiring editors, and producers, (and an overflow 5th room – back of Book Room – for added experts) available to hear 3-minute pitches on Thursday afternoon, the event connects writers with agents and editors who might offer representation or buy their manuscripts. The goal is to produce success stories of writers becoming published authors. Until we developed ConsultFest, a PitchFest attendee had a 15 times more likely chance of signing with an agent and 10 times more likely chance of landing a book deal. With the narrowed focus on who should attend, our goal is to increase the number of successful contracts for writers.

ConsultFest allows 15 minutes with industry experts who can offer advice on how writers might consider improving their craft or their approach to agents and editors. Our goal is to better prepare writers to be ready to pitch someday. As one agent suggested about the inaugural event in 2019, “ConsultFest offers connection with hope” while PitchFest is all about making that connection.

Q: Will the same industry experts at ConsultFest be attending PitchFest?

A: Some editors and agents choose to attend both ConsultFest and PitchFest, although the majority choose one or the other. The editors and agents who want to meet authors with completed and polished manuscripts ready for sale attend PitchFest to hear your pitch. If they like your pitch, they'll ask for a partial manuscript to review your writing and determine if they can take your novel to market.

At ConsultFest, a writer commits NOT to pitch to the editors and agents, instead asking for advice. It's not that these agents and editors aren't looking for talent, too, they just don't want to hear a pitch. Instead, they'd prefer to review your query and/or manuscript pages and advise you on your work. ConsultFest offers an opportunity for the agent or editor to meet authors and review writing samples in advance. This allows many industry experts who prefer not to “hear pitches” to offer valuable advice to inexperienced writers and still have the opportunity to find potential talent at ThrillerFest.

Because the two venues are so different, some of our experts like to experience both opportunities.

Q: How long is my time with an industry expert, and what does it cost?

A: Writers pay \$100 for 15 minutes of consult time at ConsultFest with the best editors and agents in the industry who will give advice on either of the following:

- Advice on a one-page query letter where the topic of the 15-minute discussion between writer and consultant is about tips to improve the writer's approach to an agent or with an acquiring editor, OR
- Advice on the first two pages of the writer's manuscript to discuss how the writer could improve his or her craft before approaching an agent or acquiring editor.

Writers can pay \$200 for two consecutive sessions with an expert to receive advice on both the query letter and the first two pages from that same expert during a single consultation of 30 minutes.

Q: What do I get out of a consultation?

A: We can promise you will get as much out of the consultation as you put into it. We've designed this event for you to get advice on...

- 1) how to better pitch your work to an agent or editor through a query letter,
- 2) how to improve your chances of selling your manuscript through critique of the first 2-pages, or
- 3) things you could do to better guide your career path. We suggest you prepare questions to ask the experts in advance.

Most writers who attended last year were amazed at how much help they received in such a short time. The agents and editors also offered suggestions on submission requirements, in case they wanted to read more about you and your work. Although it's not required for them to read anything more than the query letter or first two pages of your manuscript, many of our experts wanted to read more (which is great news for you!). We now require that you submit 7 pages described in the next question consisting of a Query Letter, first 5 Pages of manuscript, and Synopsis.

Q: What do I have to submit to attend ConsultFest?

A: To be eligible for a consultation, Writer must submit...

- By no later than June 1st to assure assignments
- 7-pages in Word Document format titled with writer's name (ie: "Jane Smith") to include,

- 1-page Query Letter addressed to “Dear Agent/Editor:”, single space, letter format, 12-point font, 1” margins.
- First 5-pages of manuscript (NOTE: only two-page- critique guarantee), double-spaced, 12-point font, 1” margins, noting writer’s name at top and working book title, and
- 1-page Synopsis of novel or non-fiction work, double spaced, 12-point font, 1” margins.

Only 1 submittal is required for any number of consultations you choose to purchase. When you register for a consultation, we will ask you whether you’d like to have advice on your Query Letter or on the first two-pages of your manuscript. If you sign up for more than one consultation, you choose how many agents/editors will review the letter or the manuscript pages. We will let your advisors know.

Q: Can I pitch my work to the agent or editor at ConsultFest?

A: We ask that you commit to NOT pitching your work at ConsultFest. Most of the experts who volunteer their time for this event would prefer not to hear pitches and expect you to honor that preference. However, if they ASK you to pitch them, please feel free, but only if they specifically ask.

Q: Can I request the expert to focus on the query more than the manuscript or on the manuscript more than the query?

A: When you sign up for a consultation, we will require you to decide which document you want the experts to review—you will choose if you want help with your Query Letter or on the first two-pages of your manuscript. If you sign up for more than one consultation, you choose how many agents/editors will review the letter or the manuscript pages. We will let your advisors know. Under no circumstance will we choose for you. If you do not choose at the time we ask, your agent or editor may not receive your submission for review in advance of your consultation

Q: Can I ask the expert to give me feedback on both the query and the manuscript?

A: Each 15-minute consultation is designed around either the Query Letter or the first two-pages of the manuscript, but not both. We also offer the opportunity to sign up for consecutive sessions with the same agent or editor so one person can review both Query Letter and manuscript pages, or to simply have more time to discuss career advice.

Q: Why do I have to submit a synopsis and both a query and manuscript pages if I only want advice on something specific?

A: Many of the agents and editors from the inaugural year of ConsultFest asked if they could receive more pages representing your work. Some will read everything you send in just to give you advice on a single page, and others will focus only on your specific questions and won’t read anything but that work.

Even if the agent/editor doesn't review all 7 pages, it is in your best interest to submit enough of your work for the experts to read. If an expert is interested in your work, submitting all three documents—Query, Manuscript, and Synopsis—would provide them with more of your writing to evaluate.

Q: We learned from ConsultFest 2019 that there may be some things you are, or are not, expecting.

A: This event was designed to give you expert advice on your work. That's it. Everything else is gravy.

If you're ready to hear honest, direct feedback from agents or editors, this is the event for you. If not, you will probably walk away disappointed. Even if your writing is stellar, you can always learn something new.

Whether or not you agree with the advice you receive, please don't argue with the experts about their opinions. It's fine to clarify your intent or offer more information if it helps the expert understand your work in more detail, but arguing with them about their advice will just frustrate both writers and experts. Invest your time wisely and redirect the conversation with a pre-planned list of questions.

Remember, a writing journey is all about differing opinions on the same body of work.

Q: How do I sign up for ConsultFest?

A: When you register (link to registration) for MasterClass, CraftFest or ThrillerFest, you will be eligible to sign up for as many consultations as you wish. If you have already registered, simply email the registrar at registrar@thrillerwriters.org. You can register for as many consultations as you wish. Remember, this is a first-come, first-served registration process and you will be assigned to the experts randomly although those of you who register for more than one will definitely be assigned to differing agents or editors. If you sign up for more sessions than agents or editors left with openings, we will contact you and allow you a refund if you don't want back-to-back with any of them.

Q: Why can't I choose who I want to see during ConsultFest?

A: Coordinating schedules for both experts and participants at such a massive conference is challenging.

We coordinate the experts' schedules based on their other conference responsibilities, such as speaking on panels, helping with the event, and travel plans to and from NYC. We then assign registered writers to confirmed agents and editors on a first-come, first served basis, also coordinating with the writers' conference schedules. In late May, we confirm schedules again with our industry experts to make sure they are still available to volunteer for ConsultFest. By mid-June, we email confirmed schedules to the writers. We regret that we are not able to pair you with agents or editors per individual requests. We do assure you that you will not be

assigned agents and editors repetitively for the current year, but we cannot promise you we won't occasionally pair you with someone you've met in the past. We do our best to please you but can't assure everyone can get his or her specific wish.

Q: Can I request back-to-back consultations with the same industry expert?

A: Yes, you can. You can register for up to 2 consultations back-to-back with the same expert and with as many experts as your maximum consultation limit allows. My Assistant Director will send you an email regarding the number of consultations you may register for and the submittal format.

Q: Should I bring anything with me to the consultation to give to the industry expert I'm assigned?

A: We recommend bringing a **business card** with your contact information. This saves time taken by the agent or editor to write it down, and it eliminates transcription errors. (I'd hate to have you miss an email from an agent or editor because of a misprinted email address.)

We also strongly advise that you bring **copies of your 7-page submittal**, in case the expert is unable to refer to your submission due to a last-minute IT or printing glitch.

Q: Why do I have to bring a copy of my 7-page submittal if my work has already been forwarded on to the industry expert?

A: We do our best to distribute your work to the assigned expert but mistakes or unexpected things happen—we're all human. So please print copies before you travel to NYC Grand Hyatt, just in case.

Q: Can I get the expert's contact information to communicate with him or her after ConsultFest?

A: Sometimes the agent or editor shares their contact information and sometimes they don't. At ITW, we are protective of the experts who volunteer their time to help you, so we do not give out any of their contact information unless they tell us to. Thank you for understanding in advance.

Q: Has anyone ever received representation from an agent or a book publishing deal by attending ConsultFest?

A: Absolutely! A side benefit to connecting writers with agents and editors at ConsultFest is that sometimes the expert finds a writer particularly interesting. Connections certainly do happen, and the agents and editors are just as excited as you are when that happens. Their job is to find you, that special talent, so be the best version of yourself at ConsultFest.

Q: If I've already registered for ThrillerFest events, how can I sign up for ConsultFest or PitchFest or both?

A: If you have already registered, simply email the registrar at registrar@thrillerwriters.org. Sign up for as many consultations as you choose and we will assign you to experts as long as we have spaces left. See you in July!

And one last note:

We love coordinating these events for our attendees, but please be patient with us—we're all volunteers.