FLORENCE · ITALY

The Manuscript Momentum Retreat

A Masterclass in Publishing

led by literary agent and author Lucinda Halpern

September 20–25, 2027



WELCOME

The week your dream of writing a book turns into a plan to get published.

Fiction, nonfiction, and memoir writers are all welcome, whether you're bringing a book idea, a partial draft, or a finished manuscript ready to query. Over five days, you'll learn what your book needs, how publishing works, and what it takes to catch an agent's attention.

The Manuscript Momentum Retreat brings twelve writers to Florence to work with literary agent and author Lucinda Halpern, founder of the New York agency Lucinda Literary, for a week of focused attention on your pages.



WHY IN THE ROOM

Discover the book you were born to write.

Many writers have a book they feel called to write, but it lives in fragments, in a stack of drafts, or as an idea they've circled for years. Each morning, you'll work closely with Lucinda to find the heart of your idea, the story only you can tell, and the reader it's for.

You'll learn to see your project the way agents and editors do: how submissions are evaluated, where a book fits in a crowded market, and what persuades publishers. Afternoons belong to Florence, with private tours, artisans, and long meals to get you out of your head.

Most people never get to meet with a literary agent. Here, you'll work with one every morning. We guarantee it.

WHO IT'S FOR

Beginners welcome. No written book required.

You only need to be one of these writers — any one is reason enough to join us. Fiction, nonfiction, and memoir writers are all welcome, and you are never too young or too old to begin. Many come to find a second act in becoming a published author; others to make room, at last, for their creative passions.

You're curious

Just starting with a book idea, or choosing between several.

OR

You're developing a book

And want to deeply understand the path of a writer, and what talent looks like to agents and publishers.

OR

You're ready for the next step

And want to package and pitch your book with clarity — and the confidence to take the next step toward getting signed.





PRAISE FOR *GET SIGNED*



"All aspiring authors know the value of a great literary agent, but few know how to get one. Lucinda Halpern has written the definitive guide to attracting an agent and laying the groundwork for a book well worth publishing."

— **Adam Grant**, #1 New York Times bestselling author of *Think Again* and *Hidden Potential*

"Lucinda Halpern and her book are the map and the compass for any beginning writer looking for a way to find their perfect agent. There is no question in my mind that it will forever be the only book anyone trying to break into publishing will ever need. If only I had it when I was starting out! Wherever Lucinda leads, I will follow."

— **Sam Wasson**, New York Times bestselling author of *Fosse* and *The Big Goodbye*

"While Lucinda Halpern offers invaluable advice for navigating the choppy waters of literary agencies and publishing houses, she does something even more valuable with Get Signed: She entices the writer to elevate the storytelling, to create a timeless book, and to launch a dream career."

— **Jenny Jackson**, VP and Executive Editor at Alfred A. Knopf and #1 New York Times bestselling author of *Pineapple Street*



Get Signed: Find an Agent, Land a Book Deal, and Become a Published Author · Hay House



YOUR GUIDE

About Lucinda

Literary agent · Founder, Lucinda Literary · Author of *Get Signed*

Lucinda Halpern is a literary agent, author, and the founder of Lucinda Literary. She brings two decades of experience across New York publishing and media.

She began in the Publicity Division at HarperCollins, working on campaigns for bestsellers including *Freakonomics*, went on to a sales and marketing management role at Scholastic, and consulted on marketing for authors such as Gretchen Rubin before becoming an agent. Today she represents New York Times, Wall Street Journal, and internationally bestselling authors in business, health, psychology, popular science, memoir, and upmarket fiction.

Her classes and live events have been taken by thousands of writers across the world, and inspired her book *Get Signed: Find an Agent, Land a Book Deal, and Become a Published Author* (Hay House).

About Lucinda Literary

Founded in New York in 2011, Lucinda Literary is a boutique literary agency representing fiction and nonfiction by leading experts and cultural voices. Its agents work with the major publishing houses, among them HarperCollins, Penguin Random House, Simon & Schuster, Macmillan, Hachette, and Hay House. Every client receives the same editorial care and strategic guidance — from big idea to bestseller to building lasting author careers.



THE PROGRAM

Learn the writing trade — and the fastest way to become a published author.

Publishing success is rarely a talent gap. More often, it's a knowledge gap.

Four focused mornings of learning and workshopping, alongside writers at every stage — many just starting out. The program focuses on what matters most once the writing begins: how agents and editors evaluate work, what talent looks like to the market, how books are positioned for readers, and how to package and pitch your own.

TUESDAY · INDUSTRY

Inside the Publishing World

WEDNESDAY · VISION

The Book Only You Can Write

THURSDAY · EXECUTION

The Page That Earns the Pitch

FRIDAY · MOMENTUM

From One Book to a Body of Work

To close Your promise, your plan, and a group lunch with Lucinda to celebrate your work and what's to come.

EACH CLASS MORNING

Mornings for the book. Afternoons for Florence.

8:30 – 9:30	**Silent writing hour**	Held each morning before class. Quiet, shared time for your own pages.
9:30 – 10:45	**Teaching**	Focused instruction on the day's theme.
10:45 – 11:00	**Break**	Coffee & pastries.
11:00 – 12:00	**Workshopping**	Small groups apply the morning's ideas to each writer's own book.
12:00 – 12:30	**Conclusion**	Reflections, and a prompt for tomorrow's writing hour.





THE AGENDA · SEPTEMBER 20–25

Five days in Florence



Monday SEPTEMBER 20 · ARRIVAL

Welcome to Florence

Settle into the Hotel Bernini Palace, take in the city, and meet the writers you'll share the week with.

Afternoon	Arrivals and check-in
Evening	**Opening cocktail**

Tuesday SEPTEMBER 21 · INDUSTRY

Inside the Publishing World

Publishing 101: how agents and editors evaluate a submission, the timeline from idea to bookstore, and how books are positioned for readers.

Morning	Class
Afternoon	At leisure — perhaps a stroll through the Boboli Gardens
Evening	**Private Tuscan cooking class & dinner with Lucinda** — make your own dish and share it with new friends

Wednesday SEPTEMBER 22 · VISION

The Book Only You Can Write

The lens turns from the market to you: your authority, your perspective, the story you were born to tell — and how to unite that idea with the market at large.

Morning	Class
Afternoon	**Curated walking tour** through the heart of Florence
Evening	Free to explore — perhaps aperitivo in the Oltrarno

Thursday SEPTEMBER 23 · EXECUTION

The Page That Earns the Pitch

How agents and editors read the opening of a book, and what your submission materials must do: the query letter or book proposal, the synopsis, the critical first chapters — and what excites an agent enough to request more.

Morning	Class
Afternoon	**Private guided tour of the Uffizi Gallery**, with skip-the-line admission
Evening	**Formal dinner** at a fine Florentine restaurant

Friday SEPTEMBER 24 · MOMENTUM

From One Book to a Body of Work

The singular reader you serve, how platform is evaluated, a healthy rejection reflex, and when to follow up, pivot, or change projects. To close: your promise, your plan, and a group lunch with Lucinda to celebrate your work and what's to come.

Morning	Final class
Afternoon	**Farewell lunch with Lucinda**



Evening	A last evening in Florence, at leisure

Saturday SEPTEMBER 25 · DEPARTURES

WHAT YOU TAKE HOME

Not just notes. Direction.



An understanding of the industry
How agents and editors evaluate work, and the path from idea to bookstore.

An author vision brief
Your perspective and the story only you can tell, in words.

Proprietary exercises & agency materials
Yours to keep permanently as you continue writing or querying.

Positioning & comparable titles
Where your book sits on the shelf, and who it is for.

Sample query letters & proposals
With exclusive agent resources.

A 90-day plan
So the momentum continues after Florence.

A private WhatsApp community forum
To stay connected with your fellow writers long after the week ends.

IN THEIR WORDS

From writers who joined us in Florence

Guests of the 2026 Manuscript Momentum Retreat



"The best retreats do two things: help you remember yourself, and help you imagine a new future. … The schedule breathed. There was room to think, to wander, to actually write. I spent the week alongside Lucinda, learning, expanding, laughing, and creating in ways I didn't expect."

Lisa Blosser
2026 Manuscript Momentum Retreat guest



"Lucinda's classes were very helpful and the balance of group time/personal time was perfect. Excellent hotel! … Best blend of working vacation ever. Well thought out activities and I felt so cared for. Loved meeting everyone in the group."

Kate Allen
2026 Manuscript Momentum Retreat guest



"Inspired writers inspiring deep conversations and shared laughter. Space to think and play, time to feel, to be. … Lucinda Halpern is wonderful; friendly, knowledgeable and accessible."

Deborah Plunkett
2026 Manuscript Momentum Retreat guest



"There are experiences you enjoy … and then there are those rare experiences that stay with you — that imprint themselves on your soul in a profound way! This retreat in Florence was the latter."

Katherine Hart
2026 Manuscript Momentum Retreat guest



"For my first time in Italy, I appreciated all the pre-arranged activities that enhanced our writing-retreat experience, from walking tours of Florence to delightful culinary excursions. Grazie mille!"

Andi Penner
2026 Manuscript Momentum Retreat guest



"The itinerary struck the perfect balance between structure and ease, allowing us to fully enjoy the experience without ever feeling rushed. … The restaurant selections were outstanding, offering a wonderful mix of local flavor and memorable dining experiences."

Sushma Sharma
2026 Manuscript Momentum Retreat guest

IN THEIR WORDS

"This was, without question, one of the most exceptional experiences I've had and one I will carry with me for a lifetime."

— **Katherine Hart**, 2026 Manuscript Momentum Retreat guest

Writers who have been mentored by Lucinda

Authors who have consulted with Lucinda and the Lucinda Literary team



"After implementing Lucinda Literary's advice, I did indeed get signed and landed a book deal with a major publishing house!"

Dr. Mary Anderson
Author of *The Happy High Achiever*



"Working one-on-one with Lucinda Halpern has been a game-changer. She's given me smart, no-nonsense advice and helped me think through the big picture of my book and my path as an author."

John Jennings
Author of *The Uncertainty Solution*



"Lucinda and her all-star team's expertise helped me reach the finish line with clarity and confidence. They sharpened my message, and that led to securing an agent and book deal."

Ricardo Valerdi
Ph.D., author of *The Five Tool Team*



"Lucinda Literary's advice was the 'secret weapon' that led to my book deal by December."

Sara McElroy
Author of *Women Who Walk*



"Through the invaluable community Lucinda Literary has created, I found not only guidance, but a true community of writers—and for the first time, I didn't feel alone in the process."

Geoff Sease
Novelist



"No matter what stage you are in the writing process, from just an idea, to being ready to pitch agents (or anywhere in between), the Writers Symposium Workshop is a wonderful way to advance to whatever your next step might be."

Richard Bistrong
Memoir writer

AT THE TABLE

Friendships that begin over a Florentine table.

A table of writers who share a love of books. You'll leave with lasting connections, friendships, and memories you'll take with you for years to come.

Opening cocktail MONDAY

Aperitivo as the sun goes down: a glass of Chianti Classico, crostini toscani, and the first conversations of the week.

Private Tuscan cooking class & dinner TUESDAY

Hands-on, with Lucinda: make your own dish — ribollita, pappa al pomodoro, fresh pasta — and share it with new friends around a long table.

Formal dinner THURSDAY

A long evening at a fine Florentine restaurant: pappardelle al cinghiale, and bistecca alla fiorentina for the table.

Farewell lunch with Lucinda FRIDAY

A group lunch to celebrate your work and what's to come, finished the Tuscan way with cantucci dipped in Vin Santo.

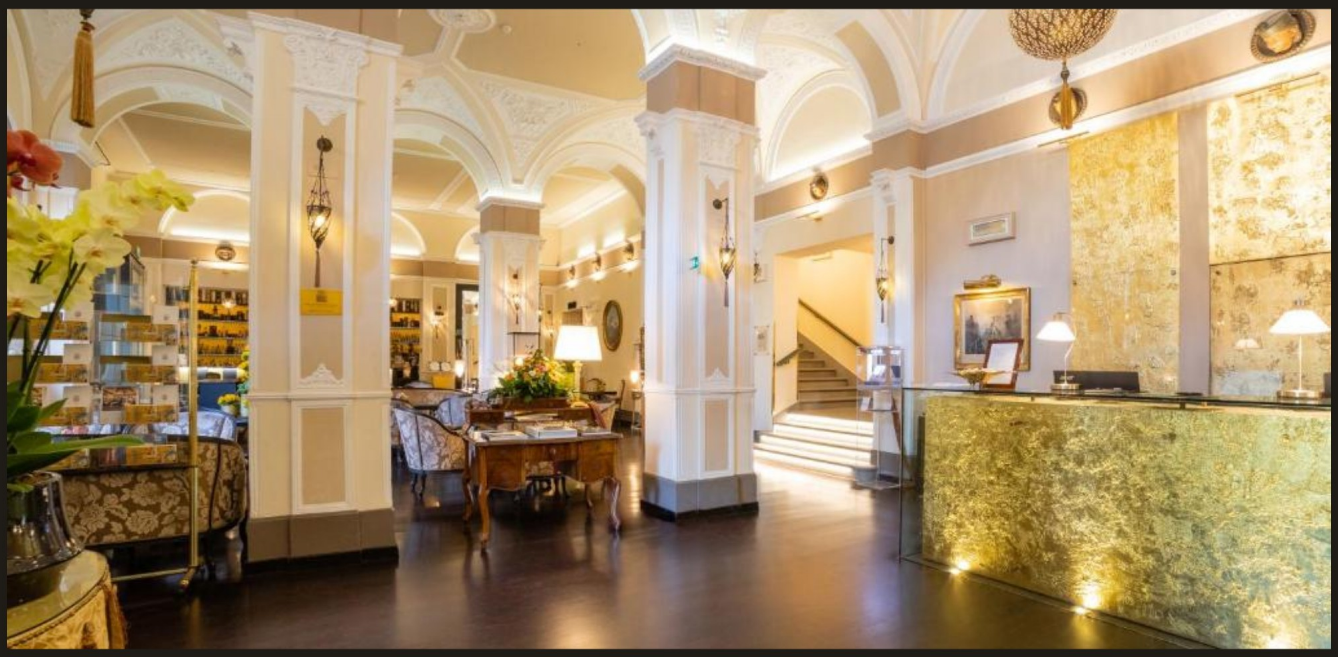


THE STAY

Hotel Bernini Palace

Five nights at the historic Hotel Bernini Palace, a restored 15th-century palazzo once home to Florentine nobility, with vaulted ceilings and an old-world lounge for an evening aperitivo. Breakfast is included each morning, and Piazza della Signoria, the Uffizi, and the Arno are all steps away.

FIVE NIGHTS	EACH MORNING	STEPS AWAY
September 20–25	Breakfast included	The Uffizi & the Arno







YOUR AFTERNOONS

Color and light for the writer's eye.

Mornings belong to your book. Afternoons belong to Florence — its world-class museums, landmarks, artisans, and shopping.

> *"Florence is an argument for the examined life - beauty pressed into every stone, every unhurried meal. To spend a week there writing, learning, and being genuinely seen by a small circle of fascinating, generous authors felt almost unreasonably good."*
>
> — **Lisa Blosser**, 2026 Manuscript Momentum Retreat guest







Museums

Uffizi Gallery
Galleria dell'Accademia
Palazzo Pitti
Bargello National Museum
Museo dell'Opera del Duomo
Palazzo Vecchio
Museo di San Marco
Medici Chapels
Palazzo Strozzi
Museo Galileo
Museo Novecento

Landmarks

The Duomo & Brunelleschi's Dome
Giotto's Bell Tower
Baptistery of San Giovanni
Ponte Vecchio
Piazza della Signoria
Basilica of Santa Croce
Santa Maria Novella
San Lorenzo & Santo Spirito
San Miniato al Monte
Piazzale Michelangelo
Boboli & Bardini Gardens

Literary Florence

Casa di Dante
Laurentian Library
Casa Guidi, home of the Brownings
The English Cemetery
Oltrarno bookbinders & marbled paper studios
Fiesole, in the hills above the city

Shopping

Via de' Tornabuoni
Ponte Vecchio goldsmiths
Oltrarno artisan workshops
Santa Maria Novella historic pharmacy
Scuola del Cuoio leather school
San Lorenzo leather market
Mercato Centrale

QUESTIONS WRITERS ASK

Before we talk

Do I need to have written a book?

No. Come with a book idea, a book in progress, or a finished draft. Many writers arrive with a blank slate and an open mind, looking for direction.

I'm already querying agents. Is this still for me?

Yes! The retreat will help you refine your submission so it is agent-ready — with insights fresh from a marketplace that is always changing.

Can I join if I've published or submitted before, or am choosing between book ideas?

Yes. Even if you're advanced in your publishing knowledge, the retreat gives you personalized instruction, workshopping, and a creative spark and momentum you can't get elsewhere.

Am I too new to this — or too late?

Never. Beginners are welcome, and you are never too young or too old to begin. Many of our writers come to find a second act in becoming a published author.

Will Lucinda's agency read my manuscript?

The retreat focuses on a selection of your material — your critical first chapters, an outline, or a book proposal. That is the scope of the program. You're welcome to query our agency whenever you feel you have the best version of your work.

What if I'm not ready to sign with an agent? Will I still have the chance for Lucinda Literary to represent me?

Yes. Our educational programs are separate from our literary agency, and participation does not guarantee representation by Lucinda Literary or another agency, or any future publishing deal. But every one of our retreat writers is treated with care and given priority in our query queue whenever they feel ready. Don't wait: this is your opportunity to get an agent's vital early feedback before it's too late. Most writers get it wrong, and few are published without connections or industry knowledge.

Do I need to send a writing sample?

No writing sample is required, though you are welcome to share one. Our call is simply about fit and your ambitions.

How much free time is there?

Class runs 8:30 to 12:30, Tuesday through Friday, and afternoons are yours. The walking tour, the private Uffizi tour, the cooking class and dinner, the opening cocktail, the formal dinner, and the farewell lunch are all included in your stay — and all optional. Join as many as you like.

Can I bring a spouse or partner?

You can. Partners are welcome in Florence, though they are not included in group activities or meals.

What if I have dietary restrictions?

No problem. We will make sure you have a delicious, proper meal wherever we go together.

Is airfare included?

Airfare is not included, and guests arrange their own travel to and from the Hotel Bernini Palace. Plan to arrive in Florence by mid-afternoon on Monday, September 20, so you have time to check in before the opening cocktail. On Saturday, you are free to depart at your convenience.

What is the cancellation and refund policy?

Deposits are non-refundable and may not be transferred to another retreat. Once the balance is due, 90 days before the retreat, all payments are non-refundable and non-transferable. Refunds cannot be offered for arriving late, leaving early, flight cancellations, travel delays, illness, or family emergencies, and no refunds or credits can be issued if the retreat is cancelled or rescheduled for reasons beyond our control. For this reason, travel insurance is required for all guests. To cancel, email info@lucindaliterary.com.





THE INVESTMENT

Priority Access

$6,300

$500 below the standard rate · through October 22

Standard rate $6,800 · standard room · 12 seats

$2,000 deposit reserves your seat
Balance due 90 days before the retreat

OPTIONAL ADD-ON

Private consultation with Lucinda
Before the retreat or in person during the week. Very limited; ask about it in your email.

Included

- Five nights at the historic Hotel Bernini Palace (standard room), breakfast included
- Four focused mornings of learning and workshopping with Lucinda
- Opening cocktail
- Private, hands-on Tuscan cooking class & dinner with Lucinda
- Curated walking tour through the heart of Florence
- Private guided tour of the Uffizi Gallery, with skip-the-line admission
- Two dinners at fine Florentine restaurants
- Farewell lunch with Lucinda
- Proprietary exercises, sample query letters, and agency materials to keep forever





An investment in your creative passions — and in the book only you can write.

SEPTEMBER 20-25 · FLORENCE

Priority Access

For writers who love to collaborate, to mentor or be mentored, and who share a passion for books, writing, travel, and personal growth.

RESERVE YOUR SEAT · PRIORITY ACCESS CODE

LUCINDA500

$6,300 instead of $6,800 · valid through October 22 at 11:59 pm

buy.stripe.com/eVq00j52i8Qg7gd74BgYU0C

EMAIL

info@lucindaliterary.com

Subject line "Retreat"

TEXT TO SET UP A CALL

917-843-0610

Lucinda Literary

"Lucinda has built something exceptional here: rigor and warmth in equal measure, inside one of the most soul-stirring cities on earth. I left with more than notes. I left with momentum."

— **Lisa Blosser**, 2026 Manuscript Momentum Retreat guest

THE MANUSCRIPT MOMENTUM RETREAT · PRESENTED BY LUCINDA LITERARY