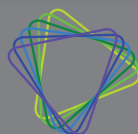


Incoming President-Elect, Lauren Kane



A Career in

Scholarly Communication



Society
for Scholarly
Publishing

The Why and What of Scholarly Communication

“The world at your fingertips—a career in scholarly communication.”

Scholarly communication, which includes publishing, is a unique industry at the intersection of research, knowledge dissemination, and technology. The scholarly publishing community encompasses book and journal publishers, university presses, professional societies and associations, libraries and academic institutions, technology and software providers, editorial services, sales and marketing organizations, and firms that specialize in product and project management.

A career in scholarly communication offers a dynamic environment at the cutting edge of technology, is accessible to anyone from early-career onwards, and supports one of the most diverse sets of disciplines of any industry. Opportunities and career paths can be found for all skill sets in this innovative industry, whether your interests lie in:

Developing software or other new tools that optimize publishing workflows

Assisting a researcher to convey complex ideas clearly with copy editing expertise

Explaining an abstract principle through graphic design

Guiding an organization through transitions to new financial models using solid business acumen

Most Desirable Skills



MANAGEMENT

----- AND -----



TECH



Where Scholarly Communication Takes Place

Scholarly communication is very much a global venture, with academic research and publications occurring in most countries and languages. While English is the predominant language of academia, scholarly publishing programs thrive worldwide with increased output from countries such as China, India, and Brazil.

The types of organizations that participate in the scholarly communications process are rapidly changing. With publishing moving toward digital solutions that account for the new ways in which users interact with scholarly research, publishers now provide content in many formats, from the traditional—journals, monographs, and books—to the state-of-the-art—databases and platforms, virtual issues, and mobile solutions.

New technology companies are constantly emerging to innovate within this market space, whether they be champions of industry standards and best practices or pioneers of new technologies and publishing workflows.

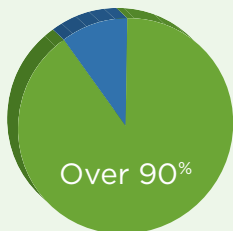
Scholarly publishing takes place everywhere, from the largest of technology companies to the smallest of specialist non-profit organizations and learned societies. Here are just a few examples of organizations that produce professional and scholarly content:

- Academic Departments and Libraries at Colleges & Universities
- Art Galleries & Museums
- Arboretums & Botanical Gardens
- Commercial Publishers & University Presses
- Financial Institutions Foundations & Philanthropic Organizations
- Government Agencies & Think Tanks
- Learned Societies & Associations
- Medical Libraries & Research Institutes
- Multinational Corporations
- Scientific, Technology, Engineering & Medical Companies
- Trade Associations

Currently, the largest employers in the field of scholarly communication are institutes of higher education, commercial publishers, scientific societies, and university presses. However, the industry is experiencing a period of rapid development and transformation; the world of tomorrow may look very different from that of today.

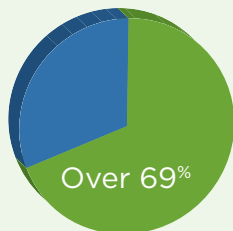
Opportunities in Scholarly Publishing

Staying Sharp



who attend webinars,
attend free of cost

.....



use LinkedIn in a
professional capacity

.....



Early-Career Professionals prefer to learn about trends and industry through colleagues and events rather than social media and blogs

There is an increasing need for people with technological aptitude, literacy, and vision in all aspects of scholarly communications as new technologies are developed and applied. From customer service to copy editing, main job functions within scholarly communication are outlined below.

Editorial/Acquisitions

Editorial jobs vary between book and journal publishing. In book publishing, editorial staff may reach out directly to qualified authors to develop book ideas, or they may receive book proposals from authors wishing to sell a concept through an outline and sample chapters. In journal publishing, editorial staff work with subject area experts who review manuscripts submitted by authors and researchers. These experts determine the articles' suitability for publication in a particular journal. In both forms of publishing, editorial staff may assist authors or subject area experts on publishing strategies to maximize content visibility, impact, and reach.

Production

Production editors facilitate and track the flow of manuscripts through composition, proofing, design, and publication (in print or online). Publications staff working in this area not only interact with internal colleagues but also manage relations with a host of external suppliers, including graphic designers, typesetters, and printers. As in other areas of publishing, production processes continue to adapt to new technologies, including print-on-demand and interactive content.





70% of Early Career Professionals are Women



Technology

Evolving technology changes not only how research is consumed but also how that research is published. Information technologists (IT), database administrators, systems engineers, and front- and back-end engineers play key roles in development and maintenance of electronic products and services, including content platforms and manuscript processing systems.

Administrative

The business of scholarly communication is continuously changing, adapting to new business models, new technology, and new markets. Project managers and individuals with a strong and strategic business acumen are crucial to the operation of the business and play a major role in the success of the organization.

Distribution/Customer Service

Whether print or digital, getting a book or journal issue into the hands of a reader is critical to the success of any publishing operation. Warehousing, shipping and billing, order fulfillment, and customer support are just a few of the positions required to ensure that activities are carefully and correctly managed every day.

Sales/Marketing

Without great marketers, graphic designers, and sales personnel, readers may never know the breadth and depth of the available content. Sales and marketing teams increasingly draw on data about current and potential readers to determine the most effective strategies for promoting books and journals to both their target communities and new audiences.

How to Succeed as an Early-Career Professional:

- Seek out mentors
- Join industry organizations/societies
- Volunteer and network
- Keep current with issues in publishing
- Always be eager to learn

Education and Training

For those interested in academic and scholarly publishing, a degree in publishing or in an allied field such as media and communications or library and information science can help kickstart your career. However, a specific degree is not required and many scholarly communications professionals learn “on the job,” often moving between different stakeholders in the industry for employment. For positions in science, technology, and medicine (STM) communications, a discipline-specific degree may be useful, and early-career faculty can transition to scholarly communications careers in their field.

The Society for Scholarly Publishing (SSP) website (sspnet.org) contains a wealth of helpful resources, including a Job Board and links to publishing and library science programs and internships.

Visit sspnet.org/careers for information on:

- Publishing and Library Programs
- SSP Fellowship Program
- SSP Mentorship Program
- Internships
- Available Jobs

Regardless of your focus, background, or career stage, now is an exciting time to be a part of scholarly communication.

Consider joining SSP at sspnet.org and sign up for *The Scholarly Kitchen* to learn what's new and happening within publishing:
scholarlykitchen.sspnet.org

