

CAREERS IN SCIENCE COMMUNICATION

This leaflet is aimed at any scientist, mathematician or engineer interested in this area regardless of whether they are an undergraduate or postgraduate student. It is likely, however, that if you are an undergraduate you will need to consider the option of a Masters degree in science communication. Courses can be found by using the Postgraduate Study section of this website www.prospects.ac.uk or using the Prospects Postgraduate Directory in the Careers Advisory Service. Alternatively a list of science communication courses can be found here: www.britishtscienceassociation.org/web/ScienceinSociety/Courses_and_Training/Science_Communication_Courses.htm.

There are few jobs advertised with science communication in the title but there are many jobs which require the subject knowledge of a scientist and the ability to communicate with both technical and non-technical audiences. Obvious jobs might include medical writers, technical writers, science journalists, book or journal editors and broadcasters. But there is a growing industry in business communication too. Science communication professionals also work in the areas of public relations (PR), communications planning, issues management, media relations, investor relations, event planning, editorial production, marketing, and financial communication. Their work may include marketing an idea to investors, writing lively pieces for promotion, developing a communication plan, or writing up press releases. They may be working in companies' communication departments, as independent consultants, or for a specialist communications or PR agency. It is not only business that needs scientists with communication skills. Not for profit organisations like charities, research bodies, government, professional membership bodies and independent scientific organisations all need to promote themselves to stakeholders and the public.

Another area where good communication skills are essential is in public engagement with science. Examples include promoting science to school children through public demonstrations, mounting exhibitions in museums and science centres and ensuring that science is included appropriately in drama on television.

Science Policy is another area where scientists can have an input and influence. Although it is not strictly science communication it is an associated area worthy of the exploration by the scientist who does not want to wear a white coat and who believes they can communicate effectively at all levels.

This list of websites will help you look for potential employers but it will not find you a job. There is no convenient place to find jobs in Science Communication. Once you have identified the kind of organisation which interests you, a Careers Adviser can help you identify advertised jobs in that area. So, too, can any contacts you are able to network with. For example jobs in universities will be advertised at www.jobs.ac.uk whilst New Scientist and the Guardian can be useful places to look. The likelihood is there will be other sources you can access. Gaining a better picture of what the work involves by talking to practitioners and building up a network of contacts will be useful to you in your job hunt. Read the separate leaflets about Creative Job Searching and Networking to understand how this job search technique can help you in this area. Relevant resources can be found on our website www.bath.ac.uk/careers/catalogue/skills.html#jobsearch.

Background/General

Psicom www.intute.ac.uk/healthandlifesciences/psicom

A free catalogue of high quality Internet resources, covering public engagement with science, science communication and the impact of science on society.

BA (British Association for the Advancement of Science) holds a science communication conference

www.britishtscienceassociation.org/web/ScienceinSociety/ScienceCommunicationConference/.

Survey of factors affecting science communication by scientists and engineers

http://royalsociety.org/General_WF.aspx?pageid=7967

Journalism, Science and Society: Science Communication between News and Public Relations by Martin W Bauer and Massimiano Bucchi, Routledge (October 2007)

<http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/20439/>

Science Careers http://sciencecareers.sciencemag.org/career_magazine/career_profiles

Search profiles using the search term "Science Communication". Some are old but still relevant.

Public Relations

Many science and technology organisations, professional bodies, companies and government departments have their own Public Relations staff. Check out their individual websites.

Getting the Message Across: Scientists in Public Relations by Kirstie Urquhart

2 May 2003

http://sciencecareers.sciencemag.org/career_development/previous_issues/articles/2310/getting_the_message_across_scientists_in_public_relations.

Consultancy

SciConnect

www.sciconnect.co.uk provides science communication training and media skills courses, uniquely led by professional journalists and communicators who also have experience as research-active scientists.

People Science & Policy is an independent public policy consultancy that specialises in science and society issues

www.peoplescienceandpolicy.com.

Science made Simple www.sciencemadesimple.co.uk provide professional presenters and high quality science shows for schools and festivals, develop educational materials and products about science, train the science communicators of the future, write accessible science articles and books, work with the media on popular science programmes.

Think Differently

www.think-differently.co.uk provides interactive science shows, training and consultancy.

Creative Science www.creativescience.co.uk

University Centres

Centre for Science Communication University of Chester www.chester.ac.uk/scicomm

Science Communication Group Imperial College

www3.imperial.ac.uk/humanities/sciencecommunicationgroup

Science Communication Unit UWE www.scu.uwe.ac.uk

University of Edinburgh Postgraduate Science Communication Team
www.scieng.ed.ac.uk/scicom/pgsct.htm

Public Engagement

British Association for the Advancement of Science is a unique nationwide organisation dedicated to the communication of science. The BA brings together scientists, industry, the media and the public.

www.britishtscienceassociation.org

The five scientific **research councils**, which are the main public investors funding scientific research in the UK, all approach 'Public engagement' in their own ways. Take a look through their websites to see what might be relevant to you, and watch out for requests for help from research councils - they are often looking for volunteers to assist at exhibitions and in schools, although they will often only use people already involved in research they fund.

The research councils are:

BBSRC (Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council) www.bbsrc.ac.uk

EPSRC (Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council) www.epsrc.ac.uk

MRC (Medical Research Council) www.mrc.ac.uk

NERC (Natural Environment Research Council) www.nerc.ac.uk

STFC (Science and Technology Facilities Council) www.scitech.ac.uk

Research Councils UK Science in Society

www.rcuk.ac.uk/sis

Wellcome Trust supports a great deal of public engagement with science activity

www.wellcome.ac.uk/Funding/Public-engagement.

Science Centres and Museums www.ecsite.net

This includes a jobs listing.

Science Festivals

www.britishcouncil.org/talkingscience-centres-festivals.htm

STEMNET www.stemnet.org.uk aims to ensure that more young people in the UK make a choice to enter science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) related careers at all levels, and future generations are properly informed about the science and technology that surrounds them.

NOISE (New Outlooks In Science & Engineering) www.noisemakers.org.uk is a UK-wide campaign funded by the Engineering & Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC). Initiated in 2000, it aims to raise awareness of science and engineering among young people.

Public Awareness of Science and Engineering www.users.globalnet.co.uk/~pawsomni offers funding to writers but also organises events where scientists and engineers can introduce writers to their work.

Sense about Science www.senseaboutscience.org.uk

A charitable trust to promote good science and evidence for the public.

Professional Bodies

There are a large number of professional bodies in the science field that look after the interests of members and also try to promote their area of science to a wider public. Examples include:

Association for Clinical Biochemistry (ACB)
Biochemical Society
British Medical Association
British Psychological Society (BPS)
Institute of Biology (IOB)
Institute of Biomedical Science (IBMS)
Institute of Clinical Research (ICR)
Institute of Materials, Minerals and Mining (IOM3)
Institute of Mathematics and its Applications (IMA)
Institute of Physics (IoP)
Institution of Chemical Engineers
Royal Society of Chemistry

Most of the significant ones belong to the **Science Council**. Their website will give you their members websites www.sciencecouncil.co.uk/Memberorganisations.php.

Knowledge Transfer

Knowledge Transfer Partnerships www.ktponline.org.uk

Government funded programme helping businesses to improve their competitiveness and productivity through the better use of knowledge, technology and skills that reside within the UK knowledge base.

Knowledge Transfer Partnerships in Bath www.bath.ac.uk/rdso/graduates/ktpsforgraduates.html

Research Councils www.rcuk.ac.uk/aboutrcs/activities/kt

Nexus

www.nexxusscotland.com promotes and supports research excellence, innovation and knowledge transfer within the life science community in the West of Scotland.

Forums/Discussion Lists

PSCI-COM and SCIENCECOMMUNICATION lists

www.jiscmail.ac.uk

British Interactive Group www.biq.uk.com not-for-profit organisation for all people involved in interactive science communication activities and hands-on education projects in the UK.

Lablit have a forum on Science Communication <http://forums.lablit.com>

Science Writing

Association of British Science Writers www.absw.org.uk exists to help those who write about science and technology, and to improve the standard of science journalism in the UK. Includes a publication "So you want to be a Science Writer".

www.absw.org.uk/reading-room/so-you-want-to-be-a-science-writer.

The European Association of Science Editors (EASE) www.ease.org.uk an internationally-oriented community of individuals from diverse backgrounds, linguistic traditions and professional experience who share an interest in science communication and editing.

Miscellaneous

SciDev.Net www.scidev.net the Science and Development Network is a not-for-profit organisation dedicated to providing reliable and authoritative information about science and technology for the developing world.

Policy

Articles on Careers in Science Policy

http://sciencecareers.sciencemag.org/career_development/previous_issues/articles/2170/science_policy_establishing_guidelines_setting_priorities

Details of **how Science and Technology** is organised in the UK can be found at this link www.britishcouncil.org/gost. In particular it provides information about relevant government departments. There are also Science and Technology Research Units in Universities or independent research organisations or Think Tanks e.g. SPRU at the University of Sussex was founded in 1966, and is now an established world leader in research, consultancy and teaching in the field of science, technology and innovation policy and management www.sussex.ac.uk/spru.

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www.bath.ac.uk/careers