

JOB DESCRIPTION

Commissioning Editor (Scottish Universities Press)

Accountable to:	Chair of Scottish Confederation of University and Research Libraries
Reporting to:	Chair of Scottish Universities Press, and Scottish Confederation of University and Research Libraries/Press Manager of Scottish Universities Press
Location:	Hybrid: Remotely from home with semi-regular travel to university locations to meet with SUP members, contributors and partners.
Duration:	Fixed Term 1 Years (renewable subject to funding and performance)
Contract:	Freelance, requiring flexible working
Hours:	0.5 FTE (127 working days total, averaging 2.5 days per week)
Salary:	£27,105 total contract fee (£213 per day)

Role overview

The primary purpose of this post is to support the development of Scottish Universities Press, a new Open Access University Press for Scotland. SUP is a non-commercial press with shared ownership and management across member institutions of the Scottish Confederation of University & Research Libraries (SCURL). The scope of the platform has initially focused on publishing monographs but options for expansion beyond this remit are currently being explored.

This role will be responsible for commissioning new works and supporting all content in the production pipeline.

A successful candidate will have experience in publishing and commissioning, an interest in open access publishing, excellent communication and digital skills, and an entrepreneurial approach to new ventures.

This post is a wonderful opportunity for anyone with experience in academic publishing to be part of an innovative, not-for-profit venture that aims to enhance the academic publishing landscape.

This position is offered in a freelance capacity, and may form part of an individual's portfolio of work projects. It is recommended that candidates consider their own insurances for health or loss of earnings through incapacity during the term of the contract.

Interviews will be held in mid-March 2024.

Role Outline

Scottish Universities Press (SUP) is seeking to appoint a Commissioning Editor to contribute to the development of the shared Open Access university press for Scotland. The

Commissioning Editor will be employed on a fixed-term contract as a freelance worker for a period of 1 year. The role will be designated as 'hybrid', with an expectation that the freelance worker utilises their own equipment to fulfil the requirements of the role. A limited travel budget will be allocated for meeting attendance.

Project Aims

Following the recommendations in the commissioned 'Proof of Concept for a Scottish University Press' report, SCURL has established Scottish Universities Press to enhance the quality of service delivery across academic and research libraries in Scotland by offering a clear and consistent approach to Open Access (OA) publishing via libraries ([Scottish Universities Press \(sup.ac.uk\)](http://ScottishUniversitiesPress.sup.ac.uk)). This will be of significant benefit to researchers who will be required to meet the OA requirements set by funders, and informed by future research assessment exercises and Plan S. The development of a non-commercial press with shared ownership will be a central part of the infrastructure provided to support not only open access publishing but the wider Open Research, Open Scholarship and Citizen Science agendas. A library-led approach to delivering OA will raise the profile of libraries and highlight the importance of the professional practice of library staff in supporting research and learning.

Key Responsibilities

The Commissioning Editor will identify high-quality content and drive submissions to Scottish Universities Press, creating an ongoing stream of materials through the publication pipeline. The role spans academic disciplines and there will be an expectation for content to be commissioned across a breadth of subjects.

You will work alongside a Publishing Officer who will provide support in liaising with editorial boards and administering the commissioning of work for publication. Support for the strategic direction of the role will be provided by the SUP Editorial Board, and the SUP Management Board will provide operational input, with final oversight from the SCURL Business Committee. You will be supervised by the Chair of the Management Board and the SUP Press Manager.

The Commissioning Editor will operate within the approach of a new business start-up, with a strong focus on developing the reputation of the Press and the medium/long-term sustainability of the enterprise. Effective advocacy, promotion and relationship-building will be critical to attracting authors to SUP.

Duties over the course of the appointment will include (but are not limited to):

- Undertake analysis of academic fields to identify opportunities for commissioning high-quality content within specified timeframes
- Tracking and monitor SUP output, working with editorial boards to agree target areas for development
- Engage with researchers to build awareness of SUP and advocate the benefits of publishing with a not-for-profit library-led press
- Build relationships with the research community by attending or presenting at relevant meetings and events

- Provide support for authors, and respond to enquiries from member institutions and individual academics
- Liaise closely with editors, authors, and other key partners, as well as operational teams, to ensure delivery of the content pipeline
- Build knowledge across subject areas
- Contribute to brand and marketing strategy, including support of events like book launches or publicity events
- Embed academic-led advocacy strategy to engage potential authors
- Clearly document workflows covering all stages of the commissioning process for all content types
- Ensure familiarity with funding requirements and compliance measures for current and forthcoming policy landscape, as relates to the publication of research

The successful candidate will be expected to set objectives and prioritise work activities to fulfil their duties and to undertake such other duties as may reasonably requested by the Scottish Universities Press Management Board/SCURL.

Post profile/Person Specification

Criteria	Essential/Desirable
Qualifications	
Good first degree or equivalent qualification or equivalent experience	Essential
Knowledge	
A demonstrable knowledge of open access publishing in higher education with an understanding of challenges, trends and current initiatives.	Essential
Understanding of the funding and compliance context for research in higher education and the role of the Research Excellence Framework	Essential
Awareness of publishing models and platforms	Desirable
Awareness of relevant standards and legislation such as accessibility, data protection, copyright, and licencing etc.	Desirable
Skills, abilities and competencies	
Evidence of strong communication skills both written and verbal with proven ability to build effective relationships.	Essential

Ability to talk through business and operational challenges clearly with partners at various experience levels	Essential
Ability to liaise with a wide variety of stakeholders and authors and to demonstrate excellent influencing skills	Essential
Ability to plan own work and responsibilities over the short and medium term, with an awareness of longer-term issues, and meet deadlines	Essential
Proven ability to work independently using initiative and judgement to deliver successful outcomes.	Essential
Strong data analysis and reporting skills.	Essential

Experience

Experience of working in Higher Education or publishing	Essential
Experience of promoting and marketing services or content to relevant audiences in print and online via websites and social media.	Essential
Previous experience of commissioning academic materials for publication	Desirable
Previous experience in writing business plans, marketing or communication strategies	Desirable
Previous experience of designing and documenting workflows for services, continual service improvement or other service development work	Desirable

Personal Attributes

A proactive and self-motivated individual with a positive attitude who is enthusiastic about the opportunities this role presents.	Essential
Motivation towards publishing excellence and quality	Essential
Understanding of the needs of authors, colleagues and staff working in a higher education environment	Essential

Commitment to personal development and to learning new skills Essential

Scottish Confederation of University & Research Libraries

SCURL is a membership body that supports service development and improvement across Scotland's university and research libraries. Our key areas of work are coordination, collaboration and advocacy.

SCURL coordinates shared services and procurement across our member library services. SHEDL, the first super-consortial purchasing scheme in the UK, is a highly successful example of our nationally coordinated outputs.

SCURL facilitates collaboration across our member institutions, and with a range of key stakeholders across the library and wider education sectors. SCURL groups and networks drive innovation and staff development across our membership base.

SCURL advocates the key role libraries play in supporting learning and research, and in delivering the strategic goals of the wider institutions.

How to apply:

Applications can be completed and submitted via email to Gillian Daly, Press Manager and SCURL Executive Officer at g.daly@nls.uk. Applications should comprise an up-to-date CV and covering letter (no longer than 2 sides of A4) detailing your experience and suitability for the role, with consideration to the person specification and responsibilities.

Any questions can be directed in the first instance to:

Gillian Daly, Press Manager and SCURL Executive Officer at g.daly@nls.uk.