

## Looking forward to 2022

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In the last eNews editorial, **Andrew Barker** - current chair of UKSG - presented his reflections on his involvement with UKSG over the past ten years and what it has meant personally and professionally. He also outlined the changes that the organisation has gone through during his leadership, not only internally but also externally (read COVID) that have impacted UKSG as well as us all over the past two years.

My contribution takes up the baton where he left off, with a forward look to where UKSG is heading over the next few years.

### **Annual conference 2022**

By now you will be aware that the Trustees have made the difficult decision to [move our 2022 annual conference](#) from March in Glasgow to May in Telford. Although we understand that some speakers, delegates and exhibitors might be disappointed, I am sure that this was the right decision and will enable us to deliver a conference where we can be confident of sufficient delegate numbers for it to be a success. We are heartened by the positive response we have received so far. Thanks are due to our Executive Director, **Bev Acreman** for her excellent behind-the-scenes work to find and negotiate this solution for us. We will be offering a hybrid experience which will mimic as much as possible the in-person experience, but we know from delegate feedback from previous years that for many of you one of the key conference benefits is the human element: bringing the scholarly communications sector together and giving the opportunity to meet one another face-to-face. And I'm sure that by May, we will be itching to participate in physical events, after another winter stuck behind our screens. Bookings will open and the excellent programme published in the coming weeks, and I'm looking forward to a conference that will be as relevant and topical as ever.

## Developing a strategic vision

The focus for UKSG as a charitable organisation over the past few years has been very much ensuring that it is robust and fit-for-purpose - establishing an Executive Director role, reorganisation of staffing and a reform of governance to create a more clearly defined [Board of Trustees](#). The next step in this process was the development of a strategic vision to set the UKSG's direction over the next five years. During 2021 Trustees held a workshop where we discussed the role that UKSG currently plays in the scholarly communication's sector, and analysed the environmental factors that will influence us in future. We also tried to distill the essence of what UKSG meant to us and our community into just a few words - global, inclusive, insightful, innovative and open.

We used our workshop material to develop a series of provocations, designed to evoke a response from our members and stakeholders. Many of you gave valuable input to these provocations as part of the consultation process, which we used to refine our ideas into a finished vision.

The vision is based on the values that are important to UKSG such as inclusion and openness, and describes what our members can expect from the organisation in terms of the way we behave and act. It recognises UKSG's important role in representing and bringing together colleagues from across the sector, to enable dialogue and constructive dialogue and work together to find solutions. The vision is fresh and exciting, and we're looking forward to launching it at the Annual Conference in May.

Now comes the hard bit - bringing the vision to life and ensuring that it's not just words on paper. Over the coming months, we'll be sharing and getting feedback on how we can deliver the vision with the network of volunteers from across our sub-committees, and making sure that our plans and activities reflect our new direction.

As well as embedding the vision into our work, over the next year we will also focus on supporting the work of our sub-committees ([Education, Publications and Outreach & Engagement](#)). These provide a vital role in delivering many of the benefits for our members: organising events, communications and publishing our journal, *Insights*. We'll support better relationships between our volunteer networks, facilitate more joined up and collaborative planning processes to ensure that we're taking advantage of synergies between the committees.

Our sub-committees will continue their excellent work throughout 2022 to support the scholarly information community: UKSG *Insights* has a [publication schedule](#) packed with the latest high-quality research articles, case studies and opinion pieces from our sector, and we continue to deliver and enhance our programme of seminars, webinars and outreach. New for this year is a seminar aimed at journalists, librarians, publishers and communications professionals in universities and publishing: *Publication to press: building trust in research communication*. [This event](#), which is being held on 9th February, is focused on how better collaboration between these groups can improve how research is portrayed and received in the media. Registration for this topical new event is still open.

## A sustainable future

The other primary focus will be to ensure a sustainable financial future for UKSG. Our annual conference will remain as our flagship event, but UKSG is more than the conference, although it currently subsidises all of our other activities including our support for new and under represented professionals and the unemployed, as well as our core administrative costs. As Andrew explained, cancelling the conference in 2020 was an enormous blow to the organisation and without the hard work of our team and the goodwill from the sector, the organisation would not have survived. Trustees will be exploring new financial models which reduce the risk that the conference not meeting its budget presents to the organisation as well as diversifying our income streams to ensure that we are able to thrive in future and continue to play the role in the scholarly communications sector which we know is valued and relied upon by our members.

In the previous editorial Andrew wrote about how UKSG had changed his life. He has also changed UKSG, and will be leaving the organisation in a much stronger position than when he became chair, despite the uncertainty of the past two years. I'd like to thank him for his enormous and unwavering commitment to UKSG over the years in his different roles: as eNews editor, Chair of the *Insights* Editorial Board, Trustee and of course Chair. We will miss his dedication to UKSG and its mission, his energy, drive and enthusiasm, and of course the endless references to obscure mid-century music and culture.

I look forward to seeing and meeting many of you, in-person or virtually in Telford in May!

(Editor's Note: we will shortly be announcing the dates for our AGM and details on the elections for new Trustees. You can see background details [here](#), and please do consider putting your name forward to stand for election!)

These views are the authors' own and do not necessarily reflect the views of UKSG.



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