



## UKSG's new subcommittee

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### **Yann Amouroux, Bioscientifica**

For many of us UKSG is synonymous with quality meetings and an incredibly unique mix of professionals actively talking to each other. My experience of UKSG has never been any different, with my first day in the publishing world happening by pure coincidence to be Monday 15 April 2002 and the opening of UKSG conference at Warwick University.

It was practically a case of being pushed in the swimming pool and quickly having to learn how to swim: my head was certainly swimming with facts and figures, learning so much about an industry that was quite (if not totally) alien to me at the time.

Now, 16 years later, I am still learning as the industry keeps on changing, and an organisation such as UKSG provides me and countless other professionals with the opportunity to top up on the necessary knowledge required to do our jobs effectively. Those professionals are librarians, systems vendors, publishers, and consultants: everyone connected directly or indirectly to scholarly communication.

For the last four years I have had the privilege of taking a much more active part in UKSG as an organisation, co-opted to be on the Main Committee for three consecutive years (thanks again for such an amazing opportunity) and finally getting elected in 2017 (that really felt good).

### **So, what now?**

Well, UKSG is a great place for networking and connecting its many members from universities, publishers, content providers, intermediaries, and other similar organisations, but it felt as if we were missing a trick somehow. And most importantly, like so many membership orientated organisations, we should do much more to engage with our members.

### **Easier said than done . . .**

UKSG has 470+ members and they vary from small businesses (1 to 5 employees) to major organisations (huge corporations and/or universities with hundreds/thousands of staff).

How many of us are actually aware of what UKSG does, and what it is involved with? How could UKSG be more in tune with its membership, making sure it delivers on giving its membership quality training and learning opportunities?

The Main Committee decided in 2017 that the time was ripe for a new subcommittee focusing just on those aspects, and I was honoured to be entrusted with launching it and starting it all from scratch. The first job was to get a group in place, inviting key people in our community to form a

subcommittee with a diverse profile. These ranged from very well established and pretty well known individuals to people that had just started. There were a few names on my 'hit list' and I also got some excellent suggestions from colleagues. The result is a great subcommittee including representation from FE to HE, early career professionals to senior managers – the perfect start.

Below is the list of all Outreach and Engagement Subcommittee members:

- Richard Abels, Auris Associates
- Yann Amouroux (Chair), Bioscientifica + UKSG Main Committee member
- Paul Ayris, University College London
- Chris Balmforth, Wakefield College
- Matt Borg, ProQuest + UKSG Main Committee member
- Claire Grace, Open University
- Helle Lauridsen, *UKSG eNews* Editor + UKSG Main Committee member
- Susanna Lob, OnlyConnect Consultancy
- Sarah Pittaway, University of Worcester
- Grace Ranola, Oxford University Press
- Renée Reagon, Springer Nature
- Sarah Roughley, University of Liverpool
- Ted Spilsbury, University of the West of England
- Paul Tavner, Hindawi
- Nathan Turner, Cambridge University Press
- Anna Vernon, Jisc

We then set up a [new section on the UKSG website](#) which gives everyone a little more detail about the subcommittee and its aims. Although a new UKSG website is due in 2018, this is a start and we intend to make much more use of our electronic presence to connect with all of our members.

An important role for this new group will be to use the connection between UKSG and its members, and to make things happen. With so many members, what is the most effective way to engage with them and who do we want to engage with? Not all staff members in a member organisation necessarily benefit from UKSG simply because their role may not be catered for (sorry finance teams, nothing personal here), but there are many of our colleagues that are losing out by not maximising their affiliated membership to UKSG and that is something which needs addressing.

The subcommittee had its very first meeting at UCL in early March 2018, and quickly started work on how it could be making itself more effective, and at the same time more efficient. The mix of committee members really worked out brilliantly, it was great to witness it happening and to have the excellent support of the UKSG staff team as well. Every person in the room came out of the meeting feeling positive and energised and, most importantly, ready to put some action plans in place.

And that is how many of us feel after attending the UKSG annual conference, or one of the many UKSG seminars, or even the great webinars organised by UKSG.

We all benefit from what UKSG provides but we do not necessarily realise it, or even know how to explain it to others. We all know what UKSG is great at and that it does good things, but how do we put this in a coherent and more marketing friendly manner? How do we get better at communicating with members, colleagues and friends from the knowledge community we live in?

As far as we are concerned, the adventure has only just started, and we are sincerely encouraged by our first steps so far. Feel free to contact the Outreach and Engagement Subcommittee with your ideas or suggestions, we would love to hear from you!



This UKSG Editorial is taken from the industry newsletter *UKSG eNews*, published every two weeks exclusively for UKSG members. The newsletter provides up-to-the-minute news of current issues and developments within the global knowledge community.

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