

UKSG Trustees: in the spotlight, part II

UKSG eNews 481

13 November 2020

The eNews co-editors Josh and Helle, asked the current Board of Trustees to reply to three important questions, exploring UKSG's response to current challenges and their vision for the future:

1. How is UKSG adapting to the dynamic challenges of the coronavirus pandemic?
2. How will UKSG stay connected beyond the UK in a post Brexit world?
3. Given these two challenges, what does the future of UKSG look like?



In this week's editorial the UKSG Trustees answer our second question:

How will UKSG stay connected beyond the UK in a post Brexit world?

Andrew Barker says: "The challenge with an organisation that is called UKSG is that people often focus on the 'UK' part of the name. UKSG is known by people across the scholarly sector wherever they are located, indeed a 1/3 of our membership is based outside the UK. We have always had people from across the globe attending our conference and engaging via Insights and eNews. On the face of it, Brexit won't make any real difference to our mission or our ambition. We want to continue to represent all of the scholarly communications ecosystem. We will remain mindful of the need to be explicit in our focus beyond the UK, but in many ways the steps we have taken post-Covid has helped us in our ambition to be global. Our November conference has seen people from across the world registering to attend or view the recording. Going digital enables us to do that. You don't have to be in the UK to attend UKSG events anymore, we shall build on that as an enabler."

Anna Grigson emphasizes that "Professional communities don't need to be limited by borders. Despite our name, UKSG has always reached beyond the UK, and beyond Europe, whether that's through international speakers and delegates at our conferences, our

partnership with NASIG in the US, or through our programme of webinars which attract attendees from around the world.

Also, **Joanna Ball** underlines the international nature of UKSG, “I’m based in Denmark, a small country, and we rely heavily on our international networks for sharing experience, ideas and best practice. The UKSG annual conference tends to attract a high number of attendees from Scandinavian libraries and we use the conference to connect with publishers and other libraries. That won’t change with Brexit, and I think the increase in digital working and connecting which COVID-19 has precipitated means that it will be easier for UKSG to maintain that contact in future.”

Dominic Broadhurst believes that “People are inherent social beings and all parts of scholarly community benefit from this interaction. The trick will be how to facilitate this, perhaps on more local/regional levels, whilst developing our online presence in ever more innovative and participative formats.”

Colleen Campbell and Katherine Rose sees a promising future in our digital communities

“While the in-person networking that is so highly valued by everyone who has attended a UKSG conference or seminar is significantly limited by the current coronavirus pandemic, the virtual presence of UKSG—with our online events, Insights and e-News—has even greater potential to foster knowledge sharing among a broader range of practitioners and experts in our field.”

“I see UKSG moving forward as an increasingly diverse and evolving community of practice, both in terms of member geography and sector focus, or specialty. It is really exciting to be in this space where the impact of our work together is so incredibly tangible!”

“At the time of writing, a month before the November conference, there are participants from 19 countries registered to take part in the event, and we have speakers joining us from America and Hong Kong. Members of our Board of Trustees represent countries beyond the UK and bring valuable international perspectives to our strategy and outlook. Now more than ever the world needs international collaboration, and UKSG is focused on providing that for its members.”

Graham Stone and Lorraine Estelle reminds us that our journal Insights is still alive and strong.

Graham comments that “although we all miss the networking at physical events, one of the huge benefits of the digital format is the ability to bring so many people together from different countries, many of whom could not attend a UK based event. Close to my heart is the work of the editorial board of Insights, the UKSG journal. In 2020 we have published peer reviewed articles from the UK, Ireland, Sweden, India and the United States.”

Lorraine remains optimistic that “UKSG will continue to reach out our colleagues outside the UK. We will continue to innovate, and this proactive approach will be more important than ever before. As a co-editor of Insights, which has a global readership, I am looking forward to publishing articles from colleagues across the world.”

Finally, **Charlie Rapple** assures “I don’t know that Brexit is going to make a dramatic difference to how we connect beyond the UK. We already have a community of members, delegates, authors and other ‘friends of UKSG’ that extends well beyond the UK. When we are planning projects, activities and events, we always keep that wider community in mind while also taking care to provide UK-specific insights and guidance where appropriate. Post-Brexit we may learn lessons in the UK that are helpful to our colleagues in other countries and UKSG could then have a useful role in helping to collate and share those experiences. But ultimately, we are part of a global sector that already transcends the boundaries of the EU, and as an organization we have healthy connections with colleagues in the US, China, the global south and many other countries - so it seems realistic to anticipate that Brexit will not affect UKSG’s ability to connect with and support colleagues beyond the UK.”



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.

To enjoy *UKSG eNews* and other member benefits [become a UKSG member.](#)