

Making the most of the editorial community

As an editor, one of the most valuable resources you have access to – whether you're employed in-house or working freelance – is the editorial community. Editors are renowned for their willingness to share professional and emotional support, best practice tips, efficiency hacks, favourite macros, and all sorts of other advice and practical suggestions. Many will even become lifelong friends in the process.

But how can you draw on this reservoir of knowledge and support? Whether you're just starting out as an editor or proofreader or are already experienced but new to the CIEP, it can seem daunting to break into a world where everyone seems to know each other. We hope that this fact sheet will make you feel welcome and able to join in. Everyone has something to offer.

How the community can help

The global editorial community exists wherever editors – or people working with text in a range of other ways – congregate. That might be online or in person, within a real or virtual space.

If you're freelance ...

Lots of editors are freelance, and they seek out community to support them in what can be a lonely occupation. Despite the many positives of working for yourself, it can be challenging at times, when there's no one else around to ask for advice, have a giggle with or vent to when things go wrong. Plugging in to the editorial community is therefore a great way to counter the negatives of self-employment – to feel part of something larger. It can also help you cultivate a sense of structure and progression in a solo career.

If you're employed ...

Many others in the wider editorial community hold an in-house position, either as an editor or in a related field. Even if you do have work colleagues, you might be the only editor in your organisation. Often, editorial training happens on the job through trial and error, and it can be hard to assess your progress. In this case, organisations such as the CIEP can provide a training pathway to support you in your career progression.

The CIEP community

This is a CIEP fact sheet, so some of the focus is on the community this organisation provides. The CIEP started as the Society for Editors and Proofreaders (SfEP) in 1988 at a meeting attended by around 60 people, and has since grown to over 2,500 members. In 2019 it was

granted chartered status, and it became the Chartered Institute of Editing and Proofreading. However, although it is now a much larger organisation, many of its guiding principles remain the same, and it continues to provide a ready-made community for editors at all stages of their career.

Forums

One of the main member benefits for individual members of the CIEP is access to its online forums. You can **register** for the forums via the CIEP website. The following are some of the core forums available:

- SfEPLine – the main forum for editorial topics (its name comes from the original email discussion list of the SfEP)
- Off-topic – for discussions not directly related to editing
- Your CIEP – for information relating to the running of the Institute
- Newbies – a place for newer editors to ask what might be considered beginners' questions and to introduce themselves
- Marketplace – for sharing work

There are also various specialist forums, including Fiction, MedSTEM and Education, and forums for the local groups. These are available to join on request.

Local groups

The CIEP has more than 40 **local groups** across the UK and internationally. Many groups meet in person, but there are also two 'Cloud Clubs', which enable members to meet from anywhere in the world, and sometimes other groups decide to meet online via Zoom. The groups

exist to enable members to share experiences and advice in an informal setting. Sometimes they also facilitate learning opportunities such as presentations, mini-conferences and visits to publishers and literary festivals.

Training and CPD

Most of the CIEP's training is now online, but it can still represent a valuable opportunity to make new professional contacts and discuss tricky issues with peers. Online learners have access to discussion groups as well as time to contact their tutor, and some courses are run as webinars that have an interactive element.

Conferences

A highlight of the CIEP's year is its **annual conference**, which since the 2020 pandemic has been run online as well as in person. The first truly hybrid conference was in 2022, with delegates attending in person and online together. The conference is perhaps the most intense networking opportunity the CIEP offers, with plenty to learn from workshops, seminars and presentations, as well as more light-hearted and social activities such as the quiz, organised runs and walks, and the gala dinner.

The community beyond the CIEP

Editorial associations

The CIEP is not the only professional association for editors, and many CIEP members are also members of other associations. See the Resources section for a list of other editorial associations. They offer different membership criteria and benefits, but they can all provide a specific sense of community.

Social media

Wherever people choose to hang out online, groups of editors and those in related fields such as writing will form communities. Social media is a fast-moving area, so this fact sheet does not go into detail, but try searching for editors you already know or editorial associations to tap into existing networks. For example, the CIEP currently has a presence on Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter. Many editors also use Instagram and, increasingly, Mastodon.

Ensuring inclusion

Sharing best practice

Inclusion is a key concept in healthy communities, to ensure that they can be accessed and enjoyed by as many people as possible. And a crucial feature of editorial communities is the chance they give us all to discuss and learn about current best practice around

equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI), especially in relation to language.

CIEP Dignity Policy

To work as it should, any community depends on its members treating each other with respect. The CIEP has a **Dignity Policy**, described as 'part of our ongoing work to embed equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) across everything we do'. It defines behaviours considered unacceptable in CIEP spaces, including discrimination, harassment, victimisation and bullying. It also explains how members can seek support or make a complaint.



Giving back

Once you've spent some time in the editorial community, you might want to give something back.

Sharing content

Lots of editors choose to share their experiences and wisdom via blogs on their own websites, or by blogging for others (for example the **CIEP blog**). Some editors try their hand at podcasting, or offer bite-sized video content on platforms such as LinkedIn. This type of content might be conceived as part of a marketing strategy to attract clients, but it also makes a huge contribution to the global editing community. Shared knowledge makes us all stronger. If you don't feel confident creating content for yourself, start by sharing useful resources created by other editors.

Training

A common career path in editing is to move into training alongside your editorial practice, whether it's training you design yourself from scratch, or training that you carry out on behalf an editorial association such as the CIEP. Training newer entrants to the profession is a rewarding way of strengthening your ties to the community, while maintaining your own professional development and relevance.

Offering advice in forums

Move beyond asking questions in shared editorial spaces – start answering them. Experienced editors taking the time to share what they know with others is part of what makes our community so special. We all have our own specialisms and areas where we can offer a unique answer or perspective.

Getting involved

The CIEP often advertises opportunities to get involved. Some positions are paid, while others are voluntary. All will give you a new insight into the workings of the wider editorial community, with the chance to make new friends and learn new skills.

Resources

Editorial associations

ACES: The Society for Editing: aceseditors.org

Association of Freelance Editors, Proofreaders and Indexers of Ireland (AFEPI): afepi-ireland.com

Chartered Institute of Editing and Proofreading (CIEP): ciep.uk

Council of Science Editors (CSE): councilscienceeditors.org

Editorial Freelancers Association (EFA): the-efa.org

Editors Canada: editors.ca

European Association of Science Editors (EASE): ease.org.uk

International Society of Managing and Technical Editors (ISMTE): ismte.org

Mediterranean Editors and Translators (MET): metmeetings.org

Professional Editors' Guild: editors.org.za

Society for Advancing Business Editing and Writing (SABEW): sabew.org

Society of English-language professionals in the Netherlands (SENSE): sense-online.nl

Society of Writers, Editors, and Translators (SWET): swet.jp

CIEP social media

Facebook: <http://facebook.com/EditProof>

LinkedIn: <http://linkedin.com/school/the-ciep>

Twitter: twitter.com/The_CIEP

CIEP forums and training

Forums: forums.ciep.uk

Training: ciep.uk/training

Written by the CIEP information team

The Chartered Institute of Editing and Proofreading (CIEP) is a non-profit body promoting excellence in English-language editing. We set and demonstrate editorial standards, and we are a community, training hub and support network for editorial professionals – the people who work to make text accurate, clear and fit for purpose.



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