

Careers in Book Publishing

What does publishing look like?/What positions are available?

There a vast number of positions found at publishers whose titles vary from location to location, however they can all be assumed to fulfill a purpose within one of the following functions:

Acquisition: They select the authors/manuscripts that are believed to succeed, create a contract to acquire the rights to publish, and take the author through that contract.

Planning: They plan what needs to be done to get the manuscript from draft to finished book.

Editing: They evaluate manuscripts, revise written material with the writer, and prepare the manuscript for the production staff.

Designing: They choose a type face that fits the subject, design the appropriate book jacket, and format the book focusing on ease of reading.

Art Directing: For illustrations in the text and also can be used for the interior and exterior book jacket art.

Copyediting: They do the fact-checking and proofread for spelling, grammar, and punctuation mistakes.

Production Management: They decide the page-layout of the book, what printer would do a good job within the budget, how to source paper and other materials, and they oversee the actual production process.

Distribution: They connect the book with online stores, warehouses, wholesalers and bookstore chains. (This is often the biggest challenge for authors who choose to self-publish).

Selling: They inform consumers, bookstores, libraries, and schools about new books. This can be done through sending out catalogs or in presentations with booksellers or library acquisition committees.

Marketing/Promoting: They send out review copies, create promotional items, send out posts on social media, and book authors on tours.

Note: Outside of publishers, there are also literary agencies.

Literary Agents are typically hired by authors to help them present their ideas and finished manuscript to interested publishers, and also to help the author understand the clauses within the publishing contract. Many literary agents will provide their initial services for free, but will require a certain percentage based on the contract their client would sign with the publishing house.

Popular Publishing Companies: “The Big Five”

“The Big Five” is the nickname for the major trade book publishing companies (all of which are located in New York City). These include:

Hachette Book Group

HarperCollins

MacMillan Publishers

Penguin Random House

Simon and Schuster

Each of “The Big Five” have multiple divisions or imprints (ex. Doubleday is an imprint of Penguin Random House). Imprints of a larger publishing company may focus on a specific genre (ex. nonfiction) or specific format of books (ex. hardcover).

Although these are the most popular publishing conglomerates, there are plenty of other publishers out there, and self-publishing has also become more common in recent years.

Useful Resources

www.bookjobs.com

-Offers book publishing-related job and internship listings, recruitment events, publisher profiles, publishing programs, publishing organizations, and more!

<https://www.bustle.com/articles/33160-how-to-get-a-job-in-book-publishing>

-Further details working in the publishing industry and how to do so.

www.mediabistro.com

-Offers resources such as a job finder, online training courses, and career advice for media professionals.

www.ed2010.com

-A networking and mentoring organization that helps young editors and writers break into relevant industries. Also has job listings.

www.youngtopublishing.com

-An organization designed to give junior employees in the publishing industry opportunities to build a community outside of their own publishing houses and to educate themselves about the industry.

www.nyu.edu/summer/housing/

-Much of the book publishing world is located in Manhattan, and Manhattan is expensive! Luckily, NYU offers their residence halls to interns during the summer for *relatively* inexpensive rates. Learn more here.