20th Annual Freelance Workshop (Virtual)

Tips and Tools for Spring Cleaning and Expanding your Freelance Business

Usable Tips and Networking for Seasoned, New, and Aspiring Freelance Medical Writers

Saturday, March 12, 2022

Virtual Workshop 12:30 PM – 3:45 PM EST
**Program**

12:30 – 12:35 PM – **Welcome and introductions** – Helen Fosam / Kathy Molnar-Kimber

12:35 – 12:45 PM – **Introductions from the Chapter President** – Dan Benau

12:45 – 1:30 PM – **Keynote: Brian Bass** "Pivoting to Thrive in Your Freelance Medical Writing/Editing Business"

1:35 – 2:20 PM – **Roundtable Session A** (virtual breakout rooms)

2:20 – 2:30 PM – **Break**

2:30 – 2:45 PM – **Atiba Page** "An Introduction to Why Diversity and Inclusion Matters in Medical Writing/Editing"

2:45 – 3:30 PM – **Roundtable Session B** (virtual breakout rooms)

3:30 – 3:45 PM – **Wrap-up**

**Workshop Registration**

Visit the [registration page](#).

Please select one roundtable option from session A and one from session B.

The plenary sessions but not the roundtables will be recorded and made available to registrants.

**Registration Cost**

We are pleased to offer a conference registration fee that is unchanged from 2019!

AMWA Members: **$20**

Non-members: **$30**

Students: **Free**

**Questions?**

Send us an email at freelanceworkshop@amwa-dvc.org.
Speakers

Keynote

*Pivoting to Thrive in Your Freelance Medical Writing/Editing Business.*
12:45 – 1:30 PM.


When confronted with a challenge, what do you do? Some freelancers run and hide. Others stay the course. Successful freelancers pivot. Behind every challenge is an opportunity waiting to be discovered. Pivoting provides the fresh perspective you need to see those opportunities and pursue them. In his keynote address, Brian will share some of the most memorable challenges he's encountered over more than 3 decades of freelancing, and how pivoting has made all the difference in his career and business.

An Introduction to Why Diversity and Inclusion Matters in Medical Writing/Editing

2:30 – 2:45 PM

**Atiba Page:** Manager, Talent Acquisition Diversity & Inclusion, Global People & Business Resource Group Recruitment co-lead at Bristol Myers Squibb. Former recruitment consultant at Sanofi and Johnson & Johnson.

Diversity and inclusion (D&I) is simply a commitment to building an inclusive environment that is representative of and welcoming to people of all backgrounds. Medical writers are involved in developing content across a broad spectrum, from content for planning clinical trials and FDA regulatory documents to physician continuing education and patient education materials. An awareness of D&I by medical writers is important for representation and healthcare equity.
Roundtable Breakout Sessions

Choose 2 roundtables on the registration page, one for the Session A breakout and one for Session B.

1:35 – 2:20 PM Roundtable Session A breakout (virtual breakout rooms)
2:45 – 3:30 PM Roundtable Session B breakout (virtual breakout rooms)

Roundtable Options

1. **Fact Checking and Annotating for Medical-Legal Review (MLR)** *(Melissa Bogen)*

   Referencing is an integral part of the document development process. Medical writers need to reference every statement containing data or a fact. In addition, they need to mark up (annotate) the reference so fact checkers and reviewers can confirm the document is accurate.

   Melissa will explain what's entailed in fact checking and annotating references for MLR, focusing on how editors should check annotations, but also providing guidance on how writers should prepare annotations. Learn best practice guidelines that writers and editors can use.

   By the end of the roundtable, attendees will be able to:
   - Describe how to ensure accuracy of document claims
   - Annotate claims
   - Highlight reference PDFs to support the claims

2. **To Be More Efficient and Consistent, Build a Better Checklist** *(Kelly Schrank, MA, ELS, Head Bookworm, Bookworm Editing Services LLC)*

   Come to this roundtable to learn how using a comprehensive checklist created and updated for a specific task can help you:
   - Differentiate workflows, systems, and activities;
   - Increase quality, accuracy, and consistency;
   - Spell out details needed at the moment you need them, track your progress, document metrics, and give you a sense of completion and peace of mind.

   Samples of checklists for editing manuscripts, dossiers, and slide decks; completing business tasks; and writing projects will be shared. Bring your own checklists and/or ideas for tasks where you need help, and we'll brainstorm together how to make you more efficient and productive.
3. **Insights on Where Medical Communication Companies Search for Freelance or Contract Medical Writers and Editors and Commonly Desired Characteristics**

(Katherine Molnar-Kimber, PhD, Kimnar Group LLC)

Ever wonder where medical communication and medical education companies search for freelance medical writers and editors to hire for a project? What characteristics do they seek (and look for)? Wondering what to include or not include on your website and AMWA Freelance Directory listing? This interactive roundtable will discuss their searching strategies, expectations of freelancers, and more. Audience will also have the opportunity to ask general questions.

After the roundtable, attendees will be:

- Cognizant of different platforms or strategies used for searching for competent freelancers,
- More aware of the characteristics sought by medical communication and education companies for hiring (tips on what to include in Freelance Directory and website),
- Enlightened about varied responsibilities of hired freelancers,
- Cognizant on how freelancers’ actions influence the chances of receiving subsequent projects.

4. **How to Set and Achieve Goals for Freelance Success**

(Lori De Milto, MJ, Freelance medical writer and founder, The Mighty Marketer)

Create the future you want for your freelance business with SMART goals. This interactive roundtable will help you use goals to get past the many distractions all freelancers face and focus on what’s most important. We’ll cover how to make big goals less intimidating, including by using the secret to Jerry Seinfeld’s success and other easy ways to achieve your goals.

Learn how to:

- Set SMART goals for freelance success
- Use mini-goals and actions to make big goals less intimidating
- Make steady progress toward your goals with consistent action
- Get back on track when you fall behind.

Come prepared to share your experiences with goals—good and bad.
5. **Examining Transferable Skillsets for Medical Writing** *(Darryl Z. L'Heureux, PhD, MSc, MS Pharm QARA)*

Certain keywords appear in almost every job posting and relate to abstract skills such as communication, multitasking, teamwork, creativity, critical thinking, and leadership. These keywords are not a secret language, but rather transferable skills that enable you to do your job well. In this roundtable, we will break down transferable skills found in scientific writing and medical communication so you can achieve these objectives:

- Identify different primary communication skills
- Explore problem-solving and creativity found in our daily activities
- Discuss better time management and organization
- Explore leadership and teamwork opportunities in your projects

6. **How Medical Writers/Editors Can Incorporate D&I In Their Projects** *(Atiba Page)*

Medical writers/editors are involved in developing content across a broad spectrum, from content for planning clinical trials and FDA regulatory documents to physician continuing education and patient education materials. An awareness of D&I by medical writers/editors is important for representation and healthcare equity.

At this roundtable, we will focus on

- An understanding of what D&I is and is not
- Why D&I matters for medical writers/editors
- Things to consider when creating documents
- Ways to incorporate D&I in your writing and editing projects

**Workshops 7-9 focus on transitioning into the field of medical writing from various backgrounds. Participants will also discover how AMWA membership can help you determine if medical writing is right for you.**

7. **Transitioning to Medical Writing From a Science Background** *(Ruwaida Vakil, MSc)*

At this roundtable session, we will discuss opportunities in medical writing if you have a science background. The discussion will focus on how to do the following:

- Is medical writing right for you?
- Use your current experiences to transition into medical writing
- Develop a portfolio of writing samples

This is an opportunity to ask questions and get answers. Participants who have already transitioned into medical writing from a science background will be encouraged to share their experiences.
8. **Transitioning to Medical Writing From a Journalism Background** *(Linda Felcone)*

This roundtable will be specific to building on past writing and editing experience to transition into medical writing and bring your particular expertise to the medical documentation table. (Examples of other humanities backgrounds besides journalism include language arts, journalism, report writing, editing, and teaching. Topics will include the following:

- Presenting writing samples
- Document management (e.g. version control)
- Getting up to speed on the subject matter--depth of knowledge needed (Hint: everything is reviewed and revised multiple times)
- Brushing up on grammar, style, and rhetoric via AMWA
- Gaining technical precision through intellectual curiosity

9. **Transitioning to Medical Writing From a Clinical Background** *(Morgan Leafe, MD)*

This roundtable session will discuss opportunities in medical writing if you are transitioning from a medical background.

We will discuss how to:

- Determine whether medical writing is right for you
- Leverage your experiences
- Develop a portfolio of writing samples

Participants who have already transitioned into medical writing from a medical background will be encouraged to share their experiences.
Biosketches

Brian Bass, MWC, is an award-winning freelance medical writer and an avid speaker and presenter on the business of freelancing. He is President of Bass Global, Inc., which was founded in 1989 and provides medical writing solutions in the areas of pharmaceuticals, biotechnology, devices, and diagnostics for healthcare professional, consumer, and business audiences in a wide range of therapeutic areas and media. Brian is also co-author of The Accidental Medical Writer® series of books, resources, information, and inspiration for freelance medical writers.

Brian is a Fellow and Past President of The American Medical Writers Association (AMWA), and recipient of the 2017 Harold Swanberg Distinguished Service Award for his contribution to the field of medical communications. Brian has served AMWA’s Executive Committee as President Elect, President, Immediate Past President, Administrator of the Annual Conference, and in development and publicity capacities. He Chaired the AMWA Communications Committee from 2017-2020, and he is currently an At-Large member of the AMWA Board of Directors, Chair of the Medical Writing Certification Commission, and a member of the AMWA Value of Medical Writing Working Group. In addition, Brian has served as President of the AMWA-Delaware Valley Chapter (AMWA-DVC), and as Chair of the chapter’s Programming and Publicity Committees. He founded and chaired the AMWA-DVC Princeton Conference for 16 years.

Melissa Bogen has been a full-time freelance editor since 1997. Her expertise is in editing, fact checking, and proofreading medical manuscripts, pharmaceutical sales training materials, and multimedia programs for healthcare professionals in a wide range of therapeutic areas. Melissa has in-depth knowledge of AMA style, FDA guidelines, & editorial production processes. Since 2006, she has regularly presented at local and national AMWA conferences on the scope of medical editing, Microsoft Word Tips and Tricks, the differences between editing and proofreading, and fact checking and annotating for MLR review.

Lori De Milto, MJ, is a freelance medical writer who has been helping clients attract, engage, and motivate audiences through targeted medical content since 1997. A fellow of the American Medical Writers Association (AMWA), Lori frequently presents on marketing and running a successful freelance business. Recent AMWA presentations include 10 steps to freelance success, 5 habits of successful freelancers, 3 Easy Steps to Get More Freelance Clients on LinkedIn, and virtual networking.

Along with freelancing, Lori helps other freelancers get the steady, high-paying clients they deserve through The Freelance Marketing Blog and an online course. Both are part of Lori’s Mighty Marketer website. She has a BA and MJ in Journalism from Temple University.
Linda Felcone made her living for 30 years as a medical writer--starting with editorial work for a continuing education journal for dentists and ending with regulatory writing. A former English/Writing teacher and part-time news reporter, she liked to write. She began writing small pieces for the journals she edited on subjects that interested her like HIV and pain management. Once she had a portfolio of articles--medical and non-medical--she became curious about how drugs are developed. After attending a conference on New Drug Applications sponsored by the FDA, she started writing on drug safety and specialized in drug labeling, drug applications, and medical affairs then did the same type of writing as a work-from-home consultant.

Helen Fosam, PhD, is a freelance medical writer and owner of The Edge Medical Writing, LLC. Medical writing for medical education brings together Helen's interest in the sciences, medicine, and communication. Helen applies her 20 years of medical writing experience to help address key needs for content development, including well-written needs assessments, slides, abstracts, manuscripts, or conference reports. Helen's reputation for professionalism and efficiency, with a commitment to deliver high quality work to strict deadline and budget, provides seamless extension to writing teams in the pharmaceutical, biotechnology, and medical communication industry sectors to meet looming deadlines. Helen is co-chair of the 2022 AMWA-DVC Freelance Workshop and the Founder of the Missing Link to Improved Health Outcomes (MiLHO) Initiative, focused on creating online CME courses for healthcare professionals in Africa.

Darryl Z. L’Heureux, PhD, MSc, MS Pharm QARA, is the Director Clinical Science, Medical Writing, and Publications at Ambrx Biopharmaceuticals. As an active member of the medical writing community, he is a former President of AMWA-DVC and has chaired/spoken at multiple medical communication and scientific writing conferences (AMWA-DVC Princeton Conference, DIA Annual Meeting, etc). He also is the principal of MedSciTech Writing, LLC. As Co-director of Scientific Writing in the Professional Science Master's program at Temple University, he lectures on regulatory writing, publications, grant writing, and writing for non-scientists.

Morgan Leafe, MD, MHA, is double board-certified physician, medical writer, editor, and copywriter. She runs her own successful freelancing business offering an array of services including medical education, patient education, executive resume writing, journalism, copywriting, and board review. Morgan also offers career counseling to physicians interested in transitioning to the medical writing field.
**Katherine Molnar-Kimber, PhD**, is an independent scientific and medical writer and consultant. She began her career as a scientist and pursued basic science, translational and medical research (20+ years in university and pharmaceutical industry, 50+ scientific articles). She uses her experience as a reviewer, speaker, award-winning scientist (best poster), and corresponding author to write or substantively edit research papers, reviews, grant proposals, slide sets, and CME programs on scientific and medical topics. She enjoys volunteering with AMWA as the Editor of the Delawriter, and the Past President of the AMWA-DVC. She has presented at AMWA Chapter and AMWA National conferences and ISMPP national meetings on Efficiently Writing Publications, Responding to Editors and Peer-Reviewers, Nurturing Clients into Long-Term Relationships, Basics for Writing CME documents, and more. She is the President of KMK Consulting Services of Kimnar Group LLC (Worcester, PA).

**Atiba Page**, is a magnetic and energetic business agent who is highly sought after by entrepreneurs, small business owners, Fortune 500 companies and community leaders who want to create healthy disruptions!

Currently Atiba & her smile are developing and facilitating disruptive & innovative diversity & inclusion programs and activities within the global market for Bristol Myers Squibb. Her passion for identifying, building, and celebrating the potential she sees in others helped her plant the seed for Brown Gyrlz Enterprise, and that seed blossomed on May 1, 2016. Brown Gyrlz Enterprise was created to help freethinkers design their individual “yellow brick road” to success! Atiba is ready to empower, inspire, and motivate the leader in YOU!

Diagnosed with Stage IV breast cancer in February 2019, Atiba has had over 100 doctor visits, 6 rounds of chemotherapy, over 30 rounds of radiation treatments, a single right mastectomy, and gamma knife & MRI thermal ablation brain surgery, within 2 years. Atiba is thrilled to report she has received NO EVIDENCE OF DISEASE (NED) from her oncology team in May 2020, October 2020, April 2021, & October 2021!

Atiba enjoys lending her brand power as a messenger within many different organizations for Black & Brown women across the globe. Her new foundation Khronic Kutie’s was created to provide spiritual, mental, physical, and financial assistance to Khronic Illness Kutie’s of all ages across the globe!

Are you ready for me?!
Kelly Schrank, MA, ELS, has been a medical editor for over 10 years. Through her business, Bookworm Editing Services, she brings consistency, structure, and clarity to her clients' content whether editing manuscripts, formulary dossiers, proposals, slide decks, or training materials. Kelly is BELS-certified Editor in the Life Sciences and has presented on editing, checklists, Microsoft Word and PowerPoint, side gigs, and networking in webinars and conferences for AIIP, AMWA, and STC.

Ruwaida Vakil, MSc, is a consultant, speaker, and medical writer with expertise in medical communications. For the past 21 years, she has designed and developed a wide range of educational programs for healthcare professionals. Ruwaida is a former benchtop scientist with an MSc in Immunology from the University of Toronto and the Ontario Cancer Institute. She has served as the Secretary and the Freelance Workshop Chair for AMWA-DVC and is currently the Section Editor for the Freelance Forum section of the AMWA Journal. She has presented at the conferences of AMWA and the Alliance for Continuing Education in the Health Professions (ACEHP). She co-authored an award-winning poster on Best Practices for Writing CME Needs Assessments. The poster received the People's Choice award from the ACEHP. In addition, she has presented in-person and virtually to global publication leaders in the pharmaceutical industry.

AMWA-DVC greatly appreciates the time and effort of the Freelance Workshop organizers and volunteers:

Program Committee
Helen Fosam (co-chair)
Katherine Molnar-Kimber (co-chair)
Yule Lee
Linda Felcone
Kelleen Flaherty