
Contributing to the CSCCE blog

Guidelines, expectations, and tips

We're excited to help you to share your ideas in a post on the CSCCE blog. The blog is the largest freely available resource of scientific community management content online and we welcome your input to this growing body of knowledge. This document outlines a few general guidelines for your post, plus some tips to help you to get started. We're here to help, so whether you're a blogging novice or an experienced writer, please don't hesitate to get in touch to discuss your ideas.

Guidelines and Expectations

1. Posts are typically 500-1000 words in length

- If you think your topic or idea would lend itself better to a longer piece or series of pieces (such as Andy Leidolf's "[Community Manager's Survival Guide](#)"), please talk to us about other possibilities. See our [blogs style guide](#) for more on formatting.

2. You can write about anything related to being a scientific community manager

- E.g., What you learned during the CEFPP training, a current project that you're working on, a trend or skill that you'd like to share, or a problem that you've overcome or are working through.
- Past posts have included tips for supporting diversity, equity, and inclusion (<https://www.cscce.org/category/diversity/>), time management challenges (<https://www.cscce.org/category/being-a-community-manager/time-management/>), and planning successful events (<https://www.cscce.org/category/events/organizing-events/>).

3. Bio

Please provide a 2-3 sentence bio along with your draft, including your name, current title / role, and very brief description of your organization and project.

E.g., Lou Woodley is Director of the Center for Scientific Collaboration and Community Engagement (CSCCE), and Program Director for the Center's flagship training fellowship, the CSCCE Community Engagement Fellows Program (CEFP). She works to support and research the role of individuals who build scientific communities and collaborations – community engagement managers.

4. Image credits

Please also provide one or two images to support and/or enhance your post, as well as the proper source credits for those images. These must be pictures that you have permission to use – which might include Creative Commons-licensed photos from places like:

<https://www.pexels.com>

5. Co-authoring

You're welcome to work in collaboration with others for guest blog post contributions – indeed we've seen collaborations between groups of Fellows as well as event-organizers. If you would like to work with someone else, we expect you to manage that collaboration yourselves. You are free to choose whatever process and format works best for the members of your collaboration, but you are still expected to adhere to the timeline you and the blog editor discuss regardless of the number of authors.

6. Timeline / Process - what to expect

You and the blog editor will discuss an appropriate timeline for your piece based on our editorial calendar and your own commitments and availability. In general, the process usually takes around **2 weeks**, including a light edit, and looks something like:

- Guest and Editor confirm topic and desired publishing date
- Editor sends instructions doc and iterate on topic / plan for the post
- Guest writes post
- Guest submits post for edits
- Editor sends feedback and any requests for clarification to Guest
- Editor and Guest agree on a final version
- Editor preps and publishes post
- Editor and Guest share on social media and through CSCCE communications channels

In certain instances, we may seek guest posts on a particular topic or to round out a series of posts. This process may differ slightly from the one outlined above.

7. Guidelines for contributions to CSCCE community resources

By publishing on the CSCCE blog you agree to abide by our [publication guidelines](#). We suggest you read through them to find out more about our policies, particularly in terms of crediting the work of others.

Tips

1. Identify your goals – and how they relate to your audience

Before you start writing, it's crucial to think through what you're hoping to communicate and how this relates to the audience for the blog. Are you hoping to share tips that others will be able to use in their own work, highlight a project that you would like others to contribute to, or start a discussion about a topic that you think needs further debate?

2. Think about structure – and how to keep the reader engaged

Now you can start thinking about how you're going to structure your post – how will you lead the reader through the points that you want to make? Think about the bare minimum your reader would need in order to follow your argument and internalize your key takeaways. You can do this in a number of ways:

- break your article into a list of bullet points
- map out the flow of your piece by working backwards from the “punchline”
- try summarizing your key takeaways in a tweet
- read your piece to a friend and notice at what point they begin to lose focus

These are all techniques that can help you understand what needs to stay and what can go.

3. Choose some accessories

Pictures, quotes, and testimonials can add interest, context, and draw more readers to your piece. These “accessories” should always be in service of the content, not a distraction. For example, ask yourself “*what photo would reinforce the main point I'm trying to make here?*” or “*whose quote would lend credibility to my argument?*”

4. Limit yourself to a small number of big takeaways per post

More than that and you can start to lose the reader. For example, if you're presenting survey results, are there couple of overall findings or recommendations that you would want the reader to remember? Or if you're sharing tips about organizing an event, maybe you could break them down into before, during and after the event sections? If an engaged reader can't summarize your piece on the elevator ride up to their office, you've bitten off too much!

5. End with a call to action

This is all about helping your audience turn your ideas into actions in their own lives. After they're finished reading, what do you want your reader to *do*? E.g., You could add a question or two to help the reader to relate what they've read to their own community or project, or add links to further reading so that they can explore the topic in more detail, or add a link to sign up to participate in a survey for which you've just described the rationale.

Citing and reusing this document

CITATION AND REUSE

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