

PRESS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

National Indexing Day hits the North

Thursday 28 March 2019

The Society of Indexers is celebrating the third National Indexing Day on Thursday 28 March 2019 with a half-day conference about book indexing at the International Anthony Burgess Foundation in Manchester. This event is designed for editors commissioning indexes, or for other interested publishing professionals, with a focus on how indexers work and how they can add value to any non-fiction book.

National Indexing Day (NID) was established on 30 March 2017 to commemorate the diamond anniversary of the founding of the Society of Indexers. In 2017 celebrations took place both online and in the media, including articles by Sam Leith in *The Guardian* and Dennis Duncan in the *Times Literary Supplement (TLS)*. Indexers, authors and publishers joined in enthusiastically on social media to salute these 'unsung heroes of the publishing world', in Sam Leith's words. In March 2018 the Society of Indexers held a successful event in London for publishers interested in learning more about indexing, which was attended by editors and project managers from many leading academic and trade publishers. This year, the NID hits the North.

A good index is a vital component of a non-fiction book, providing a structured map to its content. Poor or absent book indexes are frustrating for readers, reviewers and students, as regularly remarked upon in book reviews and on social media. Indexes are still important for ebooks in the digital age. Dedicated indexing software can automate certain tasks, but a human indexer is needed for the intellectual work. Computers can't read like a human, so they can't index like one. A Ctrl-F search is not a magic solution. It does not distinguish between significant information and passing mentions, suggest synonymous access points unmentioned in the text, highlight connections between concepts, or show the relative content and coverage of topics. Professional book indexers are trained to address these issues and to look at each text from the readers' perspectives. With newer embedded indexing techniques, index entries can be anchored and linked to their precise location in the text, so that the same index can work across different formats and with reflowable text in ebooks. Today's professional indexers have both the know-how and the technology to achieve this, but it is often underused.

For National Indexing Day 2019, the Society of Indexers is running a half-day event in Manchester. Aimed at interested publishing professionals, this will be held at the International Anthony Burgess Foundation, 3 Cambridge Street, from 12 noon to 4:30 pm on 28 March. Following a welcome from our honorary president, Sam Leith, a series of presentations will focus on current indexing practices, how to evaluate good and bad indexes, and digital developments regarding embedded and linked indexes for ebooks. There will be an 'ask the indexers' Q&A panel session and break times for publishers and indexers to meet and mingle. The event will provide a useful opportunity for indexers and publishers to learn from each other so that together we can create better indexes and make non-fiction books more valuable and saleable.

Tickets and a provisional programme are available now at: www.indexers.org.uk/events/national-indexing-day-2019. The ticket price of £30 includes all sessions, lunch and afternoon refreshments. We look forward to another successful National Indexing Day 2019 online at #indexday and live in Manchester.

Further information

For further information, please email publicity@indexers.org.uk or follow us on Twitter @indexers.

The Society of Indexers, based in Sheffield, was established in 1957 to promote improved standards in all forms of indexing. It is the only autonomous professional body for indexers in the United Kingdom and Ireland and is associated with other indexing organisations around the world. Membership includes around 350 specialist indexers across the UK, working in more than a hundred different subjects, from accountancy to zoology. The Society maintains an online Directory of Professional Indexers, which is searchable by subjects, skills and media. Further information can be found on its website: www.indexers.org.uk