

Guest Blogger guidelines

Blogging is a great way to reach beyond the traditional audience for academic work to share research findings with the public, key community stakeholders, or across academic disciplines.

If you are interested in writing a post for the Bristol University Press/ Policy Press blog please start by emailing your story pitch in 50 – 100 words to our blog editor Jessica Miles – Jessica.Miles@bristol.ac.uk.

The [Bristol University Press/ Policy Press blog](#) is a place to share news and research related to the books and journals that we publish, the causes that we support and insight into not-for-profit, academic publishing.

Here are some ideas to help you craft your pitch...

What's your angle?

Newsworthy

- Do you have an original or alternative way of looking at a news item or current debate? A good example of this is David Hunter's [An unhappy NHS: Taking the long view](#) This post brought together his expertise directly with an important news item and we were able to reach a wider audience for his book through the post via a number Twitter hashtags that were already running

Get opinionated!

- One of the wonderful things about blogging as opposed to standard academic writing is that it gives you the freedom to say what you think about a particular issue. This is your platform to express passionately and personally WHY you think your topic matters.

Tell us YOUR story

- People are interested in people! One way to bring to life a story you want to tell about your research is to talk about your personal experience of research or area, what attracted you to focus on this particular topic.
- Alternatively if there are interesting case studies you can highlight from the work that also can help to bring to life a story for someone else.

Think Social!

- What question are you answering in writing your post? Using a question, statement or a list is a really good way to keep your post tight and can even be used as a title – questions or 5 things you never knew about....are brilliant hooks to bring people into your blog especially from social media

- What other blogsites might be interested in your post? Let us know the names of the sites and/or any contacts you have and we'll get in touch with them with a reblog offer!
- What people/groups on Twitter would be interested in what you are writing about? Let us know their Twitter handles and we can tweet your blog directly at them.
- A really good example of this is [Why Race Policy must include Multiracial Americans](#) By tweeting directly at the right people/organisations we generated requests for copies of Kathleen Odell Korgen's book and by contacting other blog sites we were able to make sure her content reached a wider and different audience than just Policy Press blog readers. It really works!!

Do's and Don'ts

- Do think about what the key message is in your research, and why it matters. Make sure your blog focuses on this!
- Do write about your subject as though you are talking to an interested lay person. Our readership is broad and to get the most hits on a blog you need to think about talking to the everyperson rather than to people just within your field (which is more relevant for a journal for example)
- Don't write an essay – people have short attention spans and this is especially true when reading anything online. Get to the point quickly and keep your arguments and sentences succinct. Our upper word limit is 700 words for a post. This is for good reason, as many people click onto a link but bounce straight back out again if they see reams and reams of endless text.
- Do not include direct references to the book in the piece itself ('My book includes...', 'In chapter 8 where I cover...'. Books will be referenced and linked to at the header and footer of the piece.
- Do use photographs and pictures to illustrate your story
- Use acronyms and specialised words with caution, always write them out in full to begin with followed by bracketed acronym – e.g. Social Policy Association (SPA). If you have to use technical terminology, make sure you explain it in such a way that it will make sense to a lay readership.
- Do use links within your blog to relevant material
- Always think, 'what question am I answering?' when you write your post.

Remember a key part of writing a blog is to help your book or journal article reach the widest possible audience. All of these tips and guidelines are here to help us do just that!

General Admin - Blogs should be:

- 300 – 700 words in length
- Accompanied by a head and shoulders high-resolution image of the blogger
- Plus any other supporting images – people and items of interest
- Please provide your twitter handle so we can include it in the post

Editorial

- We aim to publish three blogs a week and schedule blogs 4 – 6 weeks in advance
- Your copy and photo is required at a minimum 7 days prior to publication

- The publication date of your blog may change if a news-related event that we need to respond to emerges. We will endeavour to reschedule your post as soon as possible afterwards
- Editorial reserve the right to make changes to your post. We will gain sign-off for any changes from you prior to publication.
- Editorial reserve the right not to use content if it is unsuitable. We will endeavour to work with you in the first instance to discuss with you any issues that have arisen and to give you the opportunity to make changes where possible.

Thanks for taking the time to read through these guidelines. If you have any questions or are unclear on anything in this document please do not hesitate to get in touch with our blog editor Jessica Miles via phone: 0117 954 5955 or email: Jessica.Miles@bristol.ac.uk.

Happy blogging!