

**PRESS RELEASE**  
**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**National Indexing Day**  
**Tuesday 31 March 2020**



The Society of Indexers is celebrating the fourth National Indexing Day on Tuesday 31 March 2020 with a half-day conference about book indexing at the Foundling Museum in London. 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 was established in 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, with indexers, authors and publishers joining in enthusiastically to salute these 'unsung heroes of the publishing world', in Sam Leith's words in *The Guardian*. The Society of Indexers held successful National Indexing Day publisher events in London in 2018 and in Manchester in 2019, which were attended by editors and project managers from many leading academic and trade publishers. This year, the main National Indexing Day event returns to London.

Every non-fiction book deserves a good index. An index provides a structured map to the contents of a book and is a vital navigational tool. Readers get frustrated by poor or absent indexes, as frequently commented on in reviews and on social media. Many people never consider how an index is created, or think it is all done by computers, but good book indexes are made neither by magic nor machine. Indexing software can automate certain tasks but only a human indexer can do the close intellectual work and consider the text from the reader's perspective. In the digital age, indexes should still be a vital part of ebooks. A Ctrl-F search is not a full solution, as it does not distinguish between significant discussion and passing mentions, suggest synonymous access points, show the coverage of topics, or highlight connections between concepts. Newer embedded indexing techniques allow the indexer to anchor and link index entries to their precise location in the text. This means that an active hyperlinked index can work across varied formats and with reflowable text in ebooks, where traditional page numbers may no longer apply. Today's professional book indexer has the skills, technology and training to address all of these issues.

For National Indexing Day 2020, the Society of Indexers is running a half-day event at the Foundling Museum, Brunswick Square, London, from 12 noon to 4pm on 31 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-2020/](http://www.indexers.org.uk/events/national-indexing-day-2020/). The ticket price of £40 includes all sessions, lunch and afternoon refreshments. We look forward to another successful National Indexing Day online at #indexday and live in London.

### **Further information**

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. 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.

For further information, please email [publicity@indexers.org.uk](mailto:publicity@indexers.org.uk), see the website [www.indexers.org.uk](http://www.indexers.org.uk) or follow @indexers on Twitter.