



Audio Transcript

Sally Collins Pitching To Publishers

Welcome To The Course

Hi, welcome to the Pitching to Publishers online course, presented by The Australian Writer's Marketplace. I'm Sally Collins, and I'll be taking you through this course. At the end of it, I hope you will walk away with a clear understanding of how best to present your book to publishers, and with some great tools and strategies for pitching your book idea or manuscript.

First up, let me introduce myself. I'm an author, an editor and a publishing consultant, and I've worked in trade book publishing for more than 20 years, in Sydney, London, Brisbane and most recently the United States. I've commissioned and produced books for companies including HarperCollins, Random House, UQP, and St Martin's Press. In that time I've seen thousands of proposals, manuscripts and submissions, in all shapes and sizes. I've worked with literary agents and dealt directly with first-time authors, as well as long-established writers who know the ropes.

As a publisher and editor, I've helped create around 400 individual books, ranging from memoirs and narrative non-fiction through to business and self-help. As a writer I focus on non-fiction, but I've helped fiction writers get their work published too – both with traditional publishers and through independent paths.

As an author, I've written five books with my name on the front cover; the first, *Sophie's Journey*, was an immediate bestseller. I've contributed as co-writer, ghostwriter

or writing partner on a dozen or so other books, including award-winners, covering all kinds of subjects from surrogacy and autism to brain surgeons and media dynasties.

These days I live in California, where I work directly with many of the leading US publishers and literary agents. The thing I love doing most is writing book proposals – which is something a lot of people view with dread, so I hope I can help you to dive in and enjoy writing your book proposal too.

Through the years I've had authors plead with me to publish their book, threaten me that I'll regret it if I don't – and the occasional bribe, mostly amounting to bars of chocolate. None of that has made any difference to my publishing decisions. Except the chocolate.

One of the great things about publishing is that no two books are the same, no two authors are the same, and no two proposals are the same. If nothing else, I hope this course helps you to find and define your own style and flavour – as a writer and as a person seeking publication. You need to stand out from the pack (in a good way!) and the surest way to do that is by being absolutely true to your vision for your book.

If you want to get your work published it's important also to understand things from the publisher's perspective, and that's something else I'll be helping you with.

Most authors work incredibly hard to create a manuscript that they think is worthy of publication. When it comes to pitching your book to publishers, I have to tell you that this isn't enough. You also need to have a fantastic pitch to present to publishers, which will catch their eye (or ear) and intrigue them enough so that they can't wait to read what you've written.

So let's find out how to do that.

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