

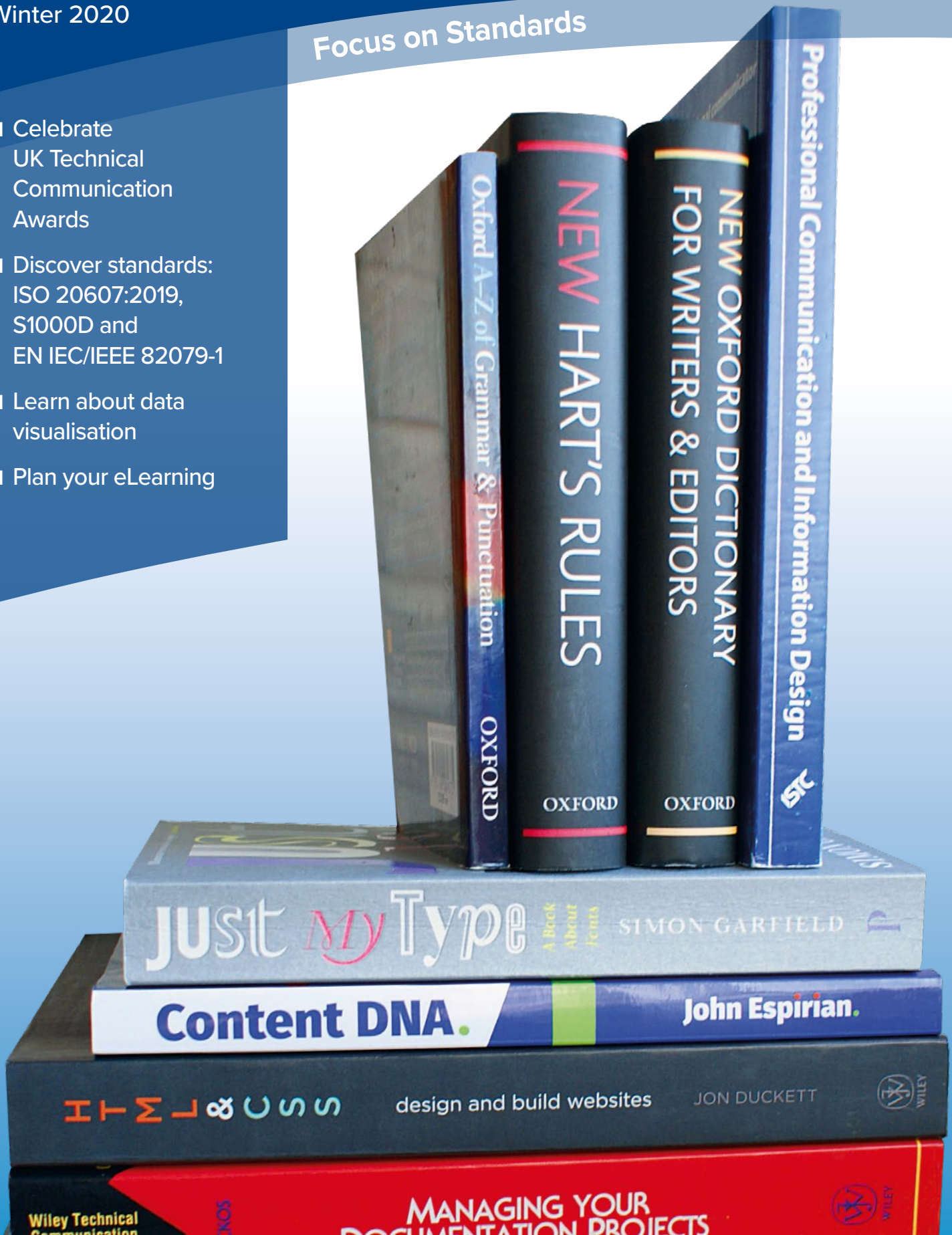
Communicator

The Institute of Scientific and Technical Communicators

Winter 2020

Focus on Standards

- Celebrate UK Technical Communication Awards
- Discover standards: ISO 20607:2019, S1000D and EN IEC/IEEE 82079-1
- Learn about data visualisation
- Plan your eLearning



President's View

Introducing the new President, Linda Robins.



Introduction

I am pleased to be writing my first President's view having picked up the baton from Carol Leahy. I'd like to thank Carol for her enthusiasm and encouragement, and look forward to continuing to work with her on the ISTC Council. My aims are to promote the ISTC as the home of technical communication professional by:

- Providing our members with a community and resources for continuing professional development.
- Attracting members from the new roles in technical communication.

I have gained a great deal from my ISTC membership throughout my career. I have been on the ISTC Council since 2006; my responsibilities have included: Membership, introduction of the Junior Member Mentoring Scheme, Resources and UK Technical Communication (UKTC) Awards. Through long involvement with the ISTC Council, I have a good awareness of the way the groups work and how improvements are made. I bring this knowledge to the role of President together with energy and enthusiasm for initiating and implementing change.

How to progress

The President is responsible for the management of the ISTC Council and its functions. I believe that the present structure and organisation are sound. There is a strong presence of expertise and experience; we also have new ISTC Council members with the prospect of more, all bringing fresh ideas and

eagerness. I am resolved to harness the strength of the ISTC Council in pursuit of my aims.

This is a critical time since we now need to publicise the value of membership of a professional body; it is not necessarily viewed as a career 'must'. Also the ISTC Council must reach out to a new wave of technical communicators engaged in newer roles such as information design and content management to ensure they know that we are there for them.

ISTC Council news

Many thanks to the members who have recently completed their terms on the ISTC Council: Alison Peck, Darren Mitcham, Derek Cooper and Ellis Pratt. We have all benefitted from their ideas, dedication and commitment. We welcomed four new members to the ISTC Council at our recent AGM: Andrew McFarland Campbell, Chris Knowles, James Bartley and Warren Singer.

We welcome prospective ISTC Council members to join an online ISTC Council meeting as observer to find out more about how we work. We also have opportunities for volunteers to join project teams or help with regular activities.

Changing times and methods

We are all adjusting to changing circumstances due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Our Horace Hockley Award recognised the importance of accurate and timely communication in this context. The award was presented to the Government Digital Services team for their commendable work in populating and maintaining the GOV.UK website with COVID-19-related regulations and guidance.

We have had to work differently and adapt to changes in our clients' ways of working. Those lone authors used to working from home have become 'dispensers of wisdom' to new arrivals to the regime. Productivity has increased in many cases without the distractions of the office environment. However, there are concerns about prolonged isolation to be managed. There are serious considerations in adjusting to and even establishing a new etiquette for online

meetings and to managing people remotely. New guidance is emerging from training providers for online learning. The ISTC Council are contributing here and will continue to do so.

I have encountered one potential issue that has been exacerbated by remote working: How do we manage meetings and discussions such that all participants can speak without interruption? In online sessions, the usual cues may not be available, and specific protocols can act against smooth flow of conversation. A newly published book may well help: 'The Promise that Changes Everything. I won't interrupt you' by Nancy Kline director of the Time to Think global leadership development and coaching company¹. The book has a broad aim to encourage independent thinking with the assurance for an individual that a speaker may have the opportunity to explain and develop ideas. I am in process of working through the principles and will report back.

Plans for 2021

TCUK Metro

This year's programme arranged as an online meeting ensured that we did have a conference and two speakers engaged for our original conference in London were able to participate.

We're now planning for TCUK Metro online due to the present circumstances and interim TCUK online sessions have been introduced.

UKTC Awards

Following the success of this year's event, we will be increasing publicity to attract even more quality entries for 2021.

And more...

We plan to progress initiatives for *Communicator*, Marketing and Resources in the short term; more of these in the next issue of *Communicator*. ■

Linda Robins FISTC

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¹ 'The Promise that Changes Everything. I won't interrupt you' by Nancy Kline Penguin Random House UK: ISBN 978-0-241-42351-6 2020.