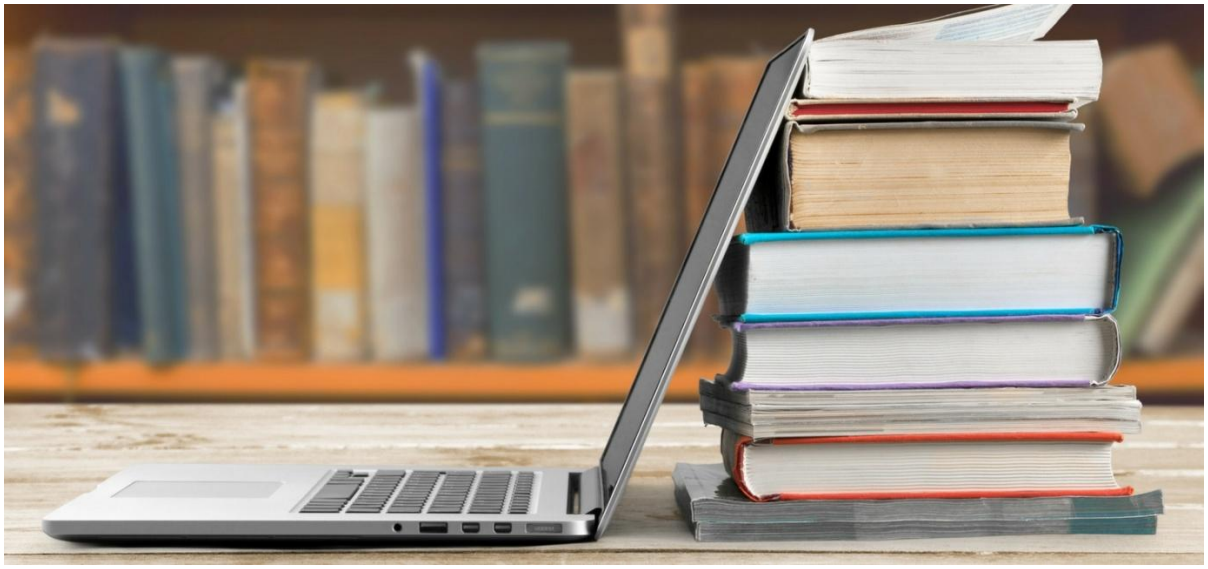
STONE COMPASS
PRESS

AUTHOR PUBLISHING GUIDE

From manuscript to marketplace



IN-DEPTH. INDEPENDENT. IN DA ISLANDS.

2026–2027 EDITION

WELCOME

Find Your Direction with Stone Compass Press

A strong book needs more than a finished manuscript. It needs editorial care, professional design, accurate metadata, dependable distribution, and a launch plan built for the readers it is meant to reach.

Stone Compass Press (SCP) is an independent hybrid publisher and distributor based in Kailua-Kona, Hawai‘i. Since 2014, we have helped writers, creators, professionals, and visionaries turn meaningful ideas into professionally produced books—and build opportunities that can extend far beyond publication day.

OUR PROMISE

Your voice remains yours. Our role is to sharpen the work, strengthen the package, open practical distribution pathways, and help you present your book with confidence.

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01 · WHY SCP

Publishing Built Around the Author

SCP combines the professional standards and market access of a publishing house with the ownership, flexibility, and creative collaboration independent authors value.

2014 FOUNDED IN HAWAIʻI	**Author-first** COLLABORATIVE MODEL	**Print + Digital** MULTI-FORMAT PRODUCTION
Retail-ready PROFESSIONAL METADATA	**Custom** PROJECT STRATEGY	**Long-term** BRAND THINKING

What sets Stone Compass Press apart

1. **Ownership & creative control.** Authors retain ownership of their intellectual property while granting only the publication rights stated in the signed agreement.
2. **Professional execution.** Editing, cover design, interior layout, metadata, file preparation, and proofing are coordinated as one publishing system.
3. **Distribution-minded from the start.** Format, price, metadata, and production decisions are made with retailer, wholesaler, library, and reader expectations in view.
4. **A real marketing foundation.** SCP pairs launch preparation with practical audience, media, retail, digital, and event opportunities suited to the title.
5. **A Hawaiʻi-based independent perspective.** We value distinctive voices, culturally grounded work, and books with the power to educate, entertain, preserve, or inspire.

MORE THAN A BOOK

When the opportunity is right, SCP can help authors develop a broader platform through talks, articles, video, workbooks, courses, events, audiobooks, and other brand extensions.

02 · THE PARTNERSHIP

A Clear, Professional Publishing Agreement

Every accepted project receives a written agreement and a project plan. The standard commercial framework below reflects SCP's current author contract; your signed agreement is always the controlling document.

COMMERCIAL TERM	STANDARD	WHAT IT MEANS
Publishing-services fee	$2,000 standard fee	Covers the core publishing services listed in the agreement.
Author royalty	50% standard share	Calculated and paid according to the royalty provisions in the signed agreement.
Initial term	3 years	Renewal requires mutual written agreement.
Author copies	10–20 copies	Quantity depends on format, specifications, and production cost.
Launch support	Basic 60-day campaign	A focused foundation; expanded campaigns may be added separately.
Rights at end of term	Revert to the Author	Subject to the expiration and termination terms of the agreement.

Core services normally included

6. **Editorial preparation.** Editing and proofreading appropriate to the project's agreed scope.
7. **Design & production.** Custom cover design and typography, print and digital interior layout, and production-ready files.
8. **Publishing setup.** ISBN/ASIN coordination, metadata preparation, retailer/catalog submissions, and file distribution.
9. **Launch foundation.** A basic 60-day marketing campaign and Amazon Author Central guidance.

IMPORTANT

Fees, royalties, formats, deadlines, special editions, author-copy quantities, and optional services may vary by project. No brochure or verbal summary changes the terms of the signed agreement.

03 · YOUR ROADMAP

From Submission to Publication

Publishing is a sequence of decisions. SCP coordinates the moving parts, keeps approvals visible, and guides the project toward a professional release.

STEP	MILESTONE	WHAT HAPPENS
1	Submit	Send a manuscript, sample chapters, or a synopsis with your goals, audience, comparable titles, timeline, and platform information.
2	Evaluate	SCP reviews the project for quality, fit, readiness, market potential, production needs, and the author's goals.
3	Plan & contract	If accepted, SCP prepares the agreement, commercial schedule, service scope, formats, responsibilities, and working timeline.
4	Edit	The manuscript moves through the agreed editorial stages. The author reviews queries and approves substantive changes.
5	Design & produce	SCP develops the cover, interior, metadata, identifiers, and print/digital files, then issues proofs for review.
6	Approve	The author completes a disciplined final proof and gives written approval before files are released to production.
7	Publish & launch	Retailer/catalog submissions, title listings, author platform setup, and the 60-day marketing foundation move into action.
8	Build	SCP and the author monitor opportunities, maintain accurate title information, and continue audience and brand development.

TYPICAL TIMING

Many projects require six to nine months from a production-ready manuscript to market. Complex editing, illustrations, permissions, custom printing, or delayed approvals can extend the schedule.

04 · EDITORIAL

Make the Manuscript Worthy of the Idea

Editing is not about flattening an author's voice. It is the disciplined process of helping that voice land clearly, consistently, and credibly with the intended reader.

EDITORIAL STAGE	PRIMARY FOCUS	BEST TIMING
Developmental / substantive	Structure, pacing, argument, completeness, character, organization, and reader experience.	Early, before sentence-level polish.
Line / copy editing	Clarity, flow, consistency, grammar, usage, tone, style, facts, and internal logic.	After major structural decisions are settled.
Proofreading	Final typographical, punctuation, spacing, page-reference, and layout errors.	After the book has been designed.

Author editorial checklist

10. Deliver one complete master manuscript—not multiple competing versions.
11. Use consistent chapter titles, headings, citations, captions, notes, and special formatting.
12. Flag quotations, images, lyrics, maps, tables, recipes, or other third-party material that may require permission.
13. Answer editorial queries and return revisions by the agreed deadline.
14. Verify names, dates, facts, quotations, references, and cultural or technical details.
15. Review the final designed proof carefully; post-approval changes may require additional time and cost.

EDITORIAL PRINCIPLE

SCP brings professional judgment and a fresh reader's eye. The author remains responsible for the truthfulness, originality, legality, and final approval of the work.

05 · DESIGN & PRODUCTION

Create a Book Readers Want to Pick Up

A professional book is a coordinated package. The cover earns attention, the interior builds trust, and the metadata helps the right reader discover what the book promises.

COMPONENT	SCP PRODUCTION FOCUS
Cover	Front, spine, back, typography, imagery, positioning, retail thumbnail impact, and printer specifications.
Interior	Trim size, margins, typography, chapter openings, running elements, images, tables, notes, and accessibility.
Identifiers	ISBN/ASIN coordination, format-specific records, imprint information, and edition management.
Metadata	Title/subtitle, author name, description, categories, keywords, pricing, audience, contributor data, and publication date.
Formats	Paperback, hardcover, e-book, audiobook, or special editions as approved and stated in the project scope.
Proofs	Digital and/or physical proof review followed by documented author approval before release.

Approvals that protect the project

16. Cover direction and final cover approval.
17. Interior design sample and final page proof.
18. Final title, subtitle, author name, description, price, categories, and keywords.
19. Confirmation that permissions, credits, captions, and acknowledgments are complete.

THINK BEYOND THE PAGE

Good design creates a repeatable visual identity for social posts, event signage, ads, presentations, trailers, and future books—not just one cover.

06 · DISTRIBUTION

Retail-Ready from Hawai‘i to Readers Everywhere

SCP prepares titles for broad trade availability and works to position each book for the channels that make sense for its audience, format, price, and author platform.

AVAILABILITY IS NOT PLACEMENT

Distribution makes a title orderable through participating systems. Shelf placement, stocking quantities, displays, library purchases, airport placement, and reorders remain individual retailer or buyer decisions.

Potential channels

20. **Online retail.** Major online booksellers and e-book platforms appropriate to the selected formats.
21. **Book trade.** Wholesalers, independent bookstores, chains, libraries, airport booksellers, and specialty retailers where project fit and terms support outreach.
22. **Direct sales.** Author events, talks, signings, organizational sales, conferences, and the author’s own network.
23. **International reach.** Availability may extend beyond the United States through participating distribution and retail partners.

What improves retail readiness

RETAIL FACTOR	WHAT BUYERS AND READERS NEED TO SEE
Professional package	Strong cover, readable interior, persuasive copy, accurate metadata
Trade terms	Appropriate list price, discount, format, returnability, and supply plan
Demand signals	Reviews, preorders, media, local interest, speaking, events, and audience engagement
Reliable author support	Prompt communication, promotion, inventory planning, and consistent public presence

Retail listings, pricing, delivery estimates, stock status, and availability can change by retailer and region. SCP cannot control third-party databases, purchasing decisions, or platform policies.

07 · MARKETING

Build Momentum Before—and After—Launch Day

A book launch is a campaign, not a single announcement. SCP builds a focused 60-day marketing foundation while helping the author develop assets and habits that can support the book for years.

CAMPAIGN PHASE	CORE ACTIVITIES
Pre-launch	Positioning, audience definition, metadata, cover reveal, endorsements, advance outreach, author profiles, and launch calendar.
Launch	Retail links, press materials, social content, email outreach, events, interviews, advertising or promotions included in scope.
Follow-through	Review requests, content repurposing, event development, retailer follow-up, partnerships, seasonal hooks, and long-tail opportunities.

Five marketing pillars

24. **Discoverability.** Search-friendly metadata, category strategy, keywords, retailer pages, and Amazon Author Central.
25. **Audience.** Email, social media, speaking, communities, partnerships, and consistent author visibility.
26. **Media.** Press releases, podcasts, interviews, articles, influencers, reviewers, and credible third-party coverage.
27. **Retail & events.** Bookstores, libraries, festivals, signings, conferences, organizational sales, and local opportunities.
28. **Content.** Quotes, excerpts, video, behind-the-book stories, educational material, and evergreen promotional assets.

THE AUTHOR ADVANTAGE

SCP can build the engine, but the author supplies the most valuable fuel: authentic expertise, personal outreach, consistent participation, and a clear reason for readers to care.

Marketing increases opportunity and visibility; it cannot guarantee sales, rankings, reviews, awards, media coverage, or retailer placement.

08 · PUBLISHING BUSINESS

Rights, Royalties & Shared Responsibilities

Strong publishing relationships are built on clear expectations. SCP's current author agreement defines what the author owns, what SCP is authorized to publish, how compensation works, and how the relationship can end.

TOPIC	CURRENT STANDARD FRAMEWORK
Author ownership	The Author retains ownership of the underlying intellectual property.
Publication grant	SCP receives only the publication and distribution rights specifically stated in the agreement.
Royalty	The standard Author share is 50%; calculation, statements, reserves, deductions, and payment timing follow the signed agreement.
Term & renewal	The initial term is three years. Renewal requires mutual written agreement.
Termination	The current standard agreement provides for 90 days' written notice, subject to its stated conditions.
Rights reversion	Rights revert to the Author after expiration or termination, subject to the agreement's closeout provisions.

Who leads what

OWNER	PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY
SCP leads	Publishing workflow, professional production, identifiers/metadata, approved distribution setup, and contracted launch support.
Author leads	Original content, factual accuracy, permissions, timely decisions, personal platform, and truthful promotional participation.
Shared	Creative direction, positioning, approvals, launch planning, opportunity evaluation, and long-term brand development.

KEEP YOUR RECORDS CURRENT

Authors should promptly update SCP with changes to legal name, pen name, address, tax information, banking details, email, phone number, website, and social media profiles.

09 · RESPONSIBLE TECHNOLOGY

AI with Transparency, Consent & Human Accountability

SCP supports responsible innovation while protecting human authorship, confidential manuscripts, creative consent, and the long-term value of an author's work.

SCP COMMITMENT	PRACTICAL MEANING
SCP may use—with human review	AI-assisted internal support for research organization, editorial diagnostics, production checks, metadata exploration, administrative efficiency, and design ideation when appropriate.
SCP will not use without prior written approval	Substantive rewriting, final translation, audiobook narration, a digital replica of the Author, or final AI-generated cover art.
No implied training license	The publishing agreement does not grant permission to train an AI model on the manuscript, the Author's voice, likeness, or other protected material. A separate signed addendum would be required.

Author commitments

29. **Disclose material AI use.** Tell SCP when generative AI materially contributed to text, images, translations, narration, research, or other submitted content.
30. **Preserve human authorship.** The Author must make meaningful creative choices and remain responsible for every submitted element.
31. **Verify everything.** AI output may contain errors, fabricated citations, bias, plagiarism, or rights problems; review and substantiate all claims.
32. **Protect confidential work.** Do not upload unpublished manuscripts, private records, interview material, or licensed content to unapproved AI systems.
33. **Clear all rights.** AI assistance does not remove obligations involving copyright, trademark, publicity, privacy, defamation, permissions, or cultural sensitivity.

HUMAN JUDGMENT STAYS IN CHARGE

AI may assist a workflow; it does not replace the Author's voice, SCP's professional judgment, or the final review required before publication.

10 · AUTHOR SERVICES

Professional Help at Every Stage

Not every author needs the same pathway. SCP can build a complete publishing partnership or provide selected services to strengthen a project that is still being written, independently produced, or prepared for relaunch.

SERVICE AREA	AVAILABLE SUPPORT
Manuscript development	Ghostwriting, spoken-draft service, project development, author coaching, developmental editing, substantive editing
Editorial	Copy editing, proofreading, indexing, permissions support, cover copy, fact and consistency review
Design	Cover design, interior design, typography, illustrations, graphics, advance reader copies, promotional design
Production	Print and digital file preparation, e-book production, audiobook coordination, printing, special editions
Publishing setup	ISBN/ASIN coordination, metadata, categories, keywords, pricing support, catalog and retailer submissions
Marketing	Press releases, launch planning, Amazon optimization, advertising, review and endorsement outreach, e-book promotion
Brand & media	Author branding, websites, social strategy, logos, speaker materials, trailers, short video, podcast and influencer outreach
Special projects	Commemorative books, company or family histories, relaunches, updated editions, ancillary products, distribution-ready titles

How service pricing works

Optional services are quoted according to manuscript length, condition, complexity, format, schedule, research, permissions, design needs, print specifications, and campaign scope. SCP will provide a written estimate before beginning out-of-scope work.

BRING YOUR TEAM

Already working with an editor, designer, publicist, illustrator, or marketing team? SCP can define responsibilities and collaborate with qualified partners so the project moves forward as one coordinated effort.

11 · QUESTIONS

Frequently Asked Questions

The short answers below explain SCP's current approach. Project-specific details belong in the written proposal and publishing agreement.

What kinds of books does SCP publish?

SCP considers fiction and nonfiction across genres, including projects at the idea, manuscript, completed-book, or relaunch stage. Acceptance depends on fit, readiness, quality, feasibility, and market potential.

Do I keep my intellectual property?

Yes. Authors retain ownership of their underlying work. The publication rights granted to SCP are limited by the signed agreement.

Can SCP get my book into bookstores?

SCP can make qualifying titles available through trade channels and pursue appropriate buyers. Retailers, wholesalers, libraries, airports, and specialty stores make their own stocking and placement decisions.

How long does publishing take?

Many production-ready projects can reach market in roughly six to nine months. Editing depth, illustrations, permissions, custom printing, complexity, and author approvals affect timing.

Can SCP work with my existing team?

Yes. SCP can collaborate with an author's editor, designer, publicist, illustrator, photographer, or marketing team when roles, standards, files, and approvals are clearly defined.

Does SCP guarantee sales?

No ethical publisher can guarantee sales, rankings, reviews, awards, press, or shelf placement. SCP provides professional production, distribution access, strategic marketing, and informed guidance; results also depend on the book, market, timing, author activity, and reader response.

Can I purchase additional author copies?

Yes. Author-copy pricing, shipping, turnaround, minimums, and resale terms depend on the format and supplier and are handled according to the agreement and current production costs.

What happens when the contract ends?

The current agreement provides for rights reversion following expiration or termination, subject to notice, account closeout, outstanding orders, inventory, and other stated provisions.

12 · NEXT STEP

Your Story Deserves a Professional Path Forward

Whether you have a powerful idea, a complete manuscript, a previously published title, or a book that needs a stronger market position, SCP is ready to evaluate the possibilities with you.

Prepare your submission

34. Contact information, legal name, pen name, location, website, and active social profiles.
35. Working title, subtitle, genre, format, estimated word count, and current manuscript status.
36. A concise synopsis, target audience, comparable titles, and what makes the project distinctive.
37. Your preferred publication timeline, available budget, and three specific goals for the book.
38. A short author biography and an honest description of your existing platform and marketing plans.
39. A Word or PDF manuscript sample—or a synopsis document if the manuscript is not yet available.
40. Disclosure of permissions needs and any material use of generative AI in submitted content.

SUBMISSION REVIEW

SCP evaluates submissions for content, quality, fit, production feasibility, audience, and sales potential. A submission is an invitation to review—not a guarantee of acceptance or publication.

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BEGIN YOUR PUBLISHING JOURNEY

Submit your book: stonecompasspress.com/submissions.html

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