

# BEYOND ACADEMIA

## Professional Opportunities for Philosophers

Developed by the Committee on Non-Academic Careers  
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American Philosophical Association

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## SECTION 1

# Introduction

Philosophers have historically flourished in the public sphere: they have served in government agencies at all levels, as journalists and museum directors, inventors and entrepreneurs, systems analysts and corporation executives, publishers, judges, and lawyers. Even now, in a time of increased professionalization, public offices in France, Germany, Great Britain, and Italy are held by graduates with advanced degrees in philosophy and political theory from *L'École Normale Supérieure*, Sciences Po, Oxford, and the London School of Economics. Philosophers flourish as teachers in stellar *Lycées* and *Gymnasias*. Logicians and philosophers of science hold positions in varieties of national and international science research centers as well as in the private sector. Google has a “resident philosopher”; LinkedIn was founded by a philosopher with a degree from Oxford. And of course many philosophers become administrators and policy makers in a wide range of educational and academic institutions. It is in any case misleading to reify what has been conventionally called “the academy”: many institutions outside the academy—the National Institute of Mental Health, the National Institutes of Health, technology and pharmaceutical companies, media and museums, judicial and financial departments of government—promote scholarly research. And many professional schools and university-based institutes and centers operate as liaison “bridges” to private and governmental agencies. Their faculties frequently have joint appointments outside the academy. Wherever acuity, rigor, clarity, critical reflection, and far-sighted planning are needed, there philosophers have a place. Their philosophical education makes them well-equipped and well-suited for a wide range of professions in which they can find satisfaction in profitably exercising their philosophical training and skills.

This brochure is intended to provide guidance—resources, information, and advice—to philosophers who are interested in exploring a wide range of professions outside of academia. It includes biographies of philosophers who chose to leave academic life and who found—and in some cases invented—productive and rewarding work that called on their philosophic talents and insights. It provides links to a variety of resources for the non-academic career search and for maintaining one’s connection to philosophy throughout a career outside the academy. And it provides recommendations for philosophy departments on maintaining connections with philosophers working outside academia and preparing philosophy students for non-academic careers. Additional information and suggestions are invited and welcomed. Please send them to [info@apaonline.org](mailto:info@apaonline.org).

## SECTION 2

# Data

### Data on Non-academic Careers

- [Connected Academics, a Modern Language Association Initiative](#)
- [Council of Graduate Schools, "Understanding Career Pathways"](#)
- [MLA Surveys of PhD Placement](#)
- [The Career Diversity Five Skills \(American Historical Association\)](#)
- [The Many Careers of History PhDs: A Study of Job Outcomes, Spring 2013 \(American Historical Association\)](#)
- ["Where Are They Now? Occupations of 1996–2011 PhD Recipients in 2013," \*Blog of the MLA Office of Research\* \(February 17, 2015\)](#)
- [Katina Rogers, "Survey on Humanities Graduate Education and Alternative Academic Careers \(Main\)"](#)
- [Katina Rogers, "Survey on Humanities Graduate Education and Alternative Academic Careers \(Employer Survey\)"](#)
- [Katina Rogers, "Humanities Unbound: Supporting Careers and Scholarship Beyond the Tenure Track"](#)
- [Abby Smith Rumsey, "Scholarly Communication Institute Reports on Rethinking Humanities Graduate Education"](#)
- [Andrew Carson, "Graduate School Philosophy Placement Records in the US and CA: Will I Get a Job?," \*Philosophy News\*](#)

### New Data: Academic Placement Data and Analysis

The Academic Placement Data and Analysis (APDA) project, run by Carolyn Dicey Jennings, has information for the philosophy graduates of 108 doctoral programs for the years 2012, 2013, 2014, and 2015. A total of 1,964 graduates are estimated to have graduated from these programs in this time period using APDA and other sources (*Review of Metaphysics Doctoral Dissertations* publication for 2011-2012, 2012-2013, 2013-2014, and 2014-2015; *PhilJobs: Jobs for Philosophers* graduation statistics for 2012, 2013, 2014, and 2015; and the APA's *Guide to Graduate Programs in Philosophy* for graduates of 2012, 2013, 2014, and 2015). Estimate was provided by taking the mean number

of graduates per year for each program from these sources and then taking the higher value of either this number or the number of graduates from that program and year with placement information in the APDA database.

For the graduates in this time period (2012–2015), the APDA project has the following placement information:

	Number of graduates	Percent of total
<b>Total graduates</b>	1,964	100%
<b>Placement information available</b>	1,445	74%
<b>Permanent academic placement</b>	638	32%
<b>Temporary academic placement</b>	707	36%
<b>Non-academic placement</b>	100	5%

## SECTION 3

# Recommendations to Department Chairs and Placement Officers

Notoriously, it is becoming more difficult for graduates to find jobs in academia. Applicants for starting-level positions often have three or four publications in major journals; they also standardly have had several years of teaching experience. Needless to say, their letters of recommendation are typically uniformly stellar. We seem to be on the verge of a retrenchment of faculty positions in the humanities, one which may be a harbinger of changes in graduate programs in philosophy. Whatever we may think of such a development, the professionalization of philosophy has proceeded at an escalating pace. Sadly, it appears to be accompanied by a decrease in the availability of full-time, tenured positions.

Despite the employment crisis, the current cohort of graduate students tends to focus their professional expectations on having the same sorts of academic jobs as their faculty. To be sure, we are careful and responsible about warning prospective and incoming graduate students about their prospects on the job market. But having fulfilled that duty, we tend to let the matter drop. While our placement officers work closely with graduates to prepare their academic job talks and applications, we tend to leave those of our students who may not enter the academic stream to their own devices.

It is especially important to support and value non-academic career tracks because of their relationship to inclusivity. Members of underrepresented groups are at higher risk for attrition—that is, leaving philosophy graduate programs—because of departmental climate issues. There is also reason to think (based on evidence from other fields) that members of underrepresented groups are more likely to be interested in non-academic jobs. A departmental climate that views non-academic careers negatively, as less than academic careers, may disproportionately impact members of underrepresented groups, which provides even more reason to promote positive perceptions of and support for non-academic career paths.

The role of department chairs and placement officers in providing information and guidance for graduates considering their career options is a crucial factor in their being able to find positions that suit the range of their interests and talents. The attitudes of the graduate faculty towards students—the ways they convey expectations—can enhance or cripple confidence and initiative. The worst thing faculty can do is imply that opting out of academic life is an indication of their failure as philosophers; the second worst thing they can do is imply that

non-academic life is second best. Anecdotal evidence suggests that “drop outs” from the profession are marginalized and sometimes even stigmatized by their former colleagues; at best they simply disappear from the department’s active network. As our sample of autobiographies indicate (see *Biographical Essays* later in this document), philosophers who have chosen alternative professions have found that their philosophical skills enable them to flourish as lawyers, developers, journalists, investment analysts, and social workers.

In the interest of helping our students find positions in which they can use their philosophical training, we might do well to broaden the graduate curriculum and to present students with a richer, more diversified picture of the opportunities that a degree in philosophy can offer. Besides shaping our informal advice to students so as to address their needs and prospects, there are a few practical things departments can do. Here are some suggestions, ranging from the most ambitious to the most routine:

- **Joint Degrees:** As things stand, many graduate schools offer joint PhD/JD, PhD/LLD, PhD/EdD, and PhD/MD degrees. Some offer joint programs in philosophy, government, and public affairs; others extend such programs to joint programs in philosophy, management, and business. Following and expanding this trend, departments could initiate and enlarge programs offering joint PhD and MA degrees to students who would like to continue their interests in philosophy but intend to look for employment outside the academy. An MA or a PhD in philosophy and computer science, philosophy and the health sciences, philosophy and economics, philosophy and urban planning, or philosophy and psychology would place a graduate in a strong position to find employment.
- **Alumni Committees:** Departments could supplement frank warnings about job prospects in academia with accounts of the kinds of employment opportunities outside academia that an advanced degree in philosophy can provide. In listing placement information on their websites, departments should include the non-academic positions that their graduates have taken. In general, departments should keep track of former graduate students who have moved outside academia, including them in their listservs for departmental news, and inviting them to colloquia and other events. A “Committee of Alumni Philosophers” might be enlisted to serve as employment advisors—mentors and resources—to emerging graduates who envision working outside the academy.
- **University Career Officers:** Placement officers should enlist members of their university career office to give talks to graduate students and job seekers. Departments should take some initiative in introducing their students to career officers whose knowledge, experience, and resources are invaluable.
- **Interdisciplinary Studies:** Many philosophy graduates who elect to stay in academia are initially likely to find jobs at institutions where they will be expected to teach a wide variety of introductory and interdisciplinary courses. Besides encouraging students to publish in their areas of specialization, departments might also urge them to increase their flexibility and enlarge their scope by taking courses in related fields. Students working in the philosophy of language might, for instance, take courses in linguistics and psychology; students working in political theory might take courses in law, politics, and economics; those working in the philosophy of science could take courses in biology and physics. If these students follow an academic career path, they will be better prepared to teach a broad array of courses; if they follow a non-academic career path, they will have some background in areas they hope to enter.

## SECTION 4





# Opportunities Outside Academia

Some non-academic careers—law and medicine, for instance—require further study or qualification, but even in these professions, there are many administrative and policy-making positions that do not require specialized training. In any case, governmental, managerial, and entrepreneurial employment opportunities are open to anyone with initiative and imagination. Here, below, are some brief examples of occupations and professions in which philosophers have flourished, along with some related resources. Students who are considering opportunities outside academia may find taking internships or part-time employment helpful, both by way of seeing whether they find such work enjoyable and by way of acquiring negotiable expertise. Many internships and part-time positions are compatible with holding part-time and temporary teaching positions. University and college career offices are excellent sources for information and contacts for such opportunities. The following list is representative, though far from exhaustive.













### Business, Management, and Consulting

Opportunities in business range widely: they include positions in management, sales, consulting, public relations, fundraising, accounting, systems analysis, and advertising. They are to be found in a wide array of enterprises: insurance and real estate, pharmaceutical companies, the financial sector. Broadly speaking, the businesses most likely to be hiring are those new to an area, those with a new product, and those in growing sectors of the economy. In addition to consulting both online job listings—both general and specific to the geographic area(s) in which you hope to find employment—talking with staff of chambers of commerce or local service organizations may give some background knowledge on the local community. In finding jobs in business, networking contacts—relatives, friends, teachers, department alumni, community groups, and service organizations—are also good sources of information and introductions. In general, the outgoing initiative that promotes success in business is also useful in the job search.




### General Business Resources

- All Business 
- American Association of Finance & Accounting 
- American Finance Association 
- Association for Financial Professionals 







- [Careers in Business](#) 
- [Entrepreneur.com](#) 
- [Financial Management Association International](#) 
- [Inc.com](#) 
- [My Own Business](#) 
- [New York Society of Security Analysts](#) 
- [Online Business Advisor](#) 
- [Service Corps of Retired Executives \(SCORE\)](#) 
- [Small Business Marketing](#) 
- [Vault](#) 
- [VentureWell](#) 
- [Wef feet](#) 

### Business-Related Government Resources

- [BusinessUSA](#) 
- [Internal Revenue Service: Starting a Business](#) 
- [Small Business Administration](#) 

### Consulting

- [CaseInterview.com](#) 
- [Independent Educational Consultants Association](#) 
- [Vault](#) 
- [Wef feet](#) 





### Freelancing

- [Freelancer's Union](#) 
- [Guru Employer](#) 
- [Solo Gig](#) 
- [Upwork](#) 

## Social Entrepreneurship

- Ashoka 
- Skoll Foundation 

## Tools for Women and Minorities in Business

- Ladies Who Launch 
- Minority Business Development Agency 
- National Minority Business Council 
- Office of Women’s Business Ownership 





## Computers and Technology

For philosophers who have had some experience in programming, employment opportunities abound. Startup companies compete for people with technological ingenuity and basic experience. Besides the obvious range of openings in the tech industry itself, job opportunities range across virtually all sectors of employment: government, private business, health services, libraries, education, etc. Graduate students who supplement their philosophical work with selected courses in computer science are advantaged when they look for jobs outside the academy.

## Culture: Art, Journalism, Libraries, and History
















Libraries, media (journals, radio, TV, newspapers), museums, and historical associations all engage in scholarly research; many are keen to have staff with a solid education in the humanities. Not everyone who works in libraries is a librarian; not everyone who works in a museum is a curator or art historian. Institutions of these kinds need people who are gifted in public relations, human resources, network administration, management, program planning. All kinds of companies and corporations advertise their job openings online. If you apply, it is a good idea to be specific about your interests and experience and to build a résumé that indicates what you have previously done in the field. This is an area where contacts are all-important.

Websites are both generic (e.g., “Jobs in libraries”) and highly specific (e.g., “WGBH jobs”). Here are some sample websites for museums and public history. Additionally, each state has its own Foundation for the Arts (as do many large cities), which can be a useful resource for jobs and networking.

- American Alliance of Museums 
- American Cultural Resources Association 
- Global Museum 
- National Council on Public History 


## Public Philosophy

A number of philosophers have careers doing public philosophy, either exclusively or concurrently with careers in academic philosophy. There are too many such philosophers to name; the following are just a few examples:





- Simon Caney 
- Myisha Cherry 
- Noam Chomsky 
- Richard Dawkins 
- Daniel Dennett 
- Rebecca Newberger Goldstein 
- Carrie Jenkins 
- Jana Mohr Lone 
- Kate Manne 
- Tom V. Morris 
- Alva Noë 
- Martha Nussbaum 
- Peter Singer 
- Jennifer Vest 
- Eric Thomas Weber 

## Education

Many philosophers are teaching or holding positions outside of philosophy departments: they have positions in schools of education, business, law, medicine, and public health. Many philosophers hold administrative positions in colleges and universities; philosophers who take administrative internships in their own institutions during their graduate studies are in a good position to move into such positions after graduation.

Besides positions throughout virtually the entire range of professional schools, there are job opportunities in humanities programs in public high schools and private secondary schools. The APA's committee on pre-college instruction in philosophy  is trying to increase the range of opportunities for teaching philosophy from the elementary through the high school levels.

In addition to checking the job listings for educational institutions at which you might like to work, the following job resources may also be useful.

- Carney, Sandoe & Associates  — Faculty Placement at Private and Boarding Schools
- National Association of Independent Schools 
- Teach for America 
- US Department of Education 







## Global Development, Government, and Law

There are philosophers on congressional staffs, in federal agencies and bureaus, in state and local governments, and in the United Nations. A former congressman—Lee H. Hamilton, 9th District, Indiana—testified to the capacities of the philosophers on his staff:



*It seems to me that philosophers have acquired skills that are very valuable to a member of Congress. The ability to analyze a problem carefully and consider it from many points of view is one. Another is the ability to communicate ideas clearly in a logically compelling form. A third is the ability to handle the many different kinds of problems that occupy the congressional agenda at any time. (March 25, 1982)*




Public sector employment for philosophers is not limited to governments and government agencies. Interest groups, labor unions, environmental programs, civic and religious organizations of all kinds offer opportunities for philosophers acting as lobbyists, city planners, publicists, and public relations experts. While the standard path into a legal career is through law school, philosophers also hold positions as administrators and research analysts in legal firms, in the Justice Department and as rights advocates, in local departments of city planning. It is not necessary to have a law degree to qualify to prepare oneself to take state bar exams; many jobs in the legal sector do not require membership in the bar.

### Global Development

- Going Global 
- United Nations Foundation 
- United States Agency for International Development 
- United States Institute of Peace Index of Research Centers in International Relations 
- Uniworld 
- William J. Clinton Foundation 




### Government

- Department of Defense 
- Department of Health and Human Services 

- Department of State 
- Go Government 
- National Endowment for the Arts 
- National Endowment for the Humanities 
- Partnership for Public Service 
- Presidential Management Fellows Program 
- USAJOBS – The Federal Government’s Official Jobs Site 

### Medicine, Public Health, and Pharmaceutical Companies





Philosophers hold a wide range of jobs in medicine and public health. Some are MDs, but many more, particularly those in bioethics, are not. Philosophers find positions formulating organizational policies in hospital administration, on ethics committees, in developing hospice care, and in integrating research and medical care.

- Health eCareers 
- PhD Career Guide – Pharma & BioTech 
- Public Health Jobs 


### Publishing

Many philosophers hold editorial, sales, or managing positions with university or commercial presses. In editorial decision-making, acquisitions, copyediting, and other phases of publishing, good philosophical training has proved to be excellent preparation.

#### Scholarly Publishing

- Association of American University Presses 
- Cognella Academic Publishing 
- Journal of Scholarly Publishing 
- Society for Scholarly Publishing 





#### Non-academic Publishing

- Association of American Publishers 
- Publishers Marketplace 
- Publishers Weekly 

### Research

Virtually every agency and organization—ranging from art galleries to zoos, from the local library to the World Bank—have research divisions.

### Related Links

- National Institute for Research Advancement’s World Directory of Think Tanks 
- United States Department of State — Jobs in Think Tanks 
- United States Institute of Peace Index of Research Centers in International Relations 
- Wordpress Index of International Think Tanks and Research Organizations 

## SECTION 5

# Biographical Essays

**Carolin Emcke, writer**

*Carolin Emcke studied philosophy and political theory with Jürgen Habermas in Frankfurt and with Seyla Benhabib at Harvard, writing a thesis entitled “Collective Identities.” In 2003-2004, she was a visiting lecturer at Yale in the Program in Ethics, Politics, and Economics. As a staff writer for Der Spiegel and Der Zeit and now as a weekly columnist for the Süddeutsche Zeitung, she has written about war crimes, violence, the plight of Muslims in Europe and human rights violations in Lebanon, Kosovo, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iraq, Israel, Gaza. She published Echoes of Violence: Letters from a War Reporter in 2007; her book on the violence of the German Baader-Meinhof Gang appeared in 2008; How We Desire appeared in 2012. Her most recent book is Essays on Witnessing and Justice. Carolin Emcke lives in Berlin, where she organizes and moderates monthly public discussions at the theatre Die Schaubuehne and works as a curator for exhibitions.*

To be honest, I don't know if I ever really “decided” on my current course as a journalist. Retroactively one tends to declare all incoherent, accidental discontinuities of one's life to follow some linear logic that didn't exist at the time.

I was lucky enough to have a friend of my parents tell me at the beginning of my studying philosophy and political theory: “If you study something like that, you better [give] yourself time.” And I did. I did not just take . . . time, but I studied at different universities, cities, countries (in London at the London School of Economics, in Frankfurt with Jürgen Habermas, and then at Harvard with Seyla Benhabib).

I never started out with a plan of what kind of job I wanted. I started with questions that concerned me. I wanted to read and think and did not ask for the instrumental use of these questions. Not because I thought philosophy or political theory was irrelevant or useless—but because I was so convinced that there could be no political life, no public sphere, no passionate engagement with the world without theoretical thinking. The relevance of asking questions about justice, about ethics, about knowledge—how could it not be existential and important.

Parallel to studying, though, I started from very early on to work journalistically. First, with an internship for German public television, but after the first internship and after my first small film, I was able to make money by working as a freelance TV journalist making short films on all kinds of social or political topics. It was from then on that I felt a strong connection or even balance between studying philosophy and political theory and working as a journalist. I never saw it as a contradiction. But for the rest of my study (until I finished my PhD) and continuing until today, I understand the theoretical questions to inform, to nurture, to structure my thinking and working as a writer. The last fifteen years of my professional life, I worked mostly as what is usually called a “war reporter,” or a reporter who focusses on human


rights violations in regions of conflict. I covered the wars in Kosovo, Afghanistan, Iraq, Gaza, Colombia, among others—and I travel to these regions of conflict not as a journalist (I would not even know whether I ever really became one) but I travel there as a philosopher and the questions about exclusion and inclusion, about stigmatization and the figure of the “Homo Sacer,” the questions about the relationship between violence, trauma and speechlessness, the question of what it requires for an account to be credible, what it requires to give an account of oneself, the questions of the preconditions for participation in a democratic polity, the questions of forgiveness and transitional justice, the question of the rights of others or the production of subjectivity through subjugation . . . all these philosophical questions inform my work, my perception, my analyzing the situations I find myself in when travelling.

On the other hand, the experiences in conflict zones, the conversations with victims of torture, with refugees, with marginalized people whether they are Roma or Muslims or Christian or transgender or political dissidents, to understand the fragility of the human body, the imprint of sexual violence on a person’s psychic skin, to listen to humans who do not sound human anymore, to understand how a disrupted, non-linear account can be an adequate representation of a violent experience, to understand that there is no such thing as the “unspeakable,” all this has of course also deeply informed and changed my theoretical thinking.

I could not imagine one without the other: I could not imagine being a writer without theory structuring and reflecting the perceptions and experiences I make when I travel—but I also could not imagine working theoretically without having the possibility to be among people in need, without the possibility to engage with the world, to intervene publicly, to have other ways of thinking, living, believing, desiring, mourning, to question and challenge my own ways of thinking and living.

Nowadays, I can choose between different forms of writing, different genres of public interventions: weekly columns that are small philosophical essays, or long reportage on international issues, books . . . that allows me to sometimes write explicitly philosophically and sometimes just implicitly. But it is always there. If I was asked to study again, not knowing what I would do afterwards, I would study the same. I would study philosophy and political theory again.

### Jim Friedman, builder

*Jim Friedman did graduate work at the University of Chicago, UC Berkeley, and Cambridge, where he wrote his dissertation on Wittgenstein’s Tractatus with Elizabeth Anscombe. In 1979, after teaching philosophy for six years, he and a colleague founded Ryan Associates , an employee-owned construction company which now has offices and projects in San Francisco, Hawaii, and New York. He has two children and one grandchild. Recently returning to Cambridge for a term as a visiting scholar, he continues to work in philosophy, with a special interest in Aristotle and Wittgenstein on intentionality.*

Forty years ago, I was teaching philosophy in a small university near San Francisco and was asked to participate in a panel discussion on undergraduate education. The other participants, from other departments, had titled their talks, “Mathematics for the Masses” and “Economics for Everyone,” and the like, and partly just to be provocative, but also at least partly because I was thinking of leaving the profession and leaving philosophy, I titled my talk, “Philosophy for the Very Few.” I suppose I accomplished my purpose; we had a lively discussion and no one threw anything at me. But I did leave the profession a few years



later and did not think about philosophy at all for the next thirty years. Now, I welcome the opportunity to offer a few thoughts about life after philosophy or, more accurately, life after teaching philosophy. If asked to participate in the same panel today, I would give a very different talk. It would not be called “Philosophy for Practically Everyone,” but it might be called something like “What Practically Everyone Could Do with a Philosophy Education.”

There are certainly careers with obvious connections to philosophy. We can easily understand how a background in philosophy could prepare someone for a career in the law. We can understand why someone with a background in political philosophy could be drawn to politics, why someone interested in ethics might become a counselor of some sort or enter the clergy, why an interest in aesthetics could lead one to open an art gallery or become an art critic. But I decided on a career change which has no obvious affinity to philosophy, either to the content or to the form of the activity. I chose to start a small construction business. I went from a fascination with very abstract thinking to immersion in a particularly concrete activity.

What prompted this madness? I can think of three things. First, I had become fascinated at how things go together. How do sticks of lumber, nails, concrete, wires and pipes go together to become a house? This fascination developed in my first few years of teaching while I was fixing up a one-hundred-year-old building which had been all but destroyed through years of neglect. In the process I taught myself to be a fairly bad carpenter but I found the concreteness of the activity to be immensely satisfying.

Second, as a result of this multiyear activity I had become acquainted with people from a much wider range of careers than I had ever known in the university, and I became fascinated with the cooperation needed by many small businesses, plumbers, electricians, painters, roofers, tile setters, etc., to collectively build or remodel a house. I became fascinated with how things worked.

Finally, I had some unrealized aspirations about improving the world; this had been a strong motivation for my becoming a teacher. I came to believe that a small business can be an important element of a society, that a well-run small business could provide a focus around which people’s lives and wellbeing could be organized. I came to believe that if I could start and run a business, do something well, provide for my employees and maybe even make some money, this would be a worthwhile way to spend my life.

Reflecting on the factors that influenced my career change, I realized that all three—a fascination with how complex objects are constructed from radically different materials, an interest in the role of cooperation in making enterprises work, and a desire to engage in a profession that can actually make a difference in people’s lives—also expressed a change in my philosophic stance. As a student and even as a beginning teacher my outlook on the world could have been described as “incorrigibly contemplative.” My shift from academic philosophy to the business of construction was effectively a shift from theory to practice which in turn reflected a shift from my regarding thinking as in some way primary to my regarding activity, what we say and do, as fundamental.

Today, I look back at the business I started 36 years ago. I think about our one hundred employees, and of the thousand or more who have worked for us over the years. I think about the offices we maintain in San Francisco, New York, and Hawaii, and I think about the hundreds of homes we have built for our clients. At these moments of reflection, I think I might not have made a bad decision. And I have little doubt that my background in

philosophy helped prepare me for the career I have had, even if it was not the career I had planned.

I will offer only one explanation for this belief. In my business, as in almost every business, there are constantly problems to be met and surmounted. When asked what I do in my company, after explaining that I do not do carpentry, do not do cost estimating, do not manage projects, I explain that my job is to solve problems. And to do that, I need to first set up the problem to be solved. I developed the ability to analyze problems and then solve them while studying and later teaching philosophy. It may be the only really developed skill I have, and I thank philosophy for it. This is what practically everyone can do with a philosophy education. Practically everyone can set up problems for solution.

As for philosophy itself, I am happy to be able to say that after a hiatus—thirty years—I resumed thinking about philosophy. I even convinced my former graduate school to let me return as an academic visitor a couple of years ago—thereby stretching the meaning of “visitor.” And, as I prepare for (a well-earned) retirement, I look forward to having the leisure to think about philosophy in a more sustained way once again.

## Paul Stern, attorney

*Paul Stern did his graduate work in philosophy at Boston University. Working with Tom McCarthy and John Findlay, he wrote his thesis, “The Limits of Kant’s Theory of Morality,” exploring deficits in Kant’s understanding of the historical and social background conditions of morality. After staying on at BU as an assistant professor 1984-1987, he decided to take a law degree at Yale. Finding considerable interest and satisfaction in his first jobs as a trial lawyer, he continued to work as a prosecutor and as a defense attorney in both federal and state courts. He eventually joined the United States Attorney’s Office in Los Angeles as a federal prosecutor. His current title is Assistant US Attorney and Senior Litigation Counsel for the US Attorney’s Office in Los Angeles, specializing in the investigation and prosecution of white collar crimes, with a focus on corporate and securities fraud and insider trading.*

### My path from philosophy professor to federal prosecutor<sup>1</sup>

For a variety of personal and practical reasons, I decided to transition out of a teaching position in philosophy in the mid-1980s, and I entered the Yale Law School in the fall of 1987, after having deferred admission to the law school for three years. At the time I was quite anxious about leaving the philosophy business, having very little idea what the study of law would entail and seriously doubting whether I would find the practice of law remotely interesting. I recall that for some reason I was preoccupied with the prospect of having to memorize a welter of obscure statutes and arcane legal rules and endlessly recite reams of mysterious Latinate expressions, such as *res ipsa loquitur* and the like. Nonetheless, I decided to abandon the priestly pastime of academic philosophy for the more ostensibly prosaic field of law, with little knowledge or understanding of what I was getting into.

When I started studying law, I was pleasantly surprised to discover that much of legal inquiry, while rooted in the practicalities of different social practices involving, for example, competing tort, property, contract, or constitutional claims, was not significantly dissimilar from philosophical inquiry. In the case of tort law, for instance, we focused on issues relating to deciding which party should bear the cost of paying for accidents that occur

<sup>1</sup> The views expressed below regarding my experiences as a federal prosecutor are entirely my own and do not represent the opinions of the Department of Justice or the United States Attorney’s Office for the Central District of California.

on roads and highways, or in building bridges or factories; in the case of contract law, we tried to figure out who has to pay whom when a contract is breached, and what remedies are available when one party decides he no longer wants to abide by the contract terms he entered into; in the case of property law, we had to figure out, among other things, how far the limitations on property transfers or uses could extend into future generations, or how much governments had to pay private parties when they wanted to convert private lands for public use and to promote common welfare; and in the case of constitutional and statutory law, we had to decide how to interpret various provisions and clauses pertaining to privacy rights, due process of law, reasonable searches and seizures, and freedom of expression and religion, a project complicated by the significant evolution of their rights and standards over time. All of these questions seemed eminently philosophical to me, yet rooted in thicker social contexts and linked to the claims of particular parties in ways that seemed a radical departure from traditional philosophical approaches to some of these same issues.

Because I found the legal background for thinking about these issues so fresh and stimulating, I flirted briefly with idea of trying to become a law professor, or securing an academic position at a law school with a cross-appointment in philosophy. In fairly short order, however, I discovered that I found even fresher and more exciting the prospect of representing clients in actual cases and preparing to present and try cases in federal and state court. Early on in my career, while working as a summer associate at a small Wall Street firm in New York, our firm represented a theatrical producer who was suing Aretha Franklin for her failure to fulfill her contractual obligation to perform in a play based on the life of Mahalia Jackson, and I found my introduction to the art and mechanics of figuring out how to marshal the evidence and shape the narrative supporting the producer's claims against the first Lady of Soul, set in the courtroom of the legendary Whitman Knapp in downtown Manhattan, an eye-opening experience. Based on my early efforts in this case, and several others, including assisting in the defense of Westinghouse corporation against a lawsuit filed by the Republic of the Philippines for having bribed Ferdinand Marcos to secure funding to build a nuclear power plant, I naturally gravitated to the role of litigating issues in court, before judges and juries, and was in particular attracted to the idea of trying to become an accomplished trial lawyer.

To that end, after about two and a half years in private practice at a small litigation boutique in Los Angeles working on both civil and criminal cases from the defense side, I joined the United States Attorney's Office in Los Angeles as a federal prosecutor, ultimately specializing in the prosecution of complex white collar crimes. Remarkably enough, I have remained in that office for well over twenty years, investigating, presenting for indictment, and trying numerous cases involving securities fraud, stock-option backdating, insider trading, Ponzi schemes of many different shades of color, mortgage fraud, bankruptcy fraud and tax evasion, to mention a few of the offenses I have looked into. I have been exposed to the extensive criminal underworld of white collar crime, as well as to the assorted layers of the criminal justice system, including the case agents, detectives and forensic analysts who investigate these crimes, the prosecutors who try to put these cases together and prove that defendants are guilty beyond a reasonable doubt, the defense lawyers who represent the alleged perpetrators, and the federal judges who preside over the trial of these matters where criminal cases are contested and fought out to the end in front of juries. It is at times a stressful and extremely demanding job, but it remains, in my estimate, a fascinating and noble occupation.

It is, moreover, an occupation that is subject to its own deeply ethical/philosophical puzzles, which keeps it both interesting and at times conceptually exasperating. What I mean by this is the following: prosecutors, unlike defense lawyers, are subject to two different competing, if not warring, sets of obligations and responsibilities in handling their cases. One set of obligations requires prosecutors to try to be forceful and effective advocates or partisans in an essentially adversarial system, seeking to secure a favorable outcome for one side of the criminal proceeding, that is, the plaintiff initiating the proceeding (in federal cases, the United States). The second set of obligations, in contrast, requires prosecutors not to act simply as partisans or advocates, trying to prevail against the other side at all costs, but to serve as disinterested, impartial, almost quasi-judicial officers, so as to ensure to the best of their ability that “justice is done.” This means, among other things, ensuring that only the guilty, not the innocent, are convicted, and not just leaving this question up to the jury in certain circumstances; that the prosecutor presents only competent and reliable evidence against the defendant in a fair and temperate manner; and that defendants also receive the full panoply of procedural and constitutional protections to which they are entitled in defending their cases. These obligations and competing roles are often difficult, if not impossible, to square with one another in many cases, and even when they do not come into express conflict they require a continual assessing and weighing of countervailing claims to strike the right balance between advocacy and impartiality, to serve the interests both of the sovereign in ensuring that justice is done while protecting the legitimate interests of victims seeking redress for wrongs they have suffered. In my judgment, this effort to strike the fairest possible balance between these competing goods of justice and redemption is an essentially philosophical enterprise, and it is an enterprise that can, at least in some instances, be more effectively carried out when informed by a philosophical frame of mind.

So I conclude my brief sketch with the faint hope that I haven’t left philosophy entirely behind or, if I have done so, it is only by tossing it aside like Wittgenstein’s ladder, in the aspiration to attain a balance of incommensurables that exceed the limits of philosophical expression. And failing that, in the past few years I have also started teaching at a local law school, exploring the conundrums of federal criminal practice with second- and third-year law students.

### Sanford Thatcher, editor and publisher

*Sanford G. Thatcher was an undergraduate philosophy major at Princeton University and continued studying philosophy in graduate school at Columbia for a year and then back at Princeton for another year before deciding to pursue a career outside the philosophy profession. He was employed for 22 years by Princeton University Press, where he started as a copyeditor and ended as editor-in-chief. He was director of Penn State University Press from 1989 to 2009. He served on the Copyright Committee of the Association of American University Presses from 1972 to 2015 and has served on the Copyright Committee of the Association of American Publishers since 1974 and on the board of directors of the Copyright Clearance Center since 1992. He served twice for three-year terms each time on the AAUP board of directors and was president of the AAUP in 2007-2008. In retirement he acquires books part-time in political science for Lynne Rienner Publishers and in political theory for the University of Rochester Press.*


If anyone had asked me in mid-1967 when I joined Princeton University Press as a fledgling copyeditor whether my training in philosophy at Princeton and Columbia would likely contribute much to my career, I would have said, “Probably not.” But thirty years

later, having reached the pinnacle of my profession as director of a university press and president of the Association of American University Presses, I could then look back on those intervening years and reach quite the opposite conclusion: “Decidedly so” is the answer I would have given to the same question if asked of me in 2007. Let me explain why by showing how philosophy helped me during each stage of my career.

Good copyediting requires a special sensitivity to language and skill in using it. My education in philosophy not only taught me to be a careful writer myself but gave me the ability to help others write more clearly and precisely. Philosophy teaches one to be attuned to nuances of meaning, and it also provides instruction in the art of constructing cogent arguments, by organizing thoughts thematically and using evidence logically to support theses put forward. This kind of training proved invaluable to me during the three years I worked principally as a copyeditor, when I went through manuscripts line by line trying to help authors make the meanings of their statements as clear as possible and the organization of their arguments structurally and logically sound.

As I moved into acquiring manuscripts in 1969, these same skills continued to serve me well, but were applied at a different level of analysis—more at the macro than the micro level. Acquiring editors need to make quick but reliable assessments of the merits of manuscripts, in order to judge whether they would likely contribute significantly to the advancement of scholarship and to the development of the press’s list and whether they are therefore worth subjecting to further scrutiny by experts in the field. The ability to detect carelessness in the use of language to convey meaning and to construct arguments enabled me to make such preliminary judgments about manuscripts no matter what their specific subject matter might be. And as acquiring editors usually need to cover more fields than they can be reasonably expected to have any special academic expertise in themselves, this generalized capacity helped me become an efficient editorial “gatekeeper.”

Princeton University Press, having no other editors on its staff at the time with any special knowledge of philosophy, also gave me the opportunity to exercise my training in the field more directly. Even while still a copyeditor, I was permitted to screen manuscripts submitted by philosophers and recommend what action should be taken on them. When I succeeded the acquiring editor who was responsible for the social sciences, I was allowed to start actively developing a list in philosophy, which theretofore had not been a strength at that press. One early opportunity I had to make a contribution came from my membership in the Society of Philosophy and Public Policy, which had been established in May 1969. From discussions in that group, led by Marshall Cohen and Tom Nagel, arose the suggestion to found a new journal, and I jumped at the chance to help get *Philosophy and Public Affairs* launched at Princeton University Press in 1971. Many other successes followed, most notably perhaps the publication in 1979 of Richard Rorty’s now classic *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature*, for which I had the special pleasure of being the sponsoring editor, having earlier been a student of Rorty (who was second reader of my Princeton senior thesis on Sartre’s ethics, with Walter Kaufmann as first reader).

While advancing through various administrative positions at Princeton, to assistant director in 1977 and then editor-in-chief in 1985, I continued to work as an acquiring editor, as I did later even while being director of a press. Thus these skills of manuscript analysis have served me in good stead throughout my entire career. For a much more detailed discussion of what is involved in this kind of job in scholarly publishing, readers may want to consult my essay entitled “Listbuilding at University Presses”  in *Editors as Gatekeepers*, edited

by Rita J. Simon and James F. Fyfe (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 1994), pages 209–58, which is freely accessible at the above link.

Being director of a press necessarily broadens one's horizons to make one more acutely conscious of how the business of scholarly publishing fits into the wider worlds both of higher education and of the general publishing industry. Planning the future of one's own press requires thinking systematically, with awareness of the complex interconnections and conflicts between the demands of the tenure-and-promotion process within universities, which presses are inevitably entangled with, and the demands of the marketplace, which presses must heed if they are to survive as fully or partially self-supporting enterprises. Training in philosophy gives one this wider vision and an appreciation for systemic complexity.

Copyright law, which undergirds all publishing, is a good example of one application of systematic thought. The debates raging now over how "fair use" should apply in our new era of electronic communications show well how errors can easily be made by focusing too narrowly on one element of the system of scholarly communication and being oblivious to the bigger picture. This is a subject in which I early took special interest, becoming a member in the early 1970s of the copyright committees of two publishing trade associations and later a member of the board of directors of the Copyright Clearance Center, which was established in 1978 when the Copyright Act of 1976 went into effect. Copyright has been justly called "the metaphysics of the law." What better training, then, could one have to develop some expertise in it than philosophy?

Publishing, I conclude after almost a half-century in the business, offers a hospitable environment for philosophers, whose skills can find ready application perhaps especially in editorial departments. For anyone interested in exploring a career in this profession, I would highly recommend attending one of the summer institutes that offer an intensive exposure to the business of publishing, those at the University of Denver and at Columbia being the best by common acclaim. I can't say that taking such a course is absolutely necessary—as I just leapt into the business myself without any such prior introduction—but the networking that comes through these institutions can only help newcomers get their feet in the door, which is not always an easy task as there are always many more applicants than there are jobs available. Internships also offer a good introduction to the business and are available at many university presses and also at some commercial houses.

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**Are you a philosopher who works outside academia?**

*We would welcome additional biographies from philosophers who would like to share their experience in working "beyond the academy."*

*If you would like to submit a brief essay for consideration for a future edition, please send it to [info@apaonline.org](mailto:info@apaonline.org).*

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## SECTION 6

# Advice on Applying for Jobs



This section gives some general suggestions for philosophers who might be considering a non-academic career, or trying to find such a career, or just a job. This is not a replacement for more specific counseling by those qualified to give it: professional career counselors, placement (and outplacement) advisors, and recruiters.

One activity is vital: talking to people. Some of the conversations will not be beneficial, but some will be, and it is not possible to tell in advance which people will turn out to be the helpful ones or which bit of advice is germane. Talk to your friends. Talk to your friends' friends. Contact people who have made the transition from academic philosophy to a non-academic career. (But be careful not to impose. Such people are often willing to give advice, but not necessarily at the very moment that a call comes in.) In short: network, network, network.

The most general point to be made here is that philosophers, by virtue of being philosophers, have skills, talents, and qualifications applicable to many non-academic fields. In a number of fields where they lack a knowledge of the day-to-day work, they have at least a majority of the capacities that determine success in that work over the long run. These points are not generally stressed in either graduate or undergraduate education in philosophy; and while philosophy departments are becoming more aware of non-academic career paths and the rapid transferability of philosophical training to non-academic pursuits, few placement officers have much knowledge of the range of non-academic opportunities for philosophers.

At the same time, it is important to remember that making the move from academic philosophy, or graduate school, to a non-academic career requires first a voyage of discovery, to explore regions where there may be no marked career paths. And second, it is important to remember that getting a job outside of the academy, especially for somebody whose professional experience is strictly academic, may require you to convince potential employers that your skills as a philosopher are valuable to other kinds of work.

## Researching Fields

An assessment of your general interests and educational background will indicate some fields for exploration, but you may also benefit greatly from considering more career options than those that seem initially appealing. As the *Opportunities Outside Academia*  and *Biographical Essays*  sections earlier in this document suggest, the range of positions philosophers have found congenial is surprisingly wide. There are, moreover, jobs that,

though they may not initially be attractive, can in time be tailored to your interests. In this connection, the following points may be useful.

First, without research into the nature of non-academic jobs, you are likely to overlook potentially attractive options. Second, without some knowledge of the demands of non-academic jobs, you may have trouble getting the job even if you are qualified. This is because, by and large, non-academic employers will not have a clear idea of what a philosopher can contribute and may even begin with the assumption that philosophical training is quite unlikely to be relevant.

There is much literature on many kinds of jobs, but often your best resource will be an informed person in the field willing to talk about careers in that area. Explore your own contacts, talk to your department's placement officer or your institution's career counseling center, or seek contacts through an organization to which you belong. In exploring career options, you may do well to get information about positions above what appears to be the usual entry level for college graduates who have little or no experience or special training in the field. You may, in some such cases, be able to start higher up than is usual by demonstrating to the employer that your overall training is appropriate to the higher level job, or at least has prepared you to do it well given a brief orientation or training period.

## Informational Interviewing

Once you have identified some companies, industries, or areas in which you are interested, it can be very helpful to conduct informational interviews, in which you can often learn about possible jobs and career paths, convey relevant information about yourself, present yourself as a qualified potential worker, and develop a contact useful in seeking a future position. To set up an informational interview, contact (usually by email) the person in an organization who is responsible for the project or area one is exploring, explain briefly what you want to know (indicating, if possible, what sorts of things one has already learned), and request an appointment to discuss the matter. If you have a personal or professional connection with the person you're contacting, such as a mutual acquaintance or shared alma mater, all the better—and mention as much in your initial inquiry.

Come to the interview prepared with questions you hope your contact can answer to help you determine whether this type of employment would be attractive to you. Don't attempt to turn the informational interview into a job interview. If the interviewer wishes to pursue possible employment, that is another matter, but otherwise, efforts to secure a job in the organization in question should be made later.

## Job Applications and Interviews

When you find a job you're interested in, you'll then have to apply and interview for it. Two aspects of the interview process deserve particular comment: getting an interview with a non-academic employer and conducting oneself in such an interview. Placement advisors, previous employers, friends, and contacts are useful resources in both processes, but it may help to add just these few points.

The first is generally familiar, yet bears repetition: *a vita is not a résumé* and is not normally appropriate for non-academic applications. (Some suggestions about writing résumés appear below.) Second, when applying for positions, cover letters are often particularly important. Such letters should be brief—normally only one page—and are an



excellent opportunity to explain how your (academic and philosophical) training prepares you for the position and why you are interested. If it is not obvious that you have the announced qualifications for the position, such a letter can state, in factual rather than self-congratulatory language, the skills you have and how you acquired them.

A third point concerns conduct in interviews. Philosophers and students of philosophy often must on the one hand know as much as they can about how their philosophical capacities bear on the job and express this well, and yet on the other hand resist being defensive or loquacious about their education. Asking the right questions and speaking from the employer's perspective can help greatly. Before applying for a job, identify, as much as possible, ways in which the work in the organization and in the particular position matches your abilities. Then, in both your cover letter and a subsequent job interview, use this information to discuss specifically how, if hired, you will be an asset to the employer. In doing so, you can demonstrate to the employer that your philosophical training, combined with teaching and other experience, is sufficient to warrant starting at a high level of responsibility or with greater autonomy than usual. Quite apart from the specific content of the interview, however, it is likely to be important to go beyond offering solid, pertinent information about your capacities in relation to the work of the organization in question. Job interviewers will usually be seriously considering your ability to get along with others and to put people at ease, and there is no substitute for good will and a cooperative disposition.

Follow-up on interviews is important. While there are times when it is clear after an interview that there is no point in pursuing the position further, there are also times when appropriate follow-up can lead to an offer that would not otherwise be extended. Where there is a promising but uncertain prospect, one may find it desirable, after an interview, to try (without being intrusive) to get more information about the organization from one or more persons employed there. This can be highly useful if there are further steps in the hiring process, such as a second interview. On the other hand, if you do not receive an offer, it may be useful, in connection with future applications, to make a tactful inquiry regarding your perceived strengths and weaknesses. And no matter how the interview went, it is always recommended to send a prompt thank-you note—handwritten if possible, but email is becoming increasingly acceptable.

## Résumés

Résumés can be prepared in many ways, and for different purposes, and it may be helpful to have different résumés for different fields or positions. Alternative résumés are particularly recommended when applying for jobs with very different sorts of requirements. Résumés most often emphasize the job experience one has had, normally listing employers in reverse chronological order. However, this is not the only approach to structuring a résumé. You might instead focus on the positions you have held (making chronology, and perhaps even employers, secondary), the skills you have to offer (with particular emphasis on the skills needed for the job you are applying for), or some combination of these. If you have little work experience outside of academia, a skills-based résumé may be an especially good choice, as it allows you to highlight the ways your academic training has prepared you for the job you are seeking. In any case, brevity, readability, and an active, positive tone are important.

Résumés are used most often by prospective employers to decide whom to interview, frequently from a long list of applicants. In a large organization, it is not uncommon for the person responsible for screening to know the job requirements only in outline. Keep

this in mind when writing résumés, which are often a basis for speedy elimination of most applicants.

Employment counselors often caution against sending unsolicited résumés or, if they must be sent, making them short, job-specific, and skill-oriented. They usually recommend making personal contacts instead, preferably with people who have the final hiring authority rather than their personnel officers. They often stress that, as in writing a résumé, one be brief and concentrate on conveying skills appropriate to the work of the prospective employer.

## Pursuing Specialized Training

As noted above, among the non-academic jobs that philosophers have found rewarding are a number that cannot be obtained without some specialized training. It is clearly important to determine, in advance of application if possible, whether a position absolutely requires special training as a condition of employment (or success). It should be emphasized, however, that recent years have plainly shown that many kinds of specialized training present no obstacle to philosophers or students of philosophy, provided they have the time and money for further coursework, a new degree, or a suitable training program. Philosophers and philosophy students (including undergraduate majors) have pursued a wide variety of courses of special training, from law school and computer science programs, to programs in business administration, medicine, theology, teacher certification, and more.

## Training on the Job

Though some jobs and career paths require specialized training, an immense amount of such training (and much general training) is done by employers on the job. Many employers train employees at considerable expense even when they have hired them expecting good preparation for the relevant jobs. This is an important fact for philosophers interested in non-academic employment. Philosophers and students of philosophy tend to be eminently capable of learning fast. In some instances, particularly where they are fairly close to meeting the technical qualifications for a position that interests them, the main obstacle to their obtaining one may be the lack of a good way to communicate the extent of their preparation. Some non-academic employers can be convinced—and many already know—that it is preferable to hire a better person and do on-the-job training than to employ a certified professional who has fewer of the basic abilities that produce high-quality work over the years.

## Staying Connected















### Retaining professional identification with philosophy

Philosophers whose careers are outside academia can maintain philosophical identifications and in many cases may benefit much from so doing. There is certainly no need for philosophers or students of philosophy to regard taking a (permanent) non-academic position as “leaving philosophy.” To call attention to some of the ways in which non-academically employed philosophers can continue their philosophical inquiries and remain actively in touch with philosophical colleagues, a few of the existing opportunities and models are described below.





## Philosophy Blogs and Websites

The many philosophy blogs (with more launching all the time) are a good way to stay in touch with colleagues, activities, and events in academic philosophy. There are also a number of philosophy websites and electronic journals that may be of interest to philosophers working outside academia. The following is just a selection of these resources active at the time this document was prepared.

### Blogs

- Blog of the APA 
- Brains Blog 
- Certain Doubts 
- Daily Nous 
- Ethics Etc 
- Experimental Philosophy 
- Feminist Philosophers 
- Goodbye, Academia! 
- It's Only A Theory 
- Leiter Reports 
- New APPS: Art, Politics, Philosophy, Science 
- PEA Soup 
- Philosophers Cocoon 
- public reason 

### Websites and Online Journals

- Notre Dame Philosophical Reviews 
- PhilEvents 
- PhilPapers 
- Society for Phenomenology and Existential Philosophy (SPEP) 

## Retaining Affiliations with Philosophy Departments

Many philosophy departments interact with non-academically employed philosophers near them, and even those that do not currently have established relationships with philosophers working outside academia would likely be quite receptive to such colleagues who wish to join them in some of the department's activities. Moreover, non-academically employed philosophers may, and in a number of cases have, become valuable resources

for academics—e.g., in teaching and research in applied ethics or computer theory. And academics may, and sometimes have, become resources for non-academic colleagues—e.g., in relation to policy issues or questions about the structure and content of important documents. Philosophers working outside academia can also serve as a resource for philosophy students. And given certain trends in professional and business education, there may be an increasing role in teaching, or at least in giving special lectures, for successful business and professional people with advanced academic training. Reach out to philosophy departments near you and explore how you can be a resource to them and vice versa.

## The APA






### Membership

Non-academically employed philosophers are welcome to belong to the APA. In addition to regular membership (which non-academic philosophers are welcome to hold), the APA has a colleague membership option specifically designed for philosophers working outside academia, which allows you to remain connected to your professional association and receive many membership benefits at a reduced rate.


### Meetings


Even without membership, non-academic philosophers are welcome to attend APA divisional meetings. APA members may submit papers for consideration for meeting programs, and any philosopher may volunteer to comment or chair a session. Program committees use anonymous review, so the papers of philosophers working outside academia will be judged exactly as are the papers submitted by academic philosophers, and often commentator and session chair positions are offered first to those who submit papers that are not accepted. Organizers of group sessions at APA meetings may in some cases also consider volunteers to present, comment, or chair. And the APA is quite willing to assist groups of non-academically employed philosophers who would like to meet at a divisional meeting.

### Committees

APA committees are open to all APA members, including non-academic philosophers. Philosophers working outside academia might be particularly well suited to service on the APA's Committee on Non-academic Careers  (which is responsible for this document), as well as the Committee on Philosophy and Computers , Committee on Philosophy and Law , Committee on Philosophy and Medicine , and Committee on the Status and Future of the Profession .

### Prizes

To encourage philosophical writing by non-academically employed philosophers, the APA offers a prize for the best essay submitted by a member of the APA who is not in long-term academic employment. To learn more about this prize, visit the *Journal of Value Inquiry* Prize page .

APA members outside of academia are also eligible for nearly all other APA prizes .

## Publication

Many philosophy journals use anonymous review. None requires academic affiliation as a condition of acceptance, and a significant number of authors of articles in philosophy journals do not list an academic affiliation. Some non-academically employed philosophers have also published in journals or magazines in the area of their employment, and some of their writings have become highly respected in the relevant fields. This sort of publication can lead to invitations to do consulting. Some of this work is also potentially useful in producing writings of interest to philosophical publications.

## Grant opportunities

There are many agencies, public and private, whose programs or grants might interest non-academically employed philosophers. Many grant and fellowship opportunities of interest to philosophers are listed on the APA website.

### Grants and Fellowships

- APA Grant Programs [🔗](#)
- Non-APA Prizes, Grants, and Fellowships [🔗](#)
- National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) Grants [🔗](#)

## Groups of Independent Scholars

Many disciplinary and interdisciplinary research organizations have developed near campuses and urban areas. They range from small local interdisciplinary groups such as the Princeton Research Forum [🔗](#) to large organizations such as the National Council of Independent Scholars (NCIS) [🔗](#). NCIS runs conferences, publishes a journal, and maintains a website with lots of useful links. Thanks to social media, there are now similar online groups and networks of philosophers and those trained in other disciplines who have left academia.

### Independent Scholar Groups and Organizations

- Canadian Academy of Independent Scholars [🔗](#)
- National Council of Independent Scholars [🔗](#)
- Professional Philosophers in Industry (LinkedIn) [🔗](#)
- Ronin Institute [🔗](#)
- Versatile PhD [🔗](#)

## SECTION 7

# Additional Resources

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## Consulting


- [CaseInterview.com](#) 
- [Independent Educational Consultants Association](#) 
- [Vault](#) 
- [Wetfeet](#) 


## Cultural and Historical Organizations


- [American Alliance of Museums](#) 
- [American Cultural Resources Association](#) 
- [Global Museum](#) 
- [National Council on Public History](#) 
- [New York Foundation for the Arts](#) 


## Entrepreneurship


- [All Business](#) 


*Information, products, and services for entrepreneurs, small businesses and professionals to start, manage, finance and build a business.*
- [Entrepreneur.com](#) 

*Information to help start, grow or manage a small business.*
- [Inc.com](#) 

*Advice, tools, and services, to help business owners and CEOs start, run, and grow their businesses.*
- [Online Business Advisor](#) 

*Free business advice on various topics in the form of training segments, articles, manuals/workbooks.*
- [Service Corps of Retired Executives \(SCORE\)](#) 

*SCORE is made up of prominent and retired business executives who volunteer their time to advise people on how to start for-profit and not-for-profit enterprises.*
- [Small Business Marketing](#) 



*The Wall Street Journal center for small business and entrepreneurs.*
- [VentureWell](#) 

*Association of colleges and universities that support technology innovation and entrepreneurship in higher education to create experiential learning opportunities for students, and successful, socially beneficial businesses. Offers grants, competitions, courses, and networking opportunities.*

## Federal Government




- Department of Defense 
- Department of Defense Civilian Careers 
- Department of Health and Human Services 
- Department of State 
- Department of State Careers 
- Federal Government Jobs 
- Federal Government Student Jobs: Internships, Fellows, Summer Jobs 
- Federal Jobs Digest 
- Federal Research Service Career Opportunities 
- Go Government 
- GovernmentJobs.com 
- Library of Congress Opportunities 
- National Endowment for the Arts 
- National Endowment for the Humanities 
- Opportunities in Public Affairs 
- Partnership for Public Service 
- Pathways for Students and Recent Graduates to Federal Careers 
- Presidential Management Fellows Program 
- USAJOBS, The Federal Government's Official Jobs Site 

## Financial Services

- American Association of Finance & Accounting 
- Association for Financial Professionals 
- Careers in Business 
- Financial Management Association International 
- New York Society of Security Analysts 
- The American Finance Association 
- Wetfeet 













## Government Resources

- [BusinessUSA](#)   
*The Official Business Link to the US Government.*
- [Internal Revenue Service: Starting a Business](#)   
*Information on federal tax responsibilities of small business owners.*
- [Small Business Administration](#)   
*Independent agency of the federal government to aid, counsel, assist, and protect the interests of small business concerns.*

## Independent Work



- [Freelancer's Union](#) 
- [Guru Employer](#) 
- [Solo Gig](#) 
- [UpWork](#) 

## Information on Non-academic Careers











- [Brown University CareerLAB](#) 
- [Career Diversity Resources \(American Historical Association\)](#) 
- [Columbia Non-academic Careers Brochure](#) 
- [Free Range Philosophers](#) 
- [The Career Diversity Five Skills \(American Historical Association\)](#) 
- [The Many Careers of History PhDs: A Study of Job Outcomes, Spring 2013 \(American Historical Association\)](#) 
- [NewAPPS Series on Philosophers who work outside of academia](#)
  - [Part 1: How and why do they end up there?](#) 
  - [Part 2: What's it like to have a nonacademic job?](#) 
  - [Part 3: Transferrable skills and concrete advice](#) 
- [University of Michigan Non-academic Careers Brochure](#) 

## International Development





- [Going Global](#) 
- [United Nations Foundation](#) 
- [United States Agency for International Development](#) 

- United States Institute of Peace Index of Research Centers in International Relations 
- William J. Clinton Foundation 





### Job Sources and Lists

- Anne Krook: Practical Workplace Advice 
- Higher Ed Jobs 
- Idealist.org 
- Inside Higher Ed Careers 
- National Association of Graduate-Professional Students 
- Monster.com 
- PhDs.org 
- PhDs at Work 
- Versatile PhD 
- Where to Find Information on Nonacademic Careers (Chronicle of Higher Education) 




### Nonprofits

- Council on Foundations 
- Foundation Center 
- Idealist 
- National Council of Nonprofits 
- Nonprofit Career Network 
- The Chronicle of Philanthropy 



### Professional Research

- National Institute for Research Advancement's World Directory of Think Tanks 
- United States Department of State Index of Think Tanks 
- United States Institute of Peace Index of Research Centers in International Relations 
- Wordpress Index of International Think Tanks and Research Organizations 



## Publishing

- Association of American Publishers 
- Publishers Market Place, Lunch Job Board 
- Publishers Weekly 




## Resources for Minorities

- Minority Business Development Agency   
*Federal agency dedicated to advancing the establishment and growth of minority-owned firms in the United States.*
- National Minority Business Council   
*Organization of business leaders dedicating to supporting and expanding opportunities for minority and women business owners.*








## Resources for Social Entrepreneurs

- Ashoka   
*A global organization that identifies and invests in leading social entrepreneurs.*
- Skoll Foundation   
*Global online community where social entrepreneurs and other practitioners of the social benefit sector connect to network, learn, inspire, and share resources.*

## Resources for Women




- Ellevest Network   
*A professional network for women.*
- Ladies Who Launch   
*Provides online resources and connections for women entrepreneurs.*
- Office of Women's Business Ownership   
*Resources for women listed by OWBO, a program of the Small Business Administration.*

## Secondary School Teaching

- Carney, Sandoe & Associates 
- High School Matters: The Secondary Section 
- Lesson Planet 
- National Association of Independent Schools 
- Office of Elementary and Secondary Education 
- PLATO (Philosophy Learning and Teaching Organization) 
- TES 


- Teach for America 
- TNTP Teaching Fellows 
- USGS Educational Resources for Secondary Grades 

## Start-up Resources

- All Business—Starting a Business   
*Articles on various topics related to starting a business.*
- Entrepreneur.com—Starting a Business   
*Articles on various topics related to starting a business.*
- My Own Business   
*A free course on how to start a business.*

## SECTION 8

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*Beyond Academia: Professional Opportunities for Philosophers* is the successor of several earlier brochures. The first of these, *Careers for Philosophers*, was published in the *Proceedings and Addresses of the American Philosophical Association*, Vol. 58 number 2, in November 1984. Its principal authors were Robert Audi, Donald Scherer, and members of the Committee on Career Opportunities.

The 1999 edition of this booklet, titled *Non-academic Careers in Philosophy?*, was principally the work of Stephanie Lewis and Michael Pritchard; much of their work remains in this edition, especially in the **Advice on Applying for Jobs**  section. Anthony Hartle and Julie Gowan also contributed to that edition. In April 2002, APA staff member Katherine A. Dettwyler edited the brochure for online publication.

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