

WHEN TO SUBMIT YOUR BOOK PROPOSAL TO PUBLISHERS

BEFORE YOU FINISH A FULL DRAFT OF YOUR MANUSCRIPT OR AFTER?

ARE YOU WRITING A TRADE BOOK OR AN ACADEMIC BOOK?

ACADEMIC

DO YOU ALREADY KNOW THE CORE ARGUMENT AND TAKEAWAY OF YOUR BOOK?

YES

NO

TRADE

DO YOU WANT EXTERNAL VALIDATION OR INPUT FROM EDITORS BEFORE YOU FINISH?

KEEP WORKING
on your manuscript until you can articulate its thesis and stakes in your proposal.

SUBMIT PROPOSAL FIRST

You'll want to make sure there's a market for your book before you invest too much time into writing it. You may need to secure representation from a literary agent if you plan to target large publishers.

YES

NOT NECESSARILY

KEEP WORKING

Your goals could shift by the time you finish. You may want to wait before committing to a publishing partner. Submitting a full manuscript allows for a streamlined peer review process and makes your book less of a risk for the publisher.

KEEP WORKING

though you can submit a proposal to gauge tentative interest.

YES

DOES YOUR TOP PRESS TYPICALLY REQUIRE A FULL DRAFT BEFORE ISSUING A CONTRACT?

NO

ARE YOU WITHIN A YEAR OR TWO OF FINISHING THE MANUSCRIPT?

YES

NO

GO AHEAD AND SUBMIT

Follow your target press's submission instructions. If you're offered an advance contract after review of the proposal, you'll set a due date for submitting the full manuscript which will likely also be peer reviewed before it's finally approved for publication.

DO YOU FIND EXTERNAL DEADLINES MOTIVATING OR STRESSFUL?

MOTIVATING

STRESSFUL

NO

YES

DO YOU NEED AN ADVANCE CONTRACT FOR SOME REASON THAT OUTWEIGHS THE STRESS OF A DEADLINE?

CHECK OUT THE BOOK PROPOSAL BOOK FOR MORE ON THE ACQUISITIONS PROCESS FOR SCHOLARLY BOOKS