



# PUBLISHING GUIDE

This is a guide to the publishing process of Lost & Found: The CUNY Poetics Document Initiative, detailing the process from initial pitch to publication.

Not all Lost & Found research projects take the form of a chapbook. Other outcomes include research papers, conferences, workshops and performances; dissertation chapters; blog posts on *Distributaries: New Writing in the Public Humanities* or other public venues; exhibitions and catalogues; and classes. The Lost & Found team is here to support these projects and outputs as well! Be in touch with the managing editor to learn more about how we can amplify your work.

## **The Nature of the Work**

All Lost & Found work involves both process and discovery, and they are related. In order to “discover” something, the researcher(s) working on a project must know enough about the person or era being explored in order to understand what constitutes a “discovery.” Sometimes the person and their work is not well-known; in other cases, the person is very well-known but certain aspects of their work, or relationships revealed in correspondence or other materials, have not received the attention they deserve. The process part of the work is constant—in other words, discovery continues through deeper familiarization with a person, an archive, a historical moment, or a movement being researched. The materials themselves lead the way, not the editor’s ideas about them. The materials are the evidence through which the editor needs to both see, examine, and describe.

The primary intention of a Lost & Found editor is to build trust with their living and deceased interlocutors. This is not something one can learn in a seminar but is created through the process of approaching the materials, the heirs, the friends, the archivists, and everyone else along the way, including the L&F team and anyone else brought to bear on the project. There are obvious occasions when relationships need to be formalized, whether with living artists, Estates, heirs, or archives, so that everyone’s expectations and needs are clearly defined.

Finally, our practices of recuperative editorship prioritize the work and the people who originally created it. This fundamental principle helps determine the style of our introductions,

biographies, and the selection of the materials. The final versions of our projects are not speculative but fact and evidence-based, which is why Lost & Found emphasizes these processes alongside collaboration with a full range of editors, other scholars, and the L&F team. In other words, editing must be done with great care for the sake of the original creator, for that person's heirs, for the archive, for the reading public, and for the tradition of excellence in scholarship.

## **What is a Lost & Found chapbook?**

A traditional Lost & Found chapbook is a pamphlet-style publication that ranges from 40-60 pages. The chapbook presents previously unpublished materials from the archive, and a contextualizing introduction by the editor that narrates their personal research trajectory while also situating the poet's work in a larger conversation. Chapbooks can include introductions by key interlocutors in the field; for example, artist Jimmie Durham introduced poet and educator Jack Forbes' institutional papers; and a biography. We publish our chapbooks as a bundle annually. Bundles usually develop around given themes, for example, Series 8 included poets & pedagogues.

Chapbooks have had a historically significant role in the development of countercultural poetry creation and scholarship. For more information about the chapbook as a method and a form, please read this interview by poet [Brian Teare](#); this history of the chapbook by previous Lost & Found editor [Kyle Waugh](#); or this amazing curated list of thirty+ Latinx chapbooks by Lost & Found friend, poet, and legacy worker, [Urayoán Noel](#). You can also review an [interview](#) between Granary Books Director Mary Catherine (MC) Kinniburgh and L&F founder Ammiel Alcalay; a [talk](#) MC gave about navigating literary archives at U. Buffalo; or [this](#) oral history of Telephone Books that MC conducted with Maureen Owen. It outlines the importance of publishing, self-made literary culture, and the ongoing vitality of L&F-adjacent communities. The spirit and ethos of our work is articulated in this NYT article called [Fading Poetry](#) that founder Ammiel Alcalay published on April 4, 2001.

## **What is Lost & Found Elsewhere?**

Sometimes, a researcher encounters a body of work that warrants a full publication with a trade or university press. For example, Rowena Kennedy Epstein found a previously unpublished novel by Muriel Rukeyser during their archival research endeavor. That book, *Costa Brava or Savage Coast*, was published by Feminist Press as a Lost & Found Elsewhere project. We are happy to facilitate conversations with trade and university presses.

Alternatively, if you develop a relationship with a larger press based on your work published through Lost & Found, we are able to work with the press on distribution and promotion, significantly expanding the reach of the publication through partnership. If you think your

chapbook might be a pathway to a bigger publication project, reach out to a senior editor to discuss.

## **Who is eligible?**

Current CUNY students who have: 1) previously received a Lost & Found research fellowship to develop an archival research project; 2) surfaced materials that warrant publication, and; 3) participated in a six-month period of engagement in the mentorship community before publication to ensure the editorial process and vision is in line with Lost & Found's mission.

## **What are we looking for in a pitch?**

The proposal is an important way for Lost & Found to hone your focus as we work closely with you to establish our vision for the book and set out our goals for what we hope the book will achieve.

On the level of scholarship, there are simple formal practices that should be followed:

1) developing and upholding a community agreement with main interlocutors, whether they are living artists/writers, heirs, archivists, etc.

2) paying citational dues and acknowledging others who are doing work in the field/discourse

3) developing an annotated bib to demonstrate scholarly breadth

4) establishing contact with people for whom the material is still vital and alive

## **What kinds of material makes a compelling Lost & Found chapbook?**

1) archival research that illustrates fuller, more complex literary histories;

2) writing that has been unjustly marginalized within scholarly spheres;

3) previously unpublished work that spotlights an author's personhood, their impact on the world, and connects them to their contemporaries (through friendship, camaraderie, companionship, or collaboration);

4) multigenre work that demonstrates creative crosscurrents that connect art, poetry, music, teaching, and political movements;

5) extra-poetic work that demonstrates unexpected relationships (including letters, collaborative projects, and documents that chronicle movement or institution building efforts).

## **Your chapbook pitch must include:**

1. Three paragraphs detailing:
  - i. the importance of the legacy work and/or scholarly research,
  - ii. where it fits in the world and how it intervenes in your field, and
  - iii. its intended audience. Please note that Lost & Found is geared toward a general readership and your writing should be challenging yet accessible.
2. Explain the current status of the work. This encompasses an account of your progress in researching and developing the manuscript and the extent of your writing and drafting thus far. This section should include your plans for finalizing the manuscript, which must respect the affordances and limitations of the chapbook form.
3. We suggest that the pitch concludes with a brief consideration of the project's post-publication trajectory as you anticipate it. Keep in mind that Lost & Found publications often create new readerships and open new pathways to trade press and university publications. How might this work advance your growth as a scholar, creator, or activist? How will you help Lost & Found ensure this book reaches the community of readers you envision for it? Underscore how your work meets the Lost & Found mission to support emerging archival scholars while supplying its audience with intellectually exciting new material and points of view expanding the field of 20th century literary and poetry studies.

## **What's the Process?**

1. Gathering Period (timeline—fellowship duration, or 6 months):
  - i. Developing raw material into manuscript drafts with senior editors.
  - ii. Gaining initial permissions from the archive, estate, or artist.
  - iii. Meeting regularly with the Lost & Found cohort to review and revise research, select material, and sketch out the main themes of the contextualizing introduction.
2. Manuscript development of L&F chapbook, as well as attention to selecting publicity materials. (timeline—6 months)
  - i. Forming what will be the “finished book.”
  - ii. Taking note of quotes, images, and excerpts to use for publicity and L&F catalogue.
  - iii. Filling out the L&F publicity form.
3. Obtaining Final Permissions:
  - i. Working with the estate, artist, and archives to gain copyright permissions needed for publication or reproduction of materials and images.
  - ii. Working with the Lost & Found administration to pay for and archive rights.
4. Complete Manuscript Draft for Editing (timeline 6 months)
  - i. Period of finalizing the manuscript.
  - ii. This time includes copyediting rounds rather than major editorial changes to the manuscript.
5. Book Layout and Design (timeline 6 months)
  - i. Period working with L&F's designer to finalize the book for print.
6. Publicity
  - i. Promotion period anticipating the official launch and publication date.

- ii. Reaching an Audience: includes pre-order period, email announcement (targeted emails related to your book) call for reviewers, interviews, and book launch/event planning
  - iii. Course adoptions and getting the chapbooks into libraries, archives and community spaces related to your subject
- 7. Printing (timeline-3-4 weeks)
  - i. All chapbooks are printed in-house at The Graduate Center, CUNY's print shop
- 8. Official publication: The book is publicly available for purchase.
- 9. Launch
  - i. Official public event celebrating the book's release or the release of the Lost & Found Series it is a part of.