

## News from Editing Societies



### Save 10% on Open University Courses with the ISTC

by Kathryn Valdal Fourie MISTC, Copy editor, ISTC newsletter InfoPlus+

Members of the Institute of Scientific and Technical Communicators (ISTC) can now get a 10% discount on courses offered by The Open University Centre for Continuing Professional Development (CPD). The ISTC has negotiated this discount as part of our commitment to continued professional development in 2008 and is negotiating with other CPD Training Providers to offer a similar discount.

If you are thinking of further study to increase your skill set, why not join the ISTC to enjoy discounts on courses as well as a broad range of other benefits. The ISTC offers its members:

- Professional recognition
- Online forum with regular job postings
- Monthly newsletter
- Quarterly journal
- Annual conference
- Annual awards
- Local area groups
- Distance learning course
- Special offers

The ISTC is the UK's professional association for technical communicators with strong international ties. To this end, the ISTC is a member of:

- The Professional Associations Research Network (PARN)
- INTECOM: the international body for technical communicators
- TCeurope: the umbrella association for technical communicators in Europe

The ISTC is the oldest association in our field, with a history dating back to 1948, and probably the largest operating on a mainly voluntary basis, run by its members for its members. Why not come along and meet us at the annual ISTC Conference, which will be held in Nottingham on 23–25 September? To learn more about the ISTC Conference and how the ISTC can help you, visit [www.istc.org.uk](http://www.istc.org.uk).

ISTC Journal Editor Marian Newell asked ISTC members what they think of the ISTC. This is what they said:

#### The best thing about the ISTC is...

...its promotion of the technical communication profession in the UK. —Mike Unwalla

...being part of an extended community of professionals: the online groups, journal and newsletter all help you to keep in touch with what others are thinking and doing, giving important information about the latest ideas, tools and methods and a chance to share your own ideas and experience. —John Evans

...(apart from the marvellous Communicator, a superb publication) the online groups because, no matter what the topic, somebody always offers assistance or guidance; without that, the job would be significantly tougher for lots of us. —John Nicholas

...that it is compact enough to facilitate the network of members who support one another in day-to-day questions such as 'Does anyone know who, what, why, how and when...?' — an invaluable facility that is alone worth many times the subscription. —Adrian Young

...being able to keep in touch with other freelancers through the online groups; working mostly at home, it gives me practical and moral support. —Lois Wakeman

...the willingness of members to make use of their own knowledge, experience and time to help each other; the most visible examples of this are the online groups. —Rick Webster

...the knowledge base provided by the members. —Charles White

...it provides me with a professional family to augment my biological and social ones. —Kevin Chilton

#### First volume in new ISTC book series

*XML in Technical Communication* has just been published. It is the first in a new series of books being published by the ISTC. Each title in the series will cover a specific topic of relevance to technical communicators in about 200 pages.

This first title has been written by Charles Cowan FISTC, who is a Principal Technical Writer with the Oracle Corporation. He has worked as a technical communicator for over a quarter of a century, developing documentation for various clients and software companies in Belgium, Germany and Switzerland, as well as in the UK and Ireland. He is an IBM Certified Developer in extensible markup language (XML) and Related Technologies and holds postgraduate qualifications in computing and software development.

The book will be invaluable to anyone who needs a fast introduction to XML and its role in technical communication, such as those whose organisation is deploying an XML-based documentation solution, or freelancers who need to keep pace with technical trends. It caters for technical communicators of all levels of markup