

BUILDING CAREERS BEYOND THE ACADEMY: A Preconference Professional Development Event

Graduate students and early-career scholars are invited to connect with professionals who have pursued non-traditional career paths using their language and area studies expertise, as well as with SASS academic career mentors. This pre-conference event offers practical advice on planning next steps and will help participants develop the knowledge, skills, and networks needed to pursue meaningful, sustainable careers—within and beyond the academy.

Whether you're exploring options, actively job searching, or simply curious about what comes next, this is your space to ask questions, make connections, and see what's possible. Come ready to talk, listen, and leave with new ideas—and new people in your corner.

Date: Thursday, April 23, 2026

Location: Scandinavia House | 58 Park Avenue | New York, NY 10016

10:00 am – 11:00 am

THE VALUE OF ADVANCED DEGREES BEYOND ACADEMIA

Join a conversation with professionals from a range of fields about the value of a humanities education beyond academia—and how to effectively market your skills and advanced degree in other industries.

Moderator: Kimberly La Palm (Executive Director, SASS)

Speakers: Nathan Fischer (Director of Career Services, The Juilliard School), Lena Almström (Founder, Lena Digital Media), Keijo Karjaleinen (Deputy Consul General of Finland, NYC), Ian Briffa, (Career Services Apprentice, The Juilliard School)

11:00 am – 12:00 pm

FROM SCHOLARSHIP TO NEW CAREERS: SASS MEMBERS ON LIFE AFTER ACADEMIA

SASS members who have built careers outside the traditional tenure-track path share how they made the transition.

Moderator: Alison Chang (Senior Program Officer, American Council of Learned Societies)

Speakers: Todd Michelson Ambelang (Senior Academic Librarian, University of Wisconsin Libraries), Dean Bennett (Professor of History, SUNY Schenectady), Amber Cederström (Acquisitions Editor, University of Wisconsin Press)

12:00 pm – 3:00 pm

ASK ME ANYTHING: CAREERS BEYOND ACADEMIA (DROP-IN SESSIONS)

Meet one-on-one with industry professionals and SASS members to ask questions, seek advice, and explore career possibilities within and beyond the academy.

