

# Nicole Mlynaryk

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Dedicated health and life sciences communications specialist with a decade of biology research experience

## PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

### Scientific Communications Manager, Salk Institute for Biological Studies

*January 2024 – Present*

- Manage the scientific communications team, supervising all science writing and illustration functions
- Lead the communication of all institutional news through press releases and media relations
- Develop strategic messaging and coach key opinion leaders for external media and fundraising campaigns
- Serve as editor-in-chief and writer for the institute's quarterly magazine, [Inside Salk](#)
- Co-host the institute's monthly podcast, [Beyond Lab Walls](#)
- Contribute to executive communications, faculty presentations, grant and proposal writing, philanthropic impact reporting, video and commercial scripting, TV/film productions, and more

### Assistant Director of Research Communications, UC San Diego Health Sciences

*June 2021 – December 2023*

- In 2023, served as Interim Director, then Interim Executive Director of Strategic Communications, working with the Vice Chancellor for Health Sciences to plan and execute the university's communications strategy
- Led the communication of university news and research through press releases, news and feature writing, video production, social media content, and the [N Equals One](#) health science podcast
- Managed media relations for key opinion leaders across local and national news outlets
- Served as editor-in-chief of [Discoveries](#) magazine, an award-winning annual publication highlighting successes in health science education, research, and clinical practice
- Developed and socialized a strategic plan to promote equity, diversity, and inclusion in communications; Collected and analyzed demographic data for 2,600 earned and owned media items to report current measures of diversity and establish strategic and quantitative goals for improvement

### Freelance Science Writer

*June 2022 – Present*

- Provide freelance/contract writing and consulting services to a variety of scientific organizations
- Writing projects include science journalism (news and feature writing), institutional writing (press releases, leadership profiles, newsletters), grant writing and consulting, conference summaries, and more
- Worked closely with Blueprint Films, a documentary production company, as the Grant Writer & Scientific Advisor for two film projects on recent innovations in health and science
- Other clients include the Simons Foundation, the Diabetes Research Institute Foundation, the La Jolla Institute of Immunology, UC San Francisco, and Pointe Health

### Instructor, UC San Diego Extension

*September 2022 – March 2025*

- Instructor of Science Writing I and Science Writing II in the Science Communication Certificate Program
- Present lectures and direct weekly writing assignments, providing detailed feedback and editing on students' writing projects as they develop their professional portfolios

### President, San Diego Science Writers Association (SANDSWA)

*January 2022 – January 2024*

- Led a professional association of over 100 science writers and journalists across the San Diego region
- Moderated our monthly board meeting to organize social networking events, skills workshops, career panels, and our popular monthly newsletter

## **Writing Consultant, UC San Diego Writing Hub**

*September 2020 – June 2021*

- Part-time role leading one-on-one writing consultations and group workshops for graduate researchers
- Helped 40+ scientists plan, write, and edit their research manuscripts, grant proposals, theses, conference abstracts, and oral presentations

## **Writer and Editor, NeuWrite-San Diego**

*August 2019 – June 2021*

- Wrote and edited blog posts on a range of neuroscience research topics for lay audiences
- Used Adobe Illustrator to create lay-friendly infographics to visually communicate complex ideas

## **Conference Organizer, ComSciCon-San Diego**

*January – September 2020*

- Co-organized the multi-day science communication conference for graduate students and postdocs
- Led media training and writing workshops and moderated a panel discussion featuring an academic scientist, a public information officer, a science journalist, and a podcaster

## **Graduate Program Leadership, UC San Diego**

*September 2017 – June 2021*

- **Elected Representative, Executive Committee:** Served on the faculty committee to increase academic, financial, and mental health support for graduate students
- **President, Career Development Committee:** Organized career panels and skills workshops, and founded [Job Talk](#), a blog of informational interviews with STEM professionals (1000+ page views/month)
- **Event Coordinator, Neuroscience Outreach Program:** Communicated complex ideas in neuroscience for diverse audiences at 15+ schools and science festivals across San Diego County, with a focus on reaching underserved communities and supporting women in STEM
- **Member, Diversity Committee:** Served on the admissions panel to advocate for students from historically excluded communities and established programs to improve student support and retention

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## **EDUCATION**

### **UC San Diego Extension, La Jolla, CA**

*August 2020 – December 2021*

Science Communication Certificate Program, GPA: 4.0

Completed courses: Science Writing I, News and Feature Writing, The Writer's Art of Interviewing

### **UC San Diego, La Jolla, CA**

*September 2017 – June 2021*

PhD Student, Neurosciences Graduate Program, GPA: 3.924

Earned Master of Science, Neurosciences, 2020

### **Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ**

*September 2011 – May 2015*

BA in Cell Biology and Neuroscience, Minor in Cognitive Science, Summa Cum Laude, GPA: 3.86

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## **RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS**

### **PhD Student, UC San Diego Neurosciences Graduate Program 2017 – 2021**

- Investigated decision-making brain circuitry using two-photon calcium imaging in Dr. Takaki Komiyama's lab

### **Postbaccalaureate IRTA Research Fellow, National Institutes of Health 2015 – 2017**

- Studied visual perception and working memory using fMRI and TMS in Dr. Leslie Ungerleider's lab

### **Amgen Summer Scholar, UC San Diego 2014**

- Evaluated effects of biofeedback on brain connectivity in autism spectrum disorder in Dr. Jamie Pineda's lab

### **Research Assistant, Rutgers University 2013 – 2015**

- Highest honors for research on miRNA and synaptic function in Down Syndrome in Dr. Zhiping Pang's lab