



2025

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# Noble House Publishing Responsibility Strategy Plan

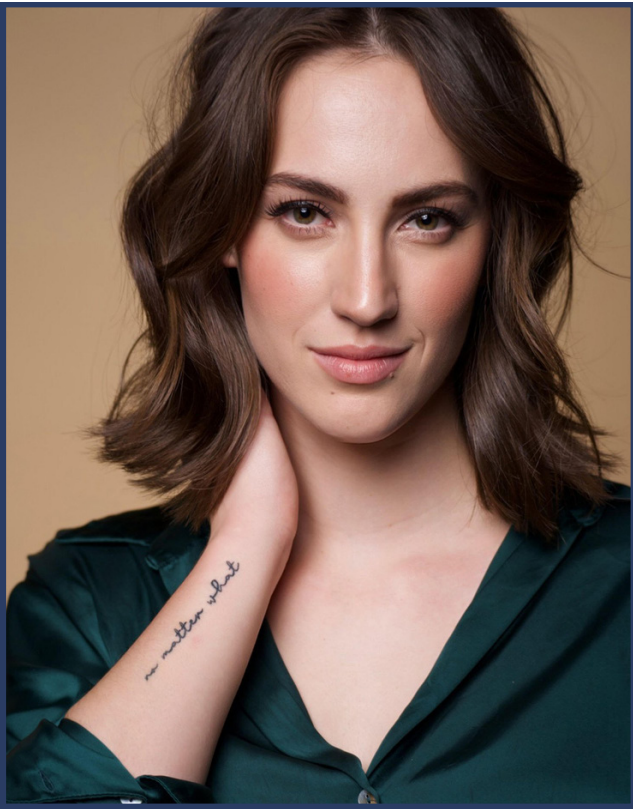
SELINA HEINEN + KENDALL DUFFINA-SALUTO

# Chapter 1

## An Introduction to Noble House Publishing



# Noble House Publishing



“Noble House Publishing stands as a beacon of hope for marginalized voices. With roots in establishing a path for all, we ground ourselves in story. We open minds and doors for those less seen and heard.”

- Founder, Samantha Noble

## About Noble House Publishing

Noble House Publishing is a small, independent book publisher that uplifts unique voices from marginalized communities. Samantha Noble founded the publishing house after years of operating the downtown Atlanta, Georgia bookstore, Noble House Books. After-hours writing clubs, open mic nights, and local zines exposed her to the abundance of local talent. In this digital age, she found that she didn’t need to be in New York to work in publishing– she could do it right here in Atlanta.

Noble House Publishing is committed to elevating diverse authors. We channel our mission both internally with the people we hire and externally with our published authors. Adult Fantasy, Romance, and Romantasy fiction are the charttopping genres of the moment. To capitalize on these trends, we prioritize these stories over other submissions. As our titles gain popularity, we hope to expand into new genres.



Eileen Omosa, Noble House Publishing author of *Ignited by Education*.

The first storefront of Noble House Books, located on Main Street in Downtown Atlanta.



Noble House Publishing notable titles.



# The Publishing Industry

The Publishing Industry is the creation, distribution, and marketing of books and book-adjacent products (e-readers, merchandise, etc). The industry is dominated by the Big 5 publishers in New York, NY– Penguin Random House, Simon & Schuster, Macmillan, Hachette Book Group, and HarperCollins. The present publishing model prioritizes popular authors, like Brandon Sanderson, and trending topics, like political moments, over debut authors and classic literature.

Publishing faces a rocky future. The percentage of American children who read for fun is plummeting (North, 2024). Companies are pressured to find innovative ways to engage new readers if they wish to stand the test of time.



## Why do we need a Responsibility Strategy?

Companies have extensive power over society and, by extension, people. In an era where DEI is diminishing and even being punished, it is more important than ever to remain steadfast in honorable business strategies. While we prioritize our stakeholders, there is always more that we can do, especially as our team grows. Our comprehensive responsibility plan holds three core focuses– the environment, social justice, and workplace culture.

Books are powerful tools of knowledge and must be treated as such. As Legg (2024) states, “educated folk are overly gullible to the written word”. This is prevalent in academia, nonfiction, and even fiction titles. The Publishing Industry as a whole is “idea venture capitalism” (Anonymous), which is essentially the investment into ideas. Because of this, we must back ethical and equitable authors, ideas, and movements. Without strong values, anyone can publish anything and call it the truth.

The Publishing Industry is criticized for gatekeeping and treating diverse voices as a trend. A lack of support and promotional opportunities has led to isolation and exclusion for the few minority voices that are present. Noble House Publishing was specifically founded with a commitment to DEI. It is not enough to be diverse-- we must also be equitable and inclusive.

Lastly, we cannot ignore the environmental impact of capitalism. When we take care of our planet, we take care of each other.

Noble House Publishing was founded from a need, not a want. We will always be loyal to the communities we serve, not our bottom line. We lead by example and show stakeholders that the Big 5 model is not the only way to find success in publishing. We take responsibility seriously and urge other publishers to follow suit.



# Chapter 2

## Environmental Responsibility Strategy

Noble House Publishing's commitment to environmentally-sustainable publishing.

# Environmental Strategy

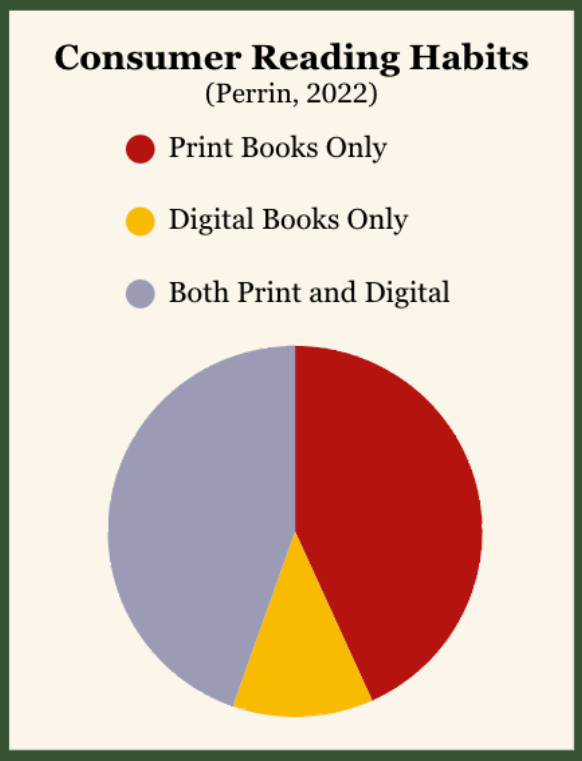
Every business should factor the environment into its long-term goals. A reliance on non-renewable resources hinders scalability and can deter consumers. The Publishing Industry is fairly environmentally conscious, but there is always more we can do to help our planet. Noble House Publishing sets itself apart from traditional publishers in many ways, but our environmental manufacturing model is a large part of our success. We produce only what we need, using the highest quality eco-friendly materials. Print-on-demand works as it sounds– the only books made are those purchased.

This approach prevents waste and pollution (Magadán–Díaz et. al., 2021).

Additionally, working with manufacturers who offer Forest Stewardship Council-certified and recycled paper, eco-inks, and non-toxic chemicals further reduces planetary impact (Ro, 2021). This model requires a higher-than-average manufacturing and delivery time. We prepare consumers for the long wait through detailed product descriptions, a Sustainability page on our website, and a reminder at checkout.

The majority of readers still do so with physical books. However, e-reading is on the rise. Our manufacturing model is as sustainable as possible, but the method of reading that causes the least environmental harm is to read/listen to a book on a device you already own. Noble House Publishing discourages readers from purchasing new ereaders because of the precious metals, like lithium, excavated using troubling labor and environmental practices (Robertson, 2023). These labor practices are, sadly, involved in most technology manufacturing today (Robertson, 2023). This is why reading on a device you already own is the least harmful.

Our Sustainability webpage provides an in-depth explanation of the benefits of our practice while ensuring the same high-quality books as other publishers. Our commitment to moral production sets us apart from other publishers and hopefully attracts mission-aligned authors looking for an alternative to the large publishers. Offering environmental explainers on our website gives consumers the knowledge to make informed choices when choosing how to read our titles. This transparency and ethical commitment should attract stakeholders and steward our success.



NH

HOME

SHOP

BLOG

ABOUT


CONTACT US

# Sustainability

**Noble House Publishing commits itself to ambitious sustainability goals**

Our cutting-edge print-on-demand manufacturing method is the most environmentally sustainable way to print books. See our case study below to learn more about how this model will revolutionize the publishing industry.

**Print-on-demand**



Printing-on-demand is the most environmentally sustainable method to book printing (Ro, 2021).



# Crisis Strategy

In the event of market shifts and supply chain disruptions, we prepared some contingency plans.

## What if...

01. ... There is a shortage of manufacturing resources, such as FSC-certified paper or eco-inks?

Because there is innovative change happening every day, in the event our usual suppliers can no longer deliver, we will research new, cutting-edge, eco-friendly alternatives.

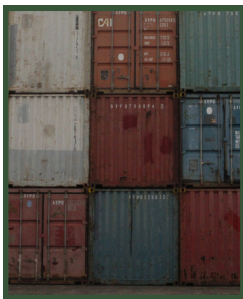


02. ... Our mission-aligned manufacturers go out of business?

We value our manufacturers. They help us provide the lowest-cost and most ethical book production possible. We would be sad to lose their partnership, but we hope comparable partners will be available for collaboration at similar price points.

03 ... Federal legislation, like tariffs, makes resources scarcer and more expensive? .

We will do whatever we can to reduce customer-facing costs. If the cost of, for example, eco-inks manufactured abroad becomes significantly more expensive than traditional inks, we will consider switching to protect our consumers' pocketbooks. However, if our book prices increase by only a few dollars per book, we hope our readers will understand that the new price is worth protecting our planet.



# Chapter 3

## Social Justice Responsibility Strategy

Noble House Publishing's dedication to social justice and inclusion in publishing.



# Social Justice Strategy

Noble House Publishing implemented, and is committed to upholding, policies aiding ethical publishing. These policies allow people to recognize misinformation or propaganda and come to knowledgeable conclusions. We ensure all our published titles have been through numerous rounds of fact-checking and editing by multiple team members.

We have on-staff fact-checkers who are provided to every academic and nonfiction author. They have their own department and are given all the tools needed for success.

This is done by facilitating continual learning for our fact-checkers. Our team attends seminars and workshops annually to ensure high-quality work. We fund optional employee courses through highly rated universities such as NYU and OSU.

If a prospective title is about a topic that we currently have no workable knowledge of, we actively seek out experts in that subject to guarantee accuracy and authenticity. In addition to our dedicated team, we host community book clubs dedicated to dissecting and understanding context clues and subtext, as well as a monthly pay-what-you-can literacy class, in-person and online, to foster informed consumption of all written works.

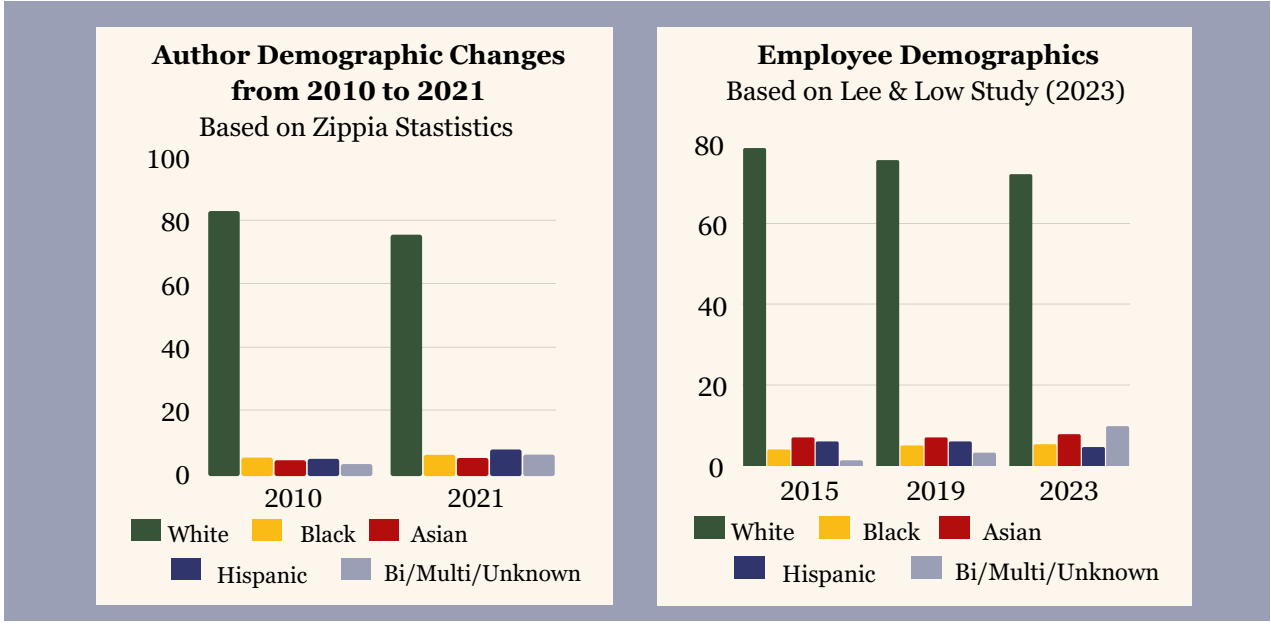
To assist in maintaining a diverse and inclusive workplace, our firm instituted several policies. Standardized and transparent author and employee recruitment strategies will ensure fair hiring practices, a sundry workforce, and give support to the myriad voices we have.

All authors will be given the same advance and then additional generous royalties based on sales. Each department will receive a set acquisition budget to combat issues with limited resources.

All editors, managers, and employees on the marketing team will be trained and well-versed in the need for diversity and how to adequately reach distinct target audiences.

In-person and virtual outreach programs will be held at all kinds of colleges, with a concentration at HBCUs and community colleges to ensure unprejudiced recruitment.

## Our policies are a direct result of troubling industry-wide statistics.



# Crisis Strategy

In the event of any controversies, we have contingency plans in place to ease transitions.

## What if...

01. ... **A controversy requires a book to be recalled or dropped?**

We will research the issue to identify the harm. If the company deems that a recall or drop is needed, we will consult with our manufacturers to see how we can recycle the products that were used in printing.



02. ... **An industry-wide boycott is called?**

Understanding the reasons for the boycott and the significance to our stakeholders is incredibly important. In the event that the company is in line with the boycott, management can assess the demands and move forward in solidarity.

03. ... **A Noble House Publishing author no longer exemplifies the firm's values?**

First, we will assess the possibility of dropping the author completely. To avoid possible calls of discrimination, we will speak to HR and legal staff to ensure that we are following the appropriate procedures. To keep this issue from happening again, additional steps will be added to our in-depth vetting process of incoming authors.



# Chapter 4

## Workplace Culture Responsibility Strategy

Noble House Publishing's devotion to maintaining workplace harmony.



# Workplace Culture Strategy

Workplace culture is often a mirror of the people in leadership positions (Taiwo, n.d.). Employees who “strongly agree that their leaders’ actions align with their words,” are 55% more likely to be engaged with their work (Gallup, 2025).

Currently, there is not a single female CEO amongst the Big 5 publishers, and only one is a man of color. However, outside of the CEOs, the Publishing Industry is overwhelmingly run by white, heterosexual women. Despite more than half of the workforce in publishing being women, only 7% of these women are Asian, 6% are Latinx, and 5% are Black," (Basu, 2024).

**Of 63 Leadership Managers at the Big 5:**

- 27 are men (43%)
- 36 are women (57%)
- 51 are white (81%)
- 12 are POC (19%)

This causes an issue when the workplace culture contains facets of “white feminism.” White feminism is defined as “a type of feminism that focuses exclusively on white middle-class women and prioritizes issues that primarily affect them - it’s a feminism that prioritizes achieving equality for white women, insisting that their equality will open up doors for all other women” (Ezaydi, 2023). When white feminism is prevalent in a workplace culture, it can cause negative effects such as exclusion and isolation for people of color, specifically women of color.

To combat this issue, we are dedicated to diversifying all positions. Each of our positions, from editorial assistants to leadership is representative of racial, sexuality, gender, and cultural diversity, featuring the highest quality talent from all walks of life. By ensuring that there are many different voices amongst our staff, all authors are advocated for and supported throughout the publishing process.

Another issue that greatly affects the workplace culture in publishing is a reliance on gig work and freelancing. “Gig-work” was coined by Jazz musicians in the 1920s and later expanded to outside industries in the 1940s (Saguier, 2021). Our modern understanding of gig work/freelancing was popularized by creative industries due to their unique needs (Bridges, 2017).

Publishers often over-utilize gig work as a cost-cutting maneuver. Some industry professionals chose freelance because it was the only way to advance their career due to limited upward mobility in-house (Gradin, 2023). Furthermore, Big 5 employees often pick up side work to compensate for industry-wide low salaries (Gradin, 2023).

Noble House Publishing pledges to pay all positions a regional, livable wage so that they do not need to work outside of the company if they so choose. We can do so because of our “choose where you work” policy. Instead of a large office, we rent a small space in Atlanta for people who prefer working in person. This policy allows us to attract highquality talent from anywhere in the country. Lastly, we encourage employees to cross-train in any department. When employees know more about each other’s jobs, they can make better informed decisions.



# Crisis Strategy

In the event of strikes, retention issues, or delayed capital, we have contingency plans in place to foster understanding and unity.

## What if...

### 01. ... Our employees go on strike?

The first step is identifying the cause for the strike. Then, management and the strike leaders will meet in a neutral environment to have a candid discussion about issues and demands to come to a satisfactory conclusion for both parties.



### 02. ... We struggle to acquire and retain highlevel talent?

We will bring in a consulting firm to audit the company and identify workplace culture concerns that could contribute to the problem. Nailing down the core of the matter such as culture, workload, or a lack of support is the first step. GritHR Solutions based out of Atlanta would be our first choice to assist with the audit.

### 03. ... We cannot reward high-performing employees with promised promotions/raises?

The accounting team will do a comprehensive review of the company’s financials. From these metrics, we can hopefully shift things around so we can deliver on our promises. We will also call in the marketing and business development teams to stimulate sales and/or find alternative revenue streams. Throughout the process, we will offer as much transparency as possible to maintain a sense of trust and unity.



# Chapter 5

## Conclusion

A summary of all 3 responsibility strategies that will inform the future of Noble House Publishing.



# In Summary



At Noble House Publishing, we believe in being transparent and candid about our business practices. Our responsibility strategies will be accessible to all stakeholders. We are committed to the environment, social justice, and maintaining a peaceful workplace culture. Each facet is important in prolonging our success. Success, to us, looks like a vibrant team where everyone is satisfied and proud of their work.

## To Reiterate:



Our manufacturing method focuses on sustainability, renewable resources, and ethical consumption to promote an understanding of the importance of conservation.



Our adherence to DEI and fact checking protocols foster a distinctive and supportive atmosphere.



Our Workplace Culture Strategy focuses on transparency, diversity, advocacy, and promoting competitive salaries to cultivate a lowstress and enjoyable workplace.

# Benefitting Employees & Consumers

Our staff will benefit from our new policies because having a cohesive workplace can ease stress and help with retention. We strive to ensure our employees feel safe and supported at work. Nourishing our team’s lives helps our company run smoothly.

Our stakeholders benefit from our employee satisfaction. An enhanced quality of life boosts morale, thus increasing productivity. Books are to be enjoyed, so it is important to us that people enjoy making them too!



## How will this Responsibility Strategy benefit the publishing industry as a whole?

We believe that running Noble House Publishing with a strong ethical code, a willingness to listen to our key players, and a drive to better the experiences of publishing professionals and authors will show other organizations that a better way is not only possible but also necessary.

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