Science Illustrator

This career compass provides options, tips, suggestions, and strategies for how a student can obtain critical skills, experiences, and competencies in order to launch their geoscience career based on their academic standing. The content herein is based on data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, interviews with personnel in the occupation, and research on available student opportunities.
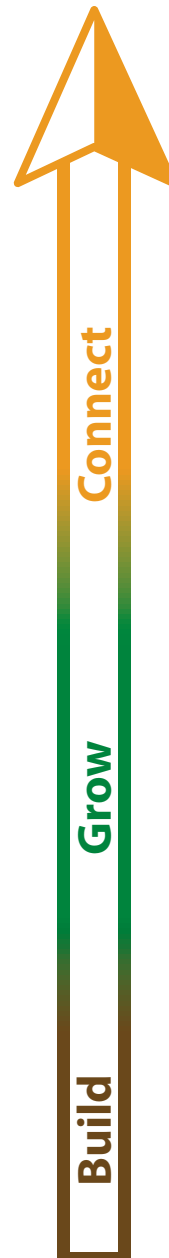
Job Summary

Illustrators combine art, science, and technology to communicate ideas through images and the layout of websites, marketing materials, and printed pages. Using images, text, and color, illustrators may transform data or concepts into visual graphics and diagrams to make complex scientific ideas more accessible. Illustrators need to keep up to date with software and computer technologies as well as their understanding of scientific concepts to remain competitive. They can be employed by publishers, museums, advertising firms, or may work as freelancers.

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connecting earth, science, and people

Connect / Grow / Build

Undergraduate or graduate students

- Engage with researchers working in your field of interest
- Build potential partnerships and develop marketing skills
- Volunteer for group projects for local interest organizations
- Organize local drawing groups
- Coordinate SciArt discussions
- Initiate public outreach projects with researchers in your field of interest
- Professional society conferences or local interest organizations
- Intern at a local science museum, nature center or scientific publication
- Strengthen reading comprehension of scientific research papers
- Develop relationship management skills
- Learn to engage in a professional critique
- Learn small business skills including project management, time management, prioritization, scheduling, invoicing, fiscal literacy, and resilience
- Degree in geosciences
- Coursework in drawing and realism
- Proficiency with digital image editing and design software
- Participate in a scientific research project as a researcher or citizen scientist
- Hone verbal and written skills through courses, community involvement, and presentations

Symbol Key

- Attend
- Communicate
- Network
- Participate
- Leadership
- Internship
- Scholarship
- Fellowship
- Academics