



PRESS RELEASE

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## The 2022 Booker Prize for Fiction: Judges announced and submissions open

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The judges for the 2022 Booker Prize are announced today, 11 January. Publishers are also now invited to submit their books for the 2022 prize.

Cultural historian, writer and broadcaster **Neil MacGregor** will chair the panel and will be joined by academic and broadcaster **Shahidha Bari**; historian **Helen Castor**; novelist and critic **M John Harrison**; and novelist, poet and professor **Alain Mabanckou**.

**Gaby Wood, Literary Director of the Booker Prize Foundation, says:**

‘It is perhaps a little easy to forget that both Booker Prizes are international. As we’ve seen in the submissions for the Booker Prize year after year, the English language has been hugely enriched by a global sensibility - whether it’s a winning London novelist influenced by a Māori author, a Turk writing in English under the star of James Baldwin or Scots dialect first published in New York. And the prize has a global impact: the shortlistees and winners are celebrated all over the world.’

This year’s panel is composed of superb readers who have an innate understanding of that global scope, yet are steeped in the history and literature of Britain. They are experts in the porous boundaries of genre, and in the exchange of literary traditions. I can’t wait to see what they recommend.’

**Chair of judges, Neil MacGregor, adds:**

‘“We tell ourselves stories in order to live”. Over the last year, as book sales surged, Joan Didion’s words were shown to be truer than ever. A large part of the world now writes and reads those necessary stories, about who we are and who we might become, in English: so to be asked to survey this year’s harvest for the Booker Prize is to be invited to inhabit many different universes. And it is a great privilege to be asked to do so in the company of such distinguished judges, who themselves write – in a rich range of traditions – about worlds real and imagined.’

The judging panel will be looking for the best work of long-form fiction, selected from entries published in the UK and Ireland between 1 October 2021 and 30 September 2022.

The 'Booker Dozen' of 12 or 13 books will be announced in July 2022 with the shortlist of six books to follow in September. The winner of the £50,000 prize will be announced in November 2022.

The 2021 winner, *The Promise* by Damon Galgut – hailed by the *Financial Times* as 'a complex, ambitious, brilliant work' – was celebrated internationally by booksellers, the media and readers alike. *The Promise* details the interconnected relationships between the members of a diminishing white South African family through the sequential lens of four funerals, with *The Guardian* describing Galgut as 'a vital, nuanced chronicler of the deep hurts of South Africa, past and present' when reflecting on his win. The morning after the announcement, the book was number one on Amazon's bestseller chart. Two weeks after the win, Chatto & Windus announced that it had reprinted 153,000 copies of *The Promise*, having sold 23,878 copies in hardback, 14,622 of which sold in the two weeks following the news, a 1,925% jump in volume compared with the two weeks before.

The Booker Prize is sponsored by Crankstart, a charitable foundation.

Find out all you need to know about this year's Booker Prize [here](#). You can also relive the [2021 Booker Prize](#) including original writing from all the shortlisted authors, Q&As, original actor readings and much more. Or visit our [virtual Booker Prizes library](#), where we celebrate the almost 600 books to which the Booker and International Booker Prize have drawn attention since 1969.

Subscribe to our YouTube channel for a mix of the latest from this year's Booker Prize, winning moments from the past decades as well as exclusive videos such as our [interview with Sarah Waters](#), where she explores her *Fingersmith* archive. <https://www.youtube.com/thebookerprizes>.

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## The 2022 Booker Prize judges

Photos of the 2022 Booker Prize judges are available to download via this [link](#).

### Judges' bios

**Neil MacGregor** is a British cultural historian, broadcaster and writer. He grew up in Glasgow, studied Modern Languages at Oxford then - in 1968 - 18<sup>th</sup> century French literature in Paris. He was called to the Bar in Edinburgh and went on to study History of Art at the Courtauld Institute, where he worked closely with Anthony Blunt and Anita Brookner, both – as he observes – art historians with unusually developed skills in constructing fictions.

He edited *The Burlington Magazine* before becoming, in 1987, Director of the National Gallery in London. During his tenure there he fought to maintain free public access to great paintings and made a number of BBC television series touching on works in the collection. His book, *Seeing Salvation: Images of Christ in Art*, was published in 2000.

He left the National Gallery in 2002 to become Director of the British Museum, where he remained until 2015. In that time, he wrote and presented several influential books and series for BBC Radio 4: the seminal *A History of the World in 100 Objects*; *Shakespeare's Restless World*, which used objects as a key to understanding the concerns of Shakespeare's public; and *Germany: Memories of a Nation*, which was published 100 years after the outbreak of World War I and aimed to recover narratives of that country that went beyond the two wars. During this period, he also sat on the board of the National Theatre; his continuing preoccupation has been to make available to the widest public objects and stories that make sense of the world, take us into the minds of others, and reveal the ways in which our apparently discrete histories interconnect.

From 2015 to 2018 MacGregor was Founding Director of the Humboldt Forum, Berlin. He is now International Advisor to the J. Paul Getty Foundation in Los Angeles and to the CSMVS Museum in Mumbai. At the end of 2021 he held the Chaire du Louvre at the Musée du Louvre in Paris, giving a series of public lectures about museums and their constantly changing relation to history and society. The lectures have been published as *À monde nouveau, nouveaux musées*.

**Shahidha Bari** is a British broadcaster and academic, who presents *Inside Culture* on BBC2 and *Free Thinking* on BBC Radio 3. In the course of this work - as well as hosting live events at the Southbank, Hay Festival and the Royal Society of Literature - she has interviewed a number of Booker Prize winners, including Anne Enright, Howard Jacobson, Julian Barnes, Marlon James and Salman Rushdie.

Having studied English at Cambridge and taught literature at the University of London for over 15 years, she is now a Professor at the University of the Arts London. Her book *Keats: The Life of Sensations* was published by Routledge in 2011 and her second, *Dressed: The Secret Life of Clothes*, by Jonathan Cape in 2019.

Shahidha is a regular book reviewer for the *Guardian* as well as writing for the *Financial Times* and the *TLS*, among other publications. She is a Trustee of the Brontë Parsonage. She judged the Baillie Gifford Prize in 2020 and was Chair of the Judges for the Forward Prizes for Poetry in 2019.

**Helen Castor** is a historian of the middle ages and sixteenth century, a Bye-Fellow of Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge and a Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature. Her books include the prize-winning *Blood & Roses: The Paston Family in the Fifteenth Century*, *Elizabeth I: A Study in Insecurity* and *Joan of Arc*, dubbed a 'triumph of history'. Her book, *She-Wolves: The Women Who Ruled England Before Elizabeth*, was made into a BBC TV series and selected as a book of the year in the *Times*, the *Sunday Times*, the *Independent*, the *Financial Times*, the *Guardian* and *BBC History Magazine*.

Castor has presented a range of programmes for BBC TV and radio and Channel 4, and was part of Channel 4's live coverage of the reburial of Richard III in Leicester in 2015. Her introduction to a new edition of William Golding's *Close Quarters* will appear in April, and she is currently at work on a study of Richard II and Henry IV, due to be published by Penguin in 2023.

**M. John Harrison**, a genre-defying author and literary critic, has been hailed by writers including Olivia Laing, Robert MacFarlane and Neil Gaiman as one of the most brilliant prose stylists alive today. He sold his first story in 1965, and in 1969 joined the staff of the UK speculative fiction magazine *New Worlds*, where he edited the books pages until 1978.

His novels include *Climbers*, which won the Boardman Tasker Prize for Mountain Literature in 1989; *Nova Swing*, which won the Arthur C. Clarke Award in 2007; and *The Sunken Land Begins to Rise Again*, which won the 2020 Goldsmiths Prize for innovation in fiction. A collection of short stories, *You Should Come With Me Now*, was published in 2017, and a volume of selected stories written between 1970 and 2020 was published under the title *Settling the World*.

He has reviewed a broad spread of fiction for the *TLS*, the *Telegraph*, the *Guardian* and the *New York Times*; co-authored a quartet of fantasy novels about talking cats; ghostwritten on behalf of a legendary British rock climber; and served on juries for the Manchester Fiction Prize and the Edinburgh Film Festival.

**Alain Mabanckou**, nicknamed 'the African Beckett', grew up in Pointe-Noire, Republic of Congo, and studied law in Brazzaville and Paris. His first novel was published in 1998, and since then he has published regularly, writing novels, essays, and poetry, and becoming one of the best-known novelists in France. His work has won many prizes, including the Renaudot Prize for *Memoirs of a Porcupine* in 2006, and his novel *Broken Glass* was ranked by the *Guardian* as one of the 100 best books of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. He has been shortlisted for the International Booker Prize twice: once in 2015, when the prize was for a body of work, and once in 2017 for a single novel, *Black Moses*.

In 2002 he became writer-in-residence at Ann Arbor, Michigan, before being hired in 2006 by the University of California at Los Angeles. He has translated works from English into French, including

*Beasts of No Nation* by the Nigerian-American novelist Uzodinma Iweala (later adapted into a film by Cary Joji Fukunaga). Alain Mabanckou is now a full Professor of Literature at UCLA.

## Notes to Editors

- The Booker Prize for Fiction was first awarded in 1969 and was called The Man Booker Prize for Fiction when sponsored by Man Group from 2002 - 2018. The winner receives £50,000. The 2021 winner was Damon Galgut with *The Promise*.
- The International Booker Prize is awarded annually for the best single work of fiction translated into English and published in the UK. It was known as the Man Booker International Prize when sponsored by Man Group. The 2021 winner was *At Night All Blood is Black* written by David Diop and translated by Anna Moschovakis. The £50,000 prize is divided equally between the author and the translator. From 2022, each shortlisted author and translator will receive £2,500. The 2022 judging panel is chaired by translator Frank Wynne and consists of: author and academic Merve Emre; lawyer and writer Petina Gappah; writer, critic, broadcaster and stand-up comedian Viv Groskop; and translator and author Jeremy Tiang.
- [Thebookerprizes.com](https://thebookerprizes.com), the home of the Booker Prizes past and present, was relaunched in 2021. It has a full history of the prize including previous winners, shortlisted authors and judges. It will become a hub for year-round editorial content designed to engage readers with both prizes and to foster a lifelong love of reading.
- The Booker Prize Foundation is a registered charity (no 1090049) established in 2002. It is responsible for the award of The Booker Prize for Fiction and for The International Booker Prize. The trustees of the Booker Prize Foundation are: Mark Damazer (chair) - freelance journalist and former broadcast executive; Nick Barley - director, Edinburgh International Book Festival; Tony Damer (treasurer) - member of the Institute of Chartered Accountants; Bidisha SK Mamata - writer, critic and broadcaster; Carol Lake - President of the JPMorgan Chase Foundation; Ben Okri - poet and author; MT Rainey - strategist, agency founder and social entrepreneur; Professor Louise Richardson - vice chancellor of the University of Oxford; Nicki Sheard - digital and social media executive; The Rt Hon. Lord David Willetts - writer, ex-minister and advocate of fairness between the generations.
- The Booker Prize Foundation Advisory Committee, which advises on any changes to the rules and on the selection of the judges, represents all aspects of the book world. Its members are: Nic Bottomley - co-founder, Mr B's Emporium of Reading Delights; Jamie Byng - publisher, Canongate Books; James Daunt - managing director of Waterstones; Jonathan Douglas CBE - director of the National Literacy Trust; Adam Freudenheim - publisher, Pushkin Press; Daniel Hahn OBE - writer and translator; Sharmaine Lovegrove - publisher, Dialogue Books; Emma Paterson - agent, Aitken Alexander Associates; Fiammetta Rocco - chief culture correspondent, *The Economist* and *1843* and The International Booker Prize

Administrator; Eve Smith - Secretary, Booker Prize Foundation; Boyd Tonkin - writer and critic; Helen Williams - Legal Counsel of Booker Group plc. It is chaired by Gaby Wood - Director, Booker Prize Foundation.

- Crankstart, a charitable foundation, is the exclusive funder of The Booker Prize and The International Booker Prize.
- The Director of the Booker Prize Foundation is Gaby Wood. The Administrator of The International Booker Prize is Fiammetta Rocco, senior editor and culture correspondent of *The Economist* and *1843*.
- Four Culture handles PR, comms and event management for the prizes and provides all events and administrative back-up.
- Booker Group is the UK's leading food & drink wholesaler with branches nationwide and a delivery network. It serves over 400,000 catering customers and 100,000 independent retailers.
- The Booker Prize Foundation has a longstanding partnership with RNIB (Royal National Institute of Blind People). The Foundation funds the production of the shortlisted titles in braille and audio. The accessible versions are then made available to the tens of thousands of blind and partially sighted members of the RNIB Library. People with sight loss have a limited choice of books in accessible formats and often have to wait much longer than their sighted peers for titles to be made available to them - and there are many more books that they will never have the chance to read. The Foundation is working with RNIB to change this story. For further information contact the RNIB PR Team on 020 7391 2223 or [pressoffice@rnib.org.uk](mailto:pressoffice@rnib.org.uk)
- The Booker Prize Foundation has partnered with the National Literacy Trust since 2012 to deliver Books Unlocked. The Foundation funds the programme, which has transformed the lives of prisoners and young offenders in the UK by helping them develop a love of reading. Prisoners are able to engage with high-quality writing as copies of Booker Prize shortlisted titles are sent out to prison reading groups. These same titles are also serialised as audiobooks on National Prison Radio, which is broadcast into c.80,000 cells, enabling still more prisoners to experience these exceptional stories. Authors go into prisons to discuss their writing directly with reading groups and many also record interviews on National Prison Radio. The shared vision for Books Unlocked is to bring about positive change in prisoners' life chances. Since 1993, the National Literacy Trust has led the campaign to transform the future of the UK's most disadvantaged young people by improving their literacy levels: [literacytrust.org.uk/programmes/books-unlocked/](http://literacytrust.org.uk/programmes/books-unlocked/)
- The Booker Prize Archive was given on loan in 2003 to Oxford Brookes University, where it now resides.

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