

Press Release
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International Booker Prize Chair Calls for a Share in Profits for Translators

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#2022InternationalBooker #FinestFiction

In the wake of last week's International Booker Prize longlist announcement, the Chair of the 2022 Judges, Frank Wynne, has called for publishers around the world to reward translators more generously for the part they play in creating books. In particular, he urges publishers to offer translators royalties on book sales.

Frank is the first translator to chair the International Booker jury and his call to action builds on the campaigns waged by other translators and writers, including the recent debate led by 2018 International Booker winner Jennifer Croft, whose translation of Olga Tokarczuk's *The Books of Jacob* is on this year's International Booker Prize longlist. On International Translation Day last year, the Society of Authors in the UK launched a campaign for full book cover credits for translators. The accompanying open letter has so far garnered over 2,500 signatures including those of Neil Gaiman and Booker Prize winner Bernardine Evaristo.

Speaking on BBC Radio 4's *Front Row* this evening, Frank explained that the lack of diversity in translation can in large part be explained by the precariousness of the work. Like many careers within the arts, it is likely to predominantly be freelance and therefore unpredictable. However, promoting best practice within the publishing community, paying fair rates, ensuring that translators, like authors, share in the rewards when their books are successful will make a career in translation more accessible and financially practical to those who might not otherwise consider it. Royalties form a part of standard translation contracts in the Netherlands, Germany, France and Spain, but are less commonly offered in the UK.

The European Council for Literary Translators Associations recommends that translators share in any profits from the sale of the books they have translated. It is the publisher's responsibility to strive to include royalties for translators when negotiating underlying rights.

'Although few works in translation will ever earn royalties, it is only fair that translators benefit from bestsellers and prize-winners that they have helped to create. While most independent publishers offer fair royalties, many of the larger publishers do not, or do so only to a small number of translators,' comments Wynne.

While remuneration is always a matter for negotiation between translator and publisher, the Translators Association in the UK does monitor rates and fees on an ongoing basis, sharing observations about the minimum rates that most publishers seem willing to pay - though some publishers still offer rates that are lower than these.

Translation, like other creative work, also deserves legal protection. Granting copyright to the translator does not guarantee the translator the right to receive an income from his or her work, especially from film adaptations and other derivative works, but it underscores the rich creative input of translators and should become the industry norm. Two of the 13 books longlisted for the International Booker Prize this year do not assign copyright for the translation to the translator.

Complementing The Booker Prize for Fiction, the International Booker Prize is awarded every year for a single book that is translated into English and published in the UK or Ireland. It aims to encourage more publishing and reading of quality works of imagination from all over the world, and to give greater recognition to the role of translators. Novels and short story collections are eligible. The contribution of author and translator is given equal recognition, with the £50,000 prize split evenly between them. In addition, for the first time in 2022, the shortlisted authors and translators will each receive £2,500, increased from £1,000 in previous years - bringing the total value of the prize to £80,000.

This year the judges considered 135 books, with a record number of submissions received. The longlist was selected by the 2022 judging panel, which consists of: translator, **Frank Wynne** (chair); author and academic **Merve Emre**; writer and lawyer **Petina Gappah**; writer, comedian and TV, radio and podcast presenter, **Viv Groskop**; and translator and author **Jeremy Tiang**. The longlist of 13 books is dominated by small independent presses and includes a book translated from Hindi for the first time. <https://thebookerprizes.com/the-booker-library/prize-years/international/2022>

The shortlist for the prize will be announced on 7 April 2022 at The London Book Fair and the winner on 26 May 2022 at a ceremony at One Marylebone in London.

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For press enquiries please contact Four Culture:

Julie Holman | Julie.Holman@fourcommunications.com | 07841 672 393

Truda Spruyt | Truda.spruyt@fourcommunications.com | 07740 725 206

Notes to Editors

- 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 until 2019 as the Man Booker International Prize when sponsored by Man Group. The £50,000 prize is divided equally between the author and the translator. From 2022, each shortlisted author and translator receives £2,500. The announcement of the 2021 winner, *At*

Night All Blood Is Black, written by David Diop and translated by Anna Moschovakis was met with both public and critical acclaim, with the book's publisher, Pushkin Press, ordering a five-figure reprint the day after the winner announcement. The week following the winner announcement, sales of *At Night All Blood Is Black* saw a 477% sale increase on the week before. President Barack Obama, a keen follower of both of The Booker Prizes, listed *At Night All Blood Is Black* at the top of his summer reading list.

- 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 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 2022 Booker Prize judging panel is chaired by cultural historian, writer and broadcaster Neil MacGregor, and consists of: academic and broadcaster Shahidha Bari; historian Helen Castor; novelist and critic M John Harrison; and novelist, poet and professor Alain Mabanckou.
- [Thebookerprizes.com](https://www.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 is 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; Tony Damer (treasurer) - member of the Institute of Chartered Accountants; Nick Barley - director, Edinburgh International Book Festival; 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 - chief marketing officer, BBC Studios; 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 - senior editor and culture correspondent, *The Economist* 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, *The Economist*.
- 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 Booker Prize shortlisted titles in braille, giant print and audio, which the RNIB produces by the date the winner is announced. It also funds the production of the winner of the International Booker Prize in these formats. 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
- 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 and International 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/
- The Booker Prize Archive was given on loan in 2003 to Oxford Brookes University, where it now resides.

