

2020 BOOKBUG PICTURE BOOK PRIZE SHORTLIST ANNOUNCED

Scottish Book Trust, the national charity transforming lives through reading and writing, has today announced the shortlist for the 2020 Bookbug Picture Book Prize. The Bookbug mascot jumped on board the Browns Book Bus to launch the annual prize, as the vote is opened to schools and the public.

Alastair Chisholm, Morag Hood and Meg McLaren have been shortlisted for the Bookbug Picture Book Prize, now in its fourth year. The award was established to celebrate the most popular picture books by Scottish authors and illustrators, and is run by Scottish Book Trust, with support from Browns Books for Students.

Children across the country can vote for the winner by submitting a class vote online or at home, via the [Scottish Book Trust](https://www.scottishbooktrust.com) website.

THE BOOKBUG PICTURE BOOK PRIZE 2020 SHORTLIST IS:

- *The Prince and the Witch and the Thief and the Bears* by Alastair Chisholm, illustrated by Jez Tuya (Walker Books)
- *Sophie Johnson: Unicorn Expert* by Morag Hood, illustrated by Ella Okstad (Simon & Schuster)
- *The Station Mouse* by Meg McLaren (Penguin)

The winning book will be announced in an exclusive video to all registered groups on 29 January 2020. Shortlisted authors and illustrators receive £500 per book, and the winner will receive £3,000.

A free copy of each of the three books on the shortlist will be given to every Primary 1 child during Book Week Scotland (18 November – 24 November), in the Bookbug P1 Family Bag.

Marc Lambert, CEO of Scottish Book Trust, said: “The Bookbug Picture Book Prize highlights some of the finest children’s books in Scotland. We are delighted to work with Browns Books for Students to make this award possible and celebrate the wonderful authors and illustrators working in the picture book industry.”

Claire Smith, Sales Manager for Browns Books for Students, said: “Browns Books for Students are once again delighted to be working with Scottish Book Trust to highlight the Bookbug Picture Book Prize. We are very honoured to be part of this literacy project, which is putting books into the hands of children and supporting a lifelong love of reading.”

Scottish Book Trust is supported with regular funding from Creative Scotland.

Alan Bett, Literature Officer at Creative Scotland, said: “Scotland has an abundance of talent when it comes to children’s authors and illustrators, from which three have been chosen by young readers and shortlisted for this prize. Creative Scotland is delighted to support this Scottish Book Trust initiative, one that recognises books that may well be among a young person’s first step into reading and which celebrates those who create them. Congratulations to all those shortlisted”

Quotes and information on the shortlisted titles:

Alastair Chisholm is a children's writer and puzzle creator. As a puzzle geek he has created a number of books of Sudoku, Kakuro and other puzzles for kids and adults. *The Prince and the Witch and the Thief and the Bears* is his first picture book. Alastair lives in Edinburgh with his wife, two children and cat.

Alastair Chisholm said: "I'm absolutely thrilled to be shortlisted with Jez Tuya, and in such fantastic company, too! Bookbug is such a great project – I remember my own daughters bringing home their Bookbug bags and books, and how pleased they were with them – and it's brilliant to imagine my book becoming a part of this."

Morag Hood is a children's author and illustrator from Edinburgh. Her debut picture book *Colin and Lee, Carrot and Pea* was a runner up in the Macmillan Prize in 2014. Morag studied Costume Design at Wimbledon College of Art and worked backstage in theatre before applying for the MA in Children's Book illustration from Cambridge School of Art. After graduating in 2015 she moved back to her native Edinburgh where she now works with a view of the hills.

Morag Hood said: "I am beyond delighted that *Sophie Johnson: Unicorn Expert* has been shortlisted for the Bookbug Picture Book Prize! It has been such a treat to work with Ella Okstad, and to have her brilliant illustrations bring Sophie to life - I am just thrilled that so many children will get to join Sophie in her hunt for Scotland's national animal. The Bookbug bag is such an important initiative and it is a real honour to have a book of mine included for the second time."

Meg McLaren graduated from the prestigious MA in Children's Book Illustration at the Cambridge School of Art. Printmaker and illustrator she now lives in Inverness with her other half Jon and their impressive Lego collection.

Meg McLaren said: "I'm really thrilled that *The Station Mouse* has been shortlisted for the Bookbug Picture Book Prize. It's wonderful to know that not only is every Primary 1 child in Scotland going to read my book but that they are also going to get their very own copy to keep. That's amazing!"

Notes to editors:

For all press queries including photos, please contact Daisy Bartlett:
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The Bookbug P1 Bag

The P1 Bag was produced by Scottish Book Trust in conjunction with Education Scotland and the Scottish Government as part of Read, Write, Count. You'll find more ideas for fun activities and games that you can slip into your daily routine at parentclub.scot.

Bookbug Picture Book Prize

- The Bookbug Picture Book Prize is managed by Scottish Book Trust in partnership with Creative Scotland and Browns Books for Students.

- Teachers, librarians and book group leaders sign up their groups, then the children read and vote for their favourite books. Children can also vote online at home via the Scottish Book Trust website.
- Videos of each author/illustrator reading and talking about their book are available at <http://www.scottishbooktrust.com/bppb>
- Books published during April 2018- March 2019 were eligible for entry to the award. The Bookbug Picture Book Prize is open to authors and illustrators based in Scotland.
- The winning book will be announced on 29 January 2020.

Scottish Book Trust

Scottish Book Trust is a national charity changing lives through reading and writing. We inspire and support the people of Scotland to read and write for pleasure through programmes and outreach work that includes:

- Gifting books to every child in Scotland to ensure families of all backgrounds can share the joy of books at home.
- Working with teachers to inspire children to develop a love of reading, creating innovative classroom activities, book awards and author events.
- Supporting Scotland's diverse writing community with our training, awards and writing opportunities.
- Funding a range of author events for the public to enjoy and promoting Scottish writing to people worldwide.

www.scottishbooktrust.com @scottishbktrust www.facebook.com/scottishbktrust

Browns Books for Students

Browns Books for Students, sponsor of the Bookbug Picture Book Prize, supplies books, eBooks and DVDs for schools, colleges and businesses. More information on Browns Books for Students, is available at www.brownsbfs.co.uk

Creative Scotland

Scottish Book Trust is supported by Creative Scotland through Regular Funding. Creative Scotland is the public body that supports the arts, screen and creative industries across all parts of Scotland on behalf of everyone who lives, works or visits here. We enable people and organisations to work in and experience the arts, screen and creative industries in Scotland by helping others to develop great ideas and bring them to life. We distribute funding provided by the Scottish Government and the National Lottery. For further information about Creative Scotland please visit www.creativescotland.com. Follow us @creativescots and www.facebook.com/CreativeScotland.