



Inaugural Ignite Fellowship awardees announced

Scottish Book Trust, the national charity transforming lives through reading and writing, has today announced the inaugural Ignite Fellowship awardees. Theatre-maker Annie George and poet Marjorie Lotfi Gill were selected by a panel including representatives from Scottish Book Trust and a professional writer.

Annie George is based in Portobello, and her recent plays include Edinburgh Fringe productions 'Twa', 'Home Is Not the Place', and 'The Bridge' – which also toured Scotland. She was awarded the Inspiring Scotland Bursary by the Saltire Society and the Scottish Book Trust in 2016.

In short film, she directed and produced 'Curry and Irn-Bru', a Real To Reel Award winner which screened internationally and was actor/development producer of 'Daddy's Girl', winner of numerous international awards including Prix Spécial De Jury at Cannes Film Festival.

For her Ignite Fellowship project, Annie will work on a screenplay, a wartime spy drama based on a true story and told from a unique perspective, about the only Indian woman working for British Intelligence in WW2. Noor Inayat Khan was a member of Special Operations Executive – codename: Madeleine – who became an unlikely heroine of the French Resistance.

Marjorie Lotfi Gill's poems have won competitions, been published widely in journals and anthologies in the UK and US (including The Rialto, Magma, Rattle and Gutter) and have been performed on BBC Radio 4. Her pamphlet 'Refuge', poems about her childhood in revolutionary Iran, was published by Tapsalteerie Press in the spring of 2018.

Marjorie, who is based in the Southside of Edinburgh, founded the Belonging Project, creative writing workshops and readings considering the experiences of refugees with over 1,500 participants. She was also Poet in Residence at Jupiter Artland and Writer in Residence for Spring Fling. She is a co-founder and director of Open Book, a charity providing shared reading and creative writing groups within community settings across Scotland, and also the Chair of Trustees of the Wigtown Book Festival.

Marjorie plans to use the Ignite Fellowship to explore the process of assimilation into a new culture. She will use her own experiences, as well as what she has learned from working with refugees and migrants in Scotland to consider how people work to build a new life in an unfamiliar place.

An additional Gaelic Ignite Fellowship, funded by the Gaelic Books Council, will be announced in the New Year.



The Ignite Fellows will receive a £2000 bursary and tailored creative support to suit their individual projects. The fellowship will run for one year, from December 2018 to December 2019.

Annie George said: “It’s difficult to put into words how much receiving the Ignite Fellowship means to me - it’s immense, and I’m delighted. I started the research many years ago, before Special Operations Executive personnel files were declassified. I’m excited to reconnect with Noor’s remarkable story and become immersed anew, to finally tell it my way.

Thank you to the wonderful team at Scottish Book Trust, for recognising, encouraging and supporting my work.”

Marjorie Lotfi Gill said: “I’m so grateful to be awarded the Ignite Fellowship, which will give me the time, space and support to focus on my own work, think deeply and write further about the process of assimilation and building a new life in an unfamiliar place.”

Marc Lambert, CEO of Scottish Book Trust, said: “Scottish Book Trust was delighted with the high standard of applications for the first Ignite Fellowship. We are sure our awardees will benefit from the tailored advice and support, and all of us at Scottish Book Trust look forward to hear more about Annie and Marjorie’s fascinating projects.”

Notes to Editors

For all media enquiries, please contact Press Officer Keara Donnachie:
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About 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 include:

- 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.

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Gaelic Books Council

The Gaelic Books Council is the lead organisation with responsibility for supporting Scottish Gaelic authors and publishers, and for raising the profile and reach of Scottish Gaelic books in Scotland and internationally. www.gaelicbooks.org

Creative Scotland

In addition to general fundraising, Scottish Book Trust receives Creative Scotland support 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. It enables 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. It distributes funding provided by the Scottish Government and the National Lottery. For further information about Creative Scotland please visit www.creativescotland.com, and follow [@creativescots](https://twitter.com/creativescots)

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