

The story begins for young teen writers and illustrators

Scottish Book Trust announces new participants for What's Your Story?

Scottish Book Trust, the national charity transforming lives through reading and writing, has today announced the seven teenage writers and illustrators who will join the What's Your Story? programme. Now in its fourth year, the scheme has so far assisted over 20 young people from across Scotland to develop writing, illustration and performance projects.

The young people selected for the What's Your Story? programme, aged from 14-17 years old, include poets, illustrators and writers. The teens were selected by a judging team, which included one of the previous What's Your Story? participants, and representatives from Creative Scotland, The National Library of Scotland, The Gaelic Books Council and Scottish Book Trust. Participants were selected on the enthusiasm and dedication they expressed for teenage participation in creative and literary culture.

The participants recently received an induction programme with the National Library of Scotland, where they had the chance to research their chosen subject and gain inspiration for their personal creative works. They have also taken part in a week-long retreat at Moniack Mhor, Scotland's creative writing centre, where they had dedicated time with their mentors. Poet Jenny Lindsay, writers Alex Nye and Helen McClory, illustrator Julia Scheele and Gaelic writer Maureen Macleod assisted the young people in their specific creative fields. The mentors will continue to work with the young people for the duration of the programme.

As part of What's Your Story?, the participants will plan and host StoryCon 2019, Scotland's biggest creative writing and illustration conference for young people. Last year, this took place in Glasgow and was attended by over 100 young people.

The young people will also have the opportunity to preview their creative projects at a showcase event, wrapping up the work they have completed during the What's Your Story? programme. Industry experts will train the young people to express their work in front of a live audience, with the use of music and images.

Organised and run by Scottish Book Trust, What's Your Story? was originally funded by Time to Shine, Creative Scotland's national youth arts strategy and is the first nationwide programme of its kind in Scotland. This year it is funded by Badenoch Trust, Kiran's Trust and The Hugh Fraser Foundation, as well as other trusts and private donors. What's Your Story? is free to take part in and travel expenses are covered for all participants. The Gaelic Books Council also funds a Gaelic-language place.

The full list of the What's Your Story? participants is as follows:

Performance poet, Beccie White, from Edinburgh



Performance poet, Devin McRoberts from Paisley

Short story writer, Nicole Foreman, from Dornoch

Illustrator, Sara Oussaiden, from Isle of Skye

Author, Skye Ailun Peng, from Glasgow

Author, Andrew Pettigrew, from Hamilton

Gaelic writer, Ailbhe Murphy, from Glasgow

Marc Lambert, CEO of Scottish Book Trust, said:

“Scottish Book Trust is pleased to launch the fourth year of the What’s Your Story? programme, highlighting new and upcoming talent in the Scottish literary scene. We are grateful to our funders, for making this programme possible, and also to our mentors for providing life-changing support and advice to the young people. We look forward to seeing the work they produce throughout the year.”

Alison Lang, Director of The Gaelic Books Council, said:

“Comhairle nan Leabhraichean is delighted to be supporting another young Gaelic writer on this year’s What’s Your Story? programme, and it’s exciting to discover new voices among a generation of Gaelic-medium pupils who have grown up with Gaelic books and aspire to add their own stories to the contemporary canon. We are grateful to Bòrd na Gàidhlig and Creative Scotland for supporting our work in promoting Gaelic literature, and pleased to have this opportunity to collaborate once again with Scottish Book Trust.”

Sara Oussaiden, from the Isle of Skye, said:

“I believe that there aren’t enough opportunities in rural areas to encourage the growth of creativity in young people. When I was told about the What’s Your Story? programme, I thought I should apply and see what would happen. My goal is to not only develop my own skills for a career, but encourage others that writing and illustrating is a massive part of Scottish culture that should be kept alive.”

Notes to editors:

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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.

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

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. 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

The Badenoch Trust

The Badenoch Trust has made grants to a wide-range of UK organisations since its inception. It is a long-standing supporter of the arts, community, education and sports, and seeks to raise the aspirations and improve the life chances of young people.

badenoch.scot

Kiran's Trust



Kiran's Trust was founded in 2009, in memory of Kiran and celebrating the creative arts and sports, which she held dear. The Trust recognises this passion in other young people and provides support to help them advance in further education and participation in these areas.

Kiran's Trust provides support to young people through schools and organisations to learn different types of art. Some of this support is in creative art, specifically to introduce ideas, techniques, skills and media which helps students to visually express themselves. Other support is in performance arts, providing opportunities for writing, music, drama and dance participation.

<http://kiranstrust.org/>

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

National Library of Scotland

The National Library of Scotland is a major European research library and one of the world's leading centres for the study of Scotland and the Scots - an information treasure trove for Scotland's knowledge, history and culture.

The Library's collections are of world-class importance. Key areas include digital material, rare books, manuscripts, maps, music, moving images, official publications, business information, science and technology, and the modern and foreign collections. The Library holds more than 26 million items dating back over 1000 years. This includes over fifteen million printed items, eight million manuscripts, two million maps and over 45,000 films and videos. Every week it collects around 4,000 new items. Around 80% of these are received free of charge in terms of Legal Deposit legislation. Further information is available at www.nls.uk