18 Scottish writers have been awarded grants to promote Scottish writing and culture worldwide by the Author International Travel Fund, a cornerstone pilot initiative of new international promotion service, Scottish Books International.

Scottish Books International began life late November 2018 as a scoping project supported by Publishing Scotland, the Edinburgh International Book Festival and Creative Scotland to create a key point of contact for the Scottish sector, one acting as a connecting force for Scottish literature overseas.

SBI launched internationally last year at the 2019 Frankfurt Book Fair, celebrating its primary purpose: to support the development of international links for Scotland’s writers, festivals, publishers and organisations in other territories.

The Author International Travel Fund was set up as a grants scheme supporting authors invited to festivals and events overseas to promote their work. Aiding the facilitation of cultural exchange the fund aims to:

- Increase opportunities for Scottish writers to attend festivals and other promotion or exchange events overseas.
- To remove barriers for Scottish writers from all backgrounds to take up these opportunities.
- To develop relationships between Scottish writers and festivals, publishers and organisations overseas.

In its first year of operation the fund has supported 18 Scottish writers and Scottish Books International is looking forward to growing this support in the coming year. The panel is drawn from Creative Scotland and the Edinburgh International Book Festival as well as the SBI manager.

Details of grants awarded are listed below:

- The Verb Festival, £1000, to bring Michael Pedersen to The Verb Festival 2019, New Zealand
- Hugh McMillan, £200, The Blash o God, France
Brian Holton, £203.50, the Emily Harvey Foundation, Venice and the Festival Internazionale di Poesia di Genova, Italy
Laura Lam, £80, Worldcon Dublin, Ireland
Chrys Salt MBE, £1000, Tasmanian Poetry Festival, Australia
Wendy H. Jones, £500, Manuscript to Marketplace Writers Conference, USA
Ubud Writers & Readers Festival, £1000, to bring Irvine Welsh to Ubud Writers & Readers Festival 2019, Indonesia
Christine De Luca, £400, Partilha Alternativa Association, Portugal
Gerry Loose, £175, 3rd Chengdu International Poetry Week, the Round Table Conference of the World Poetry in Chengdu, China
Kevin MacNeil, £1000, Yamanashi University, Japan
Christie Williamson, £350, Festa dos Anos de Á’lvaro de Campos, Portugal
Helen McClory, £1000, Mathrubhumi International Festival of Letters, India
Clare Hunter, £900, Mathrubhumi International Festival of Letters, India
David Keenan, £300, Primera Persona festival at the Centre for Contemporary Culture of Barcelona (CCCB), Spain
Damian Barr, £630, Events at literature festivals in India, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa
Alycia Pirmohamed, £475, Asmara-Addis Literary Festival (In Exile), Belgium
Hugh McMillan, £382, Limerick Poetry Month Reading, Ireland
Sha Nazir, £543, Rumia Comic Con, Poland

Quote from Alan Bett, Literature Officer, Creative Scotland.

“It is increasingly important for authors and poets to take their work to international readers. The Author International Travel Fund has put Scottish writers in front of live audiences at festivals and events from Dublin to Australia, allowing their books to be read and discussed while opening up a variety of professional opportunities. Crucially, the Fund helps to remove the financial barriers in the way of writers from all backgrounds being able to exchange ideas and share their work more widely across the globe.”

Quote from Chrys Salt MBE, Writer and recipient of the award

“I can’t thank the SBI enough for last year’s award from the Author International Travel Fund enabling me to accept the prestigious invitation to be International Poet at the Tasmanian Poetry Festival 2019. A subsequent tour of my work up the East Coast of Australia attracted wide audiences – both live and ‘on air’. Feedback was terrific; I made valuable contacts, sold £500 worth of books, and enhanced my reputation as a writer. My sequence about Scottish outsider artist Angus MacPhee from Uist was particularly well received, making folk aware of an important Scottish story.”

Quote from Marion Sinclair, of Publishing Scotland:

“Scottish Books International is in its first year and aims to bring together all parts of the literary/book ecology in Scotland for the overseas promotion of Scottish writing, publishing and festivals. Through activities such as the Author Fund and the linkages with our other international
activities and organisations, it is more vital than ever that we engage in a co-ordinated way to highlight and showcase the work of the sector.”

ENDS

Notes to Editors:

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.

Visit the website: www.creativescotland.com

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Publishing Scotland is the network for trade, training and development, a membership body and a charity. Scottish Books International, the International Fellowship Programme, the Translation Fund the Go-See Fund, our rights catalogues, and our Book Fair presence are all part of our internationalisation programme designed to make doing business overseas easier and more cost-effective for Scottish publishers.

Visit the website: www.publishingscotland.org
Follow on Twitter: @publishscotland

Scottish Books International supports the development of international links for Scotland’s writers, festivals, publishers and organisations. A scoping project, supported by Publishing Scotland, the Edinburgh International Book Festival and Creative Scotland, SBI works to develop international activity by identifying and progressing opportunities for increased visibility for writers, publishers, festivals and organisations; identifying potential income sources, and building relationships with key partners in Scotland and overseas.

Visit the website: www.scottishbooksinternational.org
Follow on Twitter: @ScotBooksInt

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