

## Publishing Futures

# IPA Congress 2026

## Terms of Reference

### About Publishing Futures

Publishing Futures is the British Council's flagship programme supporting publishing entrepreneurs and future leaders in the trade publishing industry to strengthen international connections, develop new skills and explore innovative business models. By building a global network at publishing events in cities such as London, Frankfurt, Sharjah and Jaipur and at other major industry platforms, the programme creates opportunities for collaboration and professional growth.

The programme champions an inclusive and interconnected publishing industry – one that builds resilience to navigate challenges, protects the freedom to publish, enables the exchange of knowledge and fosters the understanding essential for supporting peace and prosperity. Its impact is already clear: participants demonstrate a deep commitment to building meaningful international relationships and experience the benefits international collaboration brings.

Publishing Futures offers participants access to different industry events and ongoing connection through the fellowship alumni offer, ensuring participants are part the sector conversations which build a publishing industry that is innovative, more equitable and globally connected.

### IPA Congress Opportunity

A delegation of nine publishers from Indonesia, Malaysia and the UK will be selected via open call to participate in the [IPA Congress in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia](#), as well as the bespoke **British Council Publishing Futures programme** on the days before the Congress. The Publishing Futures programme will include roundtables and workshops with industry leaders which will offer a deep dive into the South-East Asian publishing sector as well as topics of specific interest to the selected delegates. The programme will take place from **2-8 July 2026**.

The International Publishers Congress, organized by the [International Publishers Association](#) (IPA), is the premier biennial global event for the publishing industry to discuss key trends, challenges, and opportunities. It brings together publishing professionals, associations, and experts to network, exchange ideas to shape a forward looking, inclusive, and globally connected future for the publishing industry

The IPA Congress in Malaysia in 2026 is focused on major global publishing challenges and opportunities, including AI, digital disruption, copyright, freedom of expression, and sustainable publishing practices. It will also highlight the rapidly expanding markets of Asia and Southeast Asia, fostering international collaboration and rights trading.

The programme offers:

- Opportunities to meet with global publishing leaders and publishers from international markets
- Access to a seminar programme which provides insights and builds knowledge around issues facing publishing
- Support for introductions and bespoke meetings during the programme
- Social and cultural engagements in Kuala Lumpur as part of the programme
- Relationship with British Council teams in Indonesia, Malaysia and the UK
- Access to British Council's Publishing Futures Alumni offer which includes invitations to networking events at international publishing meeting points, notifications of grants and opportunities of interest, online skills building workshops

### Proposed programme

|              |   |
|--------------|---|
| tbc June     | Overview of Malaysian and Indonesian sectors (1 hour, online) |
| tbc June     | Pre-departure briefing (1 hour, online)                       |
| Thurs 2 July | Delegate arrival in Malaysia (welcome dinner for group only)  |
| Fri 3 July   | British Council programme                                     |
| Sat 4 July   | Rest day  |
| Sun 5 July   | Bookshop tour and welcome cocktail (IPA Congress)             |
| Mon 6 July   | IPA Congress and gala dinner                                  |
| Tues 7 July  | IPA Congress and anniversary dinner                           |
| Wed 8 July   | Delegate departure  |
| tbc Sept     | Follow-up meeting (1 hour, online)                            |

## Participant Selection

### Application

Interested publishers should apply to participate in the programme via the online application form. Applications will be accepted between 20 April 2026 and 10 May 2026.

Registration link: [Publishing Futures Application Form – Fill in form](#)

**Closing date: 10 May 2026**

**Access:** If you identify as disabled and need additional access support to complete your application, please contact us at [uk-literature@britishcouncil.org](mailto:uk-literature@britishcouncil.org)

### Eligibility

The programme is for future publishing leaders based in **Indonesia, Malaysia or the UK** and applicants must:

- Currently hold an editorial or commissioning role at a trade publishing house and have 5-10 years' experience in the trade publishing industry
- Have limited international experience to date and a desire to build connections and explore collaborations with the global publishing sector
- Have the confidence and competence to participate in an English-based programme
- Be fully able to participate in the programme, including spending 6 nights in Kuala Lumpur from **2-8 July 2026** and preparatory work in advance
- Have a particular interest in literature in translation, underrepresented voices, environmental sustainability and decolonising practices (desirable)
- Demonstrate a particular interest in South East Asian literature (desirable)

We particularly welcome and encourage applications from candidates who are underrepresented in the Publishing sector. Applicants with limited international or fellowship experience will be prioritised.

Please note that climate conditions in Kuala Lumpur can be extremely hot and humid in July and the contrast of outdoor temperatures compared to indoor air conditioning can be taxing. There will also be some walking from venue to venue in the programme and this can also be difficult in the heat. While we will make as many accommodations as possible for specific requirements, it is not always possible given the particular infrastructure in the city.

Questions about eligibility can be directed to Rebecca Hart at [uk-literature@britishcouncil.org](mailto:uk-literature@britishcouncil.org)

## Assessment

All applications will be assessed against the eligibility criteria and application responses evaluated as follows:

- 20% Relevance and eligibility:** Applicant meets criteria (relevant role at publishing house based in one of the eligible countries, 5-10 years' experience) and publishes literary work of high artistic/creative quality.
- 45% Motivation:** Applicant clearly articulates their motivation and aims for participating and demonstrates a readiness and vision for continued international collaboration with specific outcomes and future plans. Applicant demonstrates a genuine interest in building connections, learning and curiosity about new markets and literatures. Applicant's participation has the potential to benefit their wider community and publishing house.
- 35% Opportunity:** Applicant has a clear personal and professional development goals they wish to achieve and is at a suitable stage in their career to maximise the opportunity. Applicant demonstrates commitment to participating fully in the programme. Applicants with limited international or fellowship experience may be prioritised.

## Expectations for the programme

The British Council's Publishing Futures programme provides a framework for individual participant's personal and professional development. Individual participants gain the most from the programme by using it as a springboard for their own growth: considering in advance their own personal objectives, preparing for the visit with pre-reading and research, and engaging deeply during the programme.

It is expected that participants will:

- Attend two one-hour online briefing sessions before departure to get to know the group, learn about the local context and run-through the programme in detail
- Prepare ahead of time by reading programme documents, suggested reading and/or research, setting individual meetings as appropriate
- Attend the entire programme and approach all meetings and events with generosity and an open mind
- Complete a baseline survey before the programme, an endline survey after the visit and a follow-on survey (one year later) to help us to monitor impact
- Pursue connections, leads you make during the programme, continue to build relationships and engage with British Council via the Alumni offer
- Participate in one one-hour online follow-up meeting to reflect on the programme and share updates about potential collaborations and personal development

## Practical and Logistical Arrangements

Participants are responsible for:

- Providing accurate information in a timely manner for British Council to make travel bookings, including signing a Visitor Support Contract
- Researching and purchasing your own comprehensive travel insurance and any travel immunisations or medications
- Notifying British Council immediately if you are travelling on a passport other than Indonesian or British (and therefore may require a visa) and applying for a Malaysian visa (if necessary)
- Advising British Council on any access requirements and accommodations you may have
- Making your own arrangements for your airport transfer between home and your home airport (British Council will reimburse costs for public transportation for those who need to travel a significant distance to the nearest airport)
- Covering all costs for personal incidentals and meals outside of the official programme and during travel days
- Covering all costs for accommodation, expenses, transfers and other incidentals if you extend your trip before or after the official programme

British Council is responsible for:

- Booking and purchasing return economy flights (or local travel) from the participant's nearest airport to and from Kuala Lumpur
- Booking and purchasing hotel accommodation in Kuala Lumpur for 5-6 nights (dependent upon flight arrivals; accommodation will not be provided for residents of Kuala Lumpur)
- Providing visa invitation letters and reimbursement for visa costs (if necessary)
- Covering all meals and local transportation during the time of the official programme
- Providing pre-departure briefings and joining instructions documenting all relevant programme information