



OpenBooks launches to the public on 22 and 23 February 2023

OpenBooks – the new virtual initiative to connect young people with potential careers within the books industry, is to launch to the public on **22 and 23 February 2023** via <https://www.publishers.org.uk/openbooks/>

Demystifying career options, identifying routes in, and positioning the book industry alongside other inspirational creative industries such as film, TV and music, **OpenBooks** is a series of free, accessible online events targeting 14-19 year olds, and especially those from under-represented backgrounds. The collaboration by the Publishers Association, Booksellers Association and The Association of Authors' Agents, has support from across the books industry and public funding from the National Lottery through Arts Council England.

The programme will go live on the 22 and 23 February and will remain online after the initial launch. All events will be available virtually via free to view platforms and will be supported by social media activity from across the books industry. Accessibility will also be enhanced with transcripts for every panel session.

OpenBooks will be promoted into schools and colleges with targeted advertising reaching over 5000 UK secondary schools and colleges, via local bookshops and with amplification from across the books industry and beyond. All activity will be shared from the hub: <https://www.publishers.org.uk/openbooks/>

The series of short virtual events will introduce young people to the books industry, including publishing, bookselling, agenting and much more, making connections with young viewers' interests, creative skills, and passions. These events will feature industry speakers including Becky Thomas (*Literary Agent, Lewinsohn Literary Agency*), Daphne Lao Tonge (*founder, Illumicrate and Daphne Press*), Zain Mahmood (*Head of Ecommerce, Waterstones*), and Amy Mae Baxter (*Senior Editor, Dialogue Books*), and will be hosted by authors including Juno Dawson, Carrie Burnell and Children's Laureate Joseph Coelho. (*Full panel details below*)

Joseph Coelho, Waterstones Children's Laureate 2022 – 2024 and award-winning performance poet, playwright, and children's author, said of OpenBooks:

“OpenBooks is a vital initiative in ensuring that the future of the books industry is healthy, progressive and more clearly identifiable as an exciting and achievable career option to a diverse range of young people. I hope that showing the wealth of opportunity and creativity across the industry - from publishing, agenting, bookselling and far beyond - will prove inspiring, and I'm delighted to support it.”

Also launching will be short form video content, including **5 Minutes With** videos, giving an insight into inspiring careers options and real life journeys, and **Come to Work with Me** videos, which will provide a look behind-the-scenes in real jobs.



Organisations and individuals in the books industry are encouraged to get involved in the initiative by sharing a short video or content of their own choice to social media with the tag #OpenBooks.

-ENDS-

CONTACT: For any queries, suggestions or to request an interview or help in another way with amplifying the OpenBooks events, please contact project managers Kat McKenna, Katherine Woodfine and Nina Douglas on openbooksevent@gmail.com (for PR specific enquiries, please cc nina@ninadouglaspr.com).

Follow our activity, and for updates on social media via **#OpenBooks**

FURTHER NOTES TO EDITORS:

SCHEDULE OF PANEL OF EVENTS:

SHELF HELP: BOOK INDUSTRY 101 - If you love... books! A one-stop to help you find your path in the industry

22 February, 10-10.45am

HOST: Joseph Coelho (Children's Laureate, poet and author)

PANEL: Becky Thomas (Literary Agent, Lewinsohn Literary Agency), Amy Mae Baxter (Senior Editor, Dialogue Books), James Routledge (Manager, the bound)

If you're looking for a one-stop event to find out why the book industry is for YOU, then look no further. Learn about the vast array of opportunities in this creative and fascinating industry, as well as the passions and skills that might be useful to get you through the door. From publishing the best new books, to working with writers as a literary agent, or working in retail to get books into readers' hands, there are so many amazing paths to choose from. Discover your perfect bookish career – whether that be as an editor, a publicist, or lots more jobs in the book industry you might never have heard of before.

DOING THE BOOKS - If you love... maths, business and sales

22 February, 11-11.30am

HOST: Fleur Sinclair (Owner, Sevenoaks Bookshop)

PANEL: Daphne Lao Tonge (founder, Illumicrate and Daphne Press), Meera Ghanshamdas (Director, Round Table Books CIC), Zain Mahmood (Head of Ecommerce, Waterstones)

Are you a whiz with a graph or spreadsheet? Perhaps you're single-handedly running your own small business empire on Tiktok or Etsy? If so, could you work in book retail or publisher sales? Find out how to put your book shopping skills to serious work with our panel featuring a bookshop owner, subscription box founder and eCommerce expert. They'll show you the power of crunching the numbers, using business skills, and how to make sure brilliant new books get into readers' hands.



JUDGE A BOOK BY ITS COVER - If you love... art and design

22 February, 1.30-2.00pm

HOST: Jack Noel (author/illustrator and Fiction Art Director, Andersen Press)

PANEL: Ebyan Egal (Studio Manager, Cornerstone), Robyn Watts (Senior Production Controller, HarperCollins)

There's never been a better time to embrace your creativity. If you have a passion for art and design, join us on this incredible panel of talented publishing stars. Discover how you could use your creative talents to make beautiful books, from cover illustration to text design to high quality production. You'll learn all about these inspiring roles in design, art, illustration or production - and discover career paths you may never have heard of before!

A NOVEL IDEA - If you love... words and incredible stories

22 February, 2.30-3.15pm

HOST: Bethany Rutter (author)

PANEL: Silé Edwards (literary agent, Andrew Nurnberg), Mireille Harper (Editorial Director, Bluebird), Juliet Pickering (literary agent, Blake Friedmann), Mo Hafeez (Commissioning Editor, Guardian Faber), Ben Horslen (Fiction Publisher, Penguin Random House Children's)

Whether you like dreaming up stories and reading with an eagle-eye for detail, or love the idea of working closely with brilliant writers and illustrators - if you're passionate about words, storytelling and writing, then this session is the one for you. Find out more about working in an editorial role in a publishing house, or how you could become a literary agent, from a line-up of inspiring talent.

SPREADING THE WORD - If you love... being a tastemaker in your gang

23 February, 10.30am-11am

HOST: Juno Dawson (author)

PANEL: Paul Black (PR/Brand Director, Andersen) Genista Tate-Alexander (Head of Marketing, Bloomsbury), Sabah Khan (Head of Publicity, Adult, Fiction & Non-Fiction, Simon & Schuster)

Can't stop talking about the latest book you've read? Excited by the idea of meeting writers and readers at book events and festivals? Or are you obsessed with adverts, branding, and how to help people discover their next favourite purchase? This session is packed with ideas for how you could use your enthusiasm working in book publicity, marketing or events. Come along and learn how a skill for spreading the word could become your dream vocation.

THE INTERNET MADE ME BUY LIT - If you love... making connections and shouting about books online

23 February, 11.30am-12pm

HOST: Cerrie Burnell (author)

PANEL: Mubarak Elmubarak (Head of Digital Marketing and Brand, Michael Joseph), Elle Jones (Head of Video and Metadata, Pan Macmillan), Kiri Inglis (Marketing and Editorial Manager, Bookshop.org)

Are you addicted to searching BookTok for the next big thing? Do you instantly head to Insta or Reddit when you finish the final page of your latest read? Or perhaps you're fascinated by the ways that digital platforms might change the ways we read, share stories, and discover books in the future? Learn



about how you could work in the book industry in these exciting roles relating to digital, social media, data and analysis.

YOUR PASSPORT INTO BOOKS - If you love...meeting people from around the world and travel
23 February, 1.30-2pm

HOST: Chloe Coles (author/UK and Export Sales Executive for Europe at Bounce)

PANEL: Roxane Edouard (literary agent, Curtis Brown), Jemma McDonagh (Deputy Managing Director, The Marsh Agency), Sunhee Jin (Senior Sales Manager, DK), Aude Bolechala (Manager, Nomad Books)

Are you an aspiring globetrotter who loves to travel and make connections with people around the world? Got a special talent for languages? Fascinated by books and stories from other countries and cultures? This session will explore opportunities in some of the most well-travelled jobs in the books industry - international sales, rights and export - and speak to some of the talented people travelling the globe to get readers hooked on the latest books.

FURTHER INFORMATION:

ARTS COUNCIL ENGLAND is the national development agency for creativity and culture. We have set out our strategic vision in Let's Create that by 2030 we want England to be a country in which the creativity of each of us is valued and given the chance to flourish and where everyone of us has access to a remarkable range of high quality cultural experiences. We invest public money from Government and The National Lottery to help support the sector and to deliver this vision. www.artscouncil.org.uk
Following the Covid-19 crisis, the Arts Council developed a £160 million Emergency Response Package, with nearly 90% coming from the National Lottery, for organisations and individuals needing support. We are also one of the bodies administering the Government's unprecedented £1.96 billion Culture Recovery Funds. Find out more at www.artscouncil.org.uk/covid19.

National Lottery Project Grants is the Arts Council's open access programme for arts, museums and libraries projects. The fund supports thousands of individual artists, community and cultural organisations thanks to National Lottery investment. National Lottery players raise over £30 million for good causes each week, funding arts, heritage, sports, voluntary and charity projects around the UK. Over £43 billion has been raised for Good Causes since the National Lottery began in 1994.

THE ASSOCIATION OF AUTHORS AGENTS (AAA) is a British voluntary trade association whose members are all UK-and Republic of Ireland-based literary agencies.

The Association of Authors' Agents exists to provide: a forum that allows member agencies to discuss issues arising in our profession, a collective voice for UK literary agencies in public affairs and the media, a code of conduct to promote best practice amongst members, and regular panel events and training sessions for our members among other support.

<http://www.agentsassoc.co.uk>

THE BOOKSELLERS ASSOCIATION (BA) is the membership organisation for booksellers in the UK & Ireland, and represents over 95% of booksellers. The BA exists to support, advise and work with its



members to provide business-critical products and services for booksellers. These include National Book Tokens, our gift card which prompts increased footfall and keeps gift spending in the book trade; Batchline and Batch, our award-winning EPOS, stock management and payments service, which saves time, money and hassle when settling invoices and organising returns; a full range of money-saving affinity deals; a free Business Support Helpline; Booktime magazine; government lobbying and representation work across the nations and regions; networking opportunities and events; and Books Are My Bag, our range of consumer-facing activity and campaigns, which include Indie Book of the Month, Independent Bookshop Week, Bookshop Day, the Books Are My Bag Readers Awards, Christmas Books and Summer Books catalogues and more.

THE PUBLISHERS ASSOCIATION (PA) is the member organisation for UK publishing, representing companies of all sizes and specialisms. Our members produce digital and print books, research journals and educational resources across genres and subjects.

We exist to champion publishing to the wider world and to provide our members with everything they need to thrive. We have helped change laws, improved business conditions and inspired people to become publishers.

We are passionate about the capacity for books and reading to make life better for people.

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