

Membership Pack

April 2023

scottishpen.org

Scottish PEN is a registered Scottish Charity with the charity number SC008772.

Scottish PEN is a SCIO (Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation).



Photo by [Patrick Tomasso](#) on [Unsplash](#)

Contents

Contents	1
Welcome from Scottish PEN President	2
Introduction	4
PEN Charter	6
Women's Manifesto	7
Background Information	9
Trustee Biographies	11
Communication	15
Ongoing Campaigns	16
Committees	18
PENning	20
Ideas for Campaigning	21
Key Dates	23

Welcome from Scottish PEN President

Welcome to Scottish PEN

Thank you for becoming a member of Scottish PEN.

We are delighted that you have joined us in the historic and ongoing struggle to protect the right to speak, read and write without hindrance.

In 1927, Hugh MacDiarmid, with Professor Herbert Grierson of the University of Edinburgh and the novelist Neil Gunn, proposed setting up a Scottish Centre of PEN International, and were joined by other founder members, Compton Mackenzie, Helen Cruickshank, Edwin and Willa Muir and Robert Cunningham Graham. Scottish PEN has been active in campaigning and advocating for human rights since then, up to and including our ongoing work on the developing relationship between writers and the internet, and leading the Congress of PEN International in calling for the release of Julian Assange from his now four years of imprisonment in a British high security prison. We often hear from writers freed from prisons around the world, and from the families of writers still imprisoned or at risk, about how much our work means to them. Our members are rightfully proud that Scottish PEN has worked throughout its history to effect real change in the world.

In fact, Scottish PEN's work is as important today as it has ever been. Across the world, independent expression and fundamental freedoms are under attack. Journalists are killed for doing their job, and writers are censored, imprisoned and sentenced to death. As recently as 2021, PEN America's Freedom to Write Index showed the nations of the United Kingdom making up one of only two states in Western Europe that jailed journalists for their work, and committing more writers to prison than Russia. Our surveys of the Scottish PEN membership have revealed a perception among readers and writers of a climate of self-censorship and uncertainty that restricts the free exchange of ideas.

As members of Scottish PEN, we subscribe to the Charter of PEN International and pledge ourselves to oppose any form of suppression of freedom of expression in the country and community to which we belong, as well as throughout the world wherever this is possible. We also pledge to champion the ideal of one humanity living in peace in one world. The Charter is a brilliantly concise yet full declaration of the principles and goals of PEN International, and I commend it to you.

Your support is essential to help us maintain our work, here and across the globe. This Membership Pack offers suggestions as to how you can help, outlines our continuing campaigns and committees and shows how you can take action in defence of free expression.

The committees are central to Scottish PEN's work. Our **Writers at Risk committee** campaigns on behalf of imprisoned and persecuted writers across the world and at home, calling for their protection and support, as well as justice for those who have been killed. Each year, this Committee organises an event to mark PEN International's Day Of The Imprisoned Writer. The **Writers in Exile committee** publishes the online journal *PENning*, which brings the work of Scottish writers together with exiled writers living in Scotland. The **Women Writers committee** stands with women writers who are often

unrepresented and targeted solely for their gender. This committee organises two annual events, a lecture in memory of Naomi Mitchison, and another event to mark International Women's Day. The **Writers for Peace committee** engages in ongoing work to oppose conflict and build peace around the world, and organises regular events, including the annual memorial Helen Cruickshank lecture. The Membership Pack has details of how you can join any of these committees if you would like to help their work. The Board of Trustees is also looking into establishing a committee with the goal of promoting all of the languages of Scotland, and would welcome members' input in that regard, too.

As well as our sub-committees, Scottish PEN works on a number of campaigns to protect at-risk writers and defend free expression across the world. This includes ongoing work with our academic partners investigating how free expression and self-censorship operate in the digital world and otherwise facilitating debate on digital human rights, hate speech, content moderation and other challenging issues that define the digital age. We have recently worked with our partners in the PEN Centres across England, Wales and the island of Ireland to monitor and examine the progress of the proposed National Security Bill, and stand ready to act with respect to any other threat to the freedom of expression of writers. Our campaigns are made possible by our membership getting involved, spreading the message and calling for change. This pack reveals ways you can take action and stand up for free expression.

We work and campaign with other human rights and literary organisations; arrange conferences and other public events championing free expression; we run education programmes and workshops in schools, colleges, prisons, universities and libraries; champion translation and minority languages, in particular Scots and Gaelic writing; and showcase Scottish literature to international audiences.

By becoming a member of Scottish PEN, you become part of an international community that stands up for writers, readers, publishers, translators and those who are at risk for speaking out. We have been working in recent times to strengthen the links among the Board of Trustees, the Committees and the membership, and are delighted to say that this project has been bearing fruit. You will be able to contribute to and receive our monthly newsletter, we will regularly update you regarding our ongoing and proposed activities, and you will be invited to all events and initiatives.

Again, thank you for joining Scottish PEN. We look forward to working with you.

In solidarity,

Ricky Monahan Brown

Introduction

Scottish PEN

Scottish PEN, founded in 1927 by Hugh MacDiarmid and Professor Herbert Grierson, supported by Edwin and Willa Muir, Robert Cunninghame Graham, Neil Gunn, Helen Cruickshank, Compton Mackenzie, and other distinguished writers of the day, is the Scottish centre of PEN International. The birth of Scottish PEN was a radical act, culturally and politically. It made a statement about the distinctive identity of Scottish literature as well as championing the aims of International PEN. Scottish PEN was the first PEN Centre to represent a non-unitary nation state and this set a precedent for future PEN centres including Catalan PEN, Uyghur PEN and other centres that represent unique and distinct linguistic, ethnic or political communities.

Over the years Scottish PEN has grown steadily in membership and influence. It campaigns vigorously on behalf of writers imprisoned and repressed. It brings together Scottish and international writers. It promotes Scottish writing in all its languages and encourages translation. It plays an important role in PEN International's congress, which is hosted each year in a different country. Scotland has been the host country on three occasions, most recently in 1997. In 2008 Scottish PEN hosted PEN International Writers in Prison conference in Glasgow. As well as strengthening the commitment to support threatened writers, it was an opportunity for PEN members from all over the world to get together and share experiences.

Scottish PEN has led campaigning on a number of key issues related to free expression both in Scotland and across the globe. This includes leading the call to reform defamation law in Scotland, oppose pervasive surveillance powers and defend human rights both in Scotland and around the world. We have also worked alongside international partners including ICORN, Reporters Without Borders, PEN International, Index on Censorship and Article 19, alongside international media outlets and policy makers to protect at-risk writers, protect international human rights standards and champion the power of literature.

PEN International

The organisation known today as PEN International began in London, UK, in 1921, as simply PEN. Catharine Amy Dawson-Scott, a British poet, playwright and peace activist, founded PEN as a way to unite writers after the devastation of World War One. Within four years there were 25 PEN Centres in Europe, and by 1931 there were several Centres in South America as well as China.

As the world grew darker just before the outbreak of war in 1939, PEN member centres included Argentina, Australia, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Egypt, India, Iraq, Japan, Mexico, New Zealand, Palestine, Uruguay, the US and others. All the Scandinavian countries were accounted for in the membership, as well as several countries in Eastern Europe. Basque, Catalan and Yiddish Centres were represented, too. PEN was one of the world's first non-governmental organisations and amongst the first international bodies advocating for human rights and today the overwhelming majority of PEN International's 145 centres come from outside Europe.



Whether it was protecting free expression in Nazi Germany and Eastern Europe during the Cold War, or campaigning for justice for writers across the globe, over the years PEN International has stood alongside and supported leading writers including Arthur Koestler who was imprisoned in fascist Spain, Wole Soyinka who was to be executed in Nigeria and Salman Rushdie who had a fatwa issued against him following the publication of his novel, *The Satanic Verses*.

PEN International is now active in over 100 countries, and still echoes Dawson-Scott's original principles advocating freedom of expression, peace and friendship. For more information please visit the [PEN International website](https://www.peninternational.org/).

1 Scottish PEN 90th Anniversary Exhibition in the Glasgow City Chambers

PEN Charter

The Charter of PEN International has guided, unified and inspired its members for over 60 years. Its principles were implicit at the organisation's founding in 1921. However, like the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the PEN Charter was forged amidst the harsh realities of World War Two. It was approved at the 1948 PEN Congress in Copenhagen.

PEN affirms that:

- Literature knows no frontiers and must remain common currency among people in spite of political or international upheavals.
- In all circumstances, and particularly in time of war, works of art, the patrimony of humanity at large, should be left untouched by national or political passion.
- Members of PEN should at all times use what influence they have in favour of good understanding and mutual respect between nations and people; they pledge themselves to do their utmost to dispel all hatreds and to champion the ideal of one humanity living in peace and equality in one world.
- PEN stands for the principle of unhampered transmission of thought within each nation and between all nations, and members pledge themselves to oppose any form of suppression of freedom of expression in the country and community to which they belong, as well as throughout the world wherever this is possible. PEN declares for a free press and opposes arbitrary censorship in time of peace.

It believes that the necessary advance of the world towards a more highly organised political and economic order renders a free criticism of governments, administrations and institutions imperative. And since freedom implies voluntary restraint, members pledge themselves to oppose such evils of a free press as mendacious publication, deliberate falsehood and distortion of facts for political and personal ends.



2 Early logo for PEN International

Women's Manifesto

The first and founding principle of the PEN Charter asserts that 'literature knows no frontiers'. These frontiers were traditionally thought of as borders between countries and peoples. For many women in the world – and for almost all women until relatively recently – the first, and the last and perhaps the most powerful frontier was the door of the house she lived in: her parents' or her husband's home.

For women to have free speech, the right to read, the right to write, they need to have the right to roam physically, socially and intellectually. There are few social systems that do not regard with hostility a woman who walks by herself.

PEN believes that violence against women, in all its many forms, both within the walls of a home or in the public sphere, creates dangerous forms of censorship. Across the globe, culture, religion and tradition are repeatedly valued above human rights and are used as arguments to encourage or defend harm against women and girls.

PEN believes that the act of silencing a person is to deny their existence. It is a kind of death. Humanity is both wanting and bereft without the full and free expression of women's creativity and knowledge.

PEN ENDORSES THE FOLLOWING INTERNATIONALLY RECOGNISED PRINCIPLES:

NON-VIOLENCE: End violence against women and girls in all of its forms, including legal, physical, sexual, psychological, verbal and digital; promote an environment in which women and girls can express themselves freely, and ensure that all gender-based violence is comprehensively investigated and punished, and compensation provided for victims.

SAFETY: Protect women writers and journalists and combat impunity for violent acts and harassment committed against women writers and journalists in the world and online.

EDUCATION: Eliminate gender disparity at all levels of education by promoting full access to quality education for all women and girls and ensuring that women can fully exercise their education rights to read and write.

EQUALITY: Ensure that women are accorded equality with men before the law; condemn discrimination against women in all its forms and take all necessary steps to eliminate discrimination and ensure the full equality of all people through the development and advancement of women writers.

ACCESS: Ensure that women are given the same access to the full range of civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights to enable the full and free participation and public recognition of women in all media and across the spectrum of literary forms. Additionally, ensure equal access for women and girls to all forms of media as a means of freedom of expression.

PARITY: Promote the equal economic participation of women writers, and ensure that women writers and journalists are employed and paid on equal terms to men without any discrimination.

- [Download the PEN International Women's Manifesto \(pdf\)](#)
- [Disponible en arabe متوفرة باللغة العربية](#)
- [Read the Women's Manifesto in Zulu](#)
- [Palestinian poet Dareen Tatour speaks on the PEN International Women's Manifesto](#)



PEN International President Jennifer Clement, First Minister Nicola Sturgeon, Publishing Director and manifesto advisor Ellah Wakatama Allfrey OBE, and PEN International board member Margie Orford

Background Information

Scottish PEN is a registered Scottish Charity with the charity number **SC008772**. Scottish PEN is a SCIO (Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation).

Constitution

As well as being guided by the PEN Charter, as a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO) all members, staff members and trustees must agree to comply with the Scottish PEN Constitution.

The constitution can be viewed [here](#).

Trustees

Scottish PEN is governed by a board of trustees. The current board is:

- **Ricky Monahan Brown, President**
- **Fiona Graham, Vice-President**
- **Drew Campbell, Treasurer**
- **Ruth Aylett**
- **Jenni Calder**
- **Colin Donati**
- **Lizzie Eldridge**
- **Bashabi Fraser**
- **Carl MacDougall**
- **Mario Relich**

Staff

Lisa Clark, Project Manager – lisa@scottishpen.org

Caroline Whitham, Finance and Admin Worker – finance@scottishpen.org

General Enquiries – info@scottishpen.org

Life members

Scottish PEN awards life time memberships to writers who have supported our work over the years and agree to champion our aims. This list is currently under review and will be updated as required. Current honorary members are:

- Jenni Calder
- Carol Ann Duffy
- Christine De Luca
- Laura Fiorentini
- Jackie Kay
- Eric Milligan
- Ian Rankin
- JK Rowling
- Alexander McCall Smith
- Wole Soyinka
- Louise Welsh
- Joan Lingard
- Sir Tom Devine
- Nick Barley

Office Location

The Scottish PEN office is located in the **Writer's Museum, Lady Stair's Close, Lawnmarket, Edinburgh, EH1 2PA** (the office is open Monday to Friday between 10:00am and 5:00pm – please note, the office is not staffed everyday, so if you are keen to meet with someone from the organisation, or visit the office please contact the staff first on the emails above).

Phone: 0131 226 5590



Writers Museum in Edinburgh that hosts the Scottish PEN offices



Trustee Biographies

Ricky Monahan Brown, President

Ricky Monahan Brown is the author of the memoir *Stroke: A 5% chance of survival* from Sandstone Press, which was one of The Scotsman's Scottish Books of 2019. He is the co-founder and curator of the multiple award-winning irregular night of live spoken word and musical entertainment, *Interrobang?! which* has served as a vehicle to facilitate one of the strands of Scottish PEN's Many Voices project and has supported Scottish PEN's work in opposing pervasive surveillance.

Fiona Graham, Vice-President

Fiona Graham is an editor, researcher and writer having worked for publishers such as Calder and Boyars, Quartet and Canongate and then researched and written projects for organisations such as Nova Scotia Marketing Agency, the Edinburgh International Festival, the National Library of Scotland and the University of Edinburgh.

Jenni Calder

Jenni Calder was for 23 years with the National Museum of Scotland, as education officer, Head of Publications, script editor for the Museum of Scotland (opened 1998) and Head of Museum of Scotland International. She has published widely on literary and historical subjects and writes fiction and poetry as Jenni Daiches. She has been an active member of Scottish PEN for over 30 years and president from 2007-11. Her latest book is *The Burning Glass: The Life of Naomi Mitchison*.

Carl MacDougall

Carl MacDougall has written three prize-winning novels, four pamphlets, four collections of short stories, including two for children, five works of non-fiction and edited four anthologies, including the best selling *The Devil and the Giro*. He has written and presented major television series for BBC 2 and BBC 4 and held a number of residencies and fellowships.

Drew Campbell

Drew Campbell is a novelist, playwright and poet whose work has appeared in many publications and various media. An SAC Writing Fellow from 2002 – 2005, he was Writer-in-Residence for schools in

Argyll & Bute 2007 – 2011, and held a Scottish Book Trust reading residency in 2013 – 14. He was the Scottish PEN President between 2010 – 16 and Treasurer from 2017-18.

Colin Donati

Colin Donati is a Scottish-born poet and musician of third generation Italian descent. He gives regular public readings of his work, including extracts from his Scots translation of Dostoevsky's *Crime and Punishment*, and performs his songs and song-settings as part of the duo Various Moons with cellist, Robin Mason. In 2014, he edited the collected dramatic works of Robert McLellan, *Playing Scotland's Story* (Luath Press). He lives in Edinburgh.

Bashabi Fraser

Bashabi Fraser is an award-winning poet, writer and academic. Her awards include the 2015 was 'Outstanding Woman of Scotland' conferred by the Saltire Society and the Word Masala Foundation Award for Excellence in Poetry in 2017. She has authored and edited 22 books and been widely anthologised. Her recent publications include *Rabindranath Tagore*, a biography (2019), *The Homing Bird* (2017), *Scottish Orientalism and the Bengal Renaissance: the Continuum of Ideas* (2017). She is Professor Emerita and Director of the Scottish Centre of Tagore Studies at Edinburgh Napier University, an Honorary Fellow at the Centre for South Asian Studies at the University of Edinburgh and a Royal Literary Fund Fellow at the University of Dundee. She is the Chief Editor of the international academic and creative e-journal, *Gitanjali and Beyond*.

Mario Relich

Mario Relich's book of poems *Frisky Ducks* was published by Grace Note in 2014. His poems have appeared in Poetry journals, and in the 'Poem of the Day' section of *The Herald*. He is also a retired academic who was a lecturer on Post-Colonial Literature and Film History at the Open University, both in Scotland and London, for many years. At present, he writes regularly literary reviews, and an annual *Edinburgh International Festival Diary for Scottish Affairs*.

Lizzie Eldridge

Lizzie is a writer, actor, teacher and activist. After 15 years as a university lecturer in theatre, she moved to Malta in 2008. Her novel, *Vandalism* (2015), was shortlisted for a National Book Prize in Malta and it was here she became involved in the fight to get justice for Daphne Caruana Galizia. She continued campaigning when she moved back to Glasgow in 2019 and is an active member of Occupy Justice (a women-led pressure group) and Repubblika (an anti-corruption NGO). Lizzie's other novel, *Duende* (2014), focuses on political issues in Spain before the civil war and she publishes regularly in PENning as well as producing journalistic work.

Communication

Website – scottishpen.org

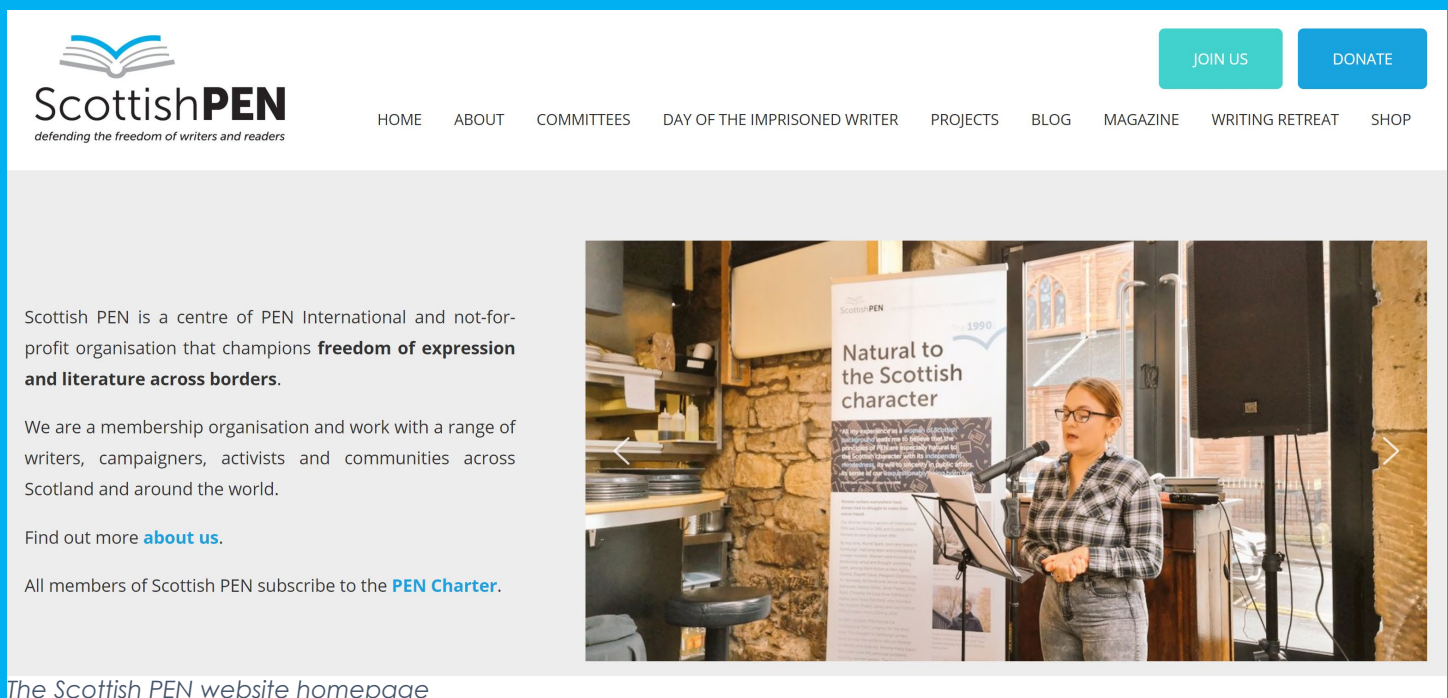
The Scottish PEN website showcases the work undertaken by the organisation. It includes updates on the campaigns and project work, regular blogs and events updates, alongside a range of other relevant content. The website also allows for books published by our members to be showcased.

Visit the website here: scottishpen.org

To submit your work please email info@scottishpen.org with the subject line - **Member Publication for the Website**. Please include the following information:

- Your name
- Name of the book
- Publisher name and website
- Blurb for the book (200-word maximum)
- Image of the book's front cover
- Author photograph
- Author biography

Once sent please give us 7 days to upload the details. As the information is presented as a carousel, your book will be displayed in order of the pieces uploaded.



Newsletter

Currently Scottish PEN sends out a newsletter at the start of each calendar month to promote events, launches, initiatives and publications of Scottish PEN members. This is kindly put together by Scottish PEN member, Mary McCabe. Any Scottish PEN member can promote their event, initiatives or book launches to be included in the Scottish PEN newsletter. To ensure it contains all necessary information please use [this template](#).

If you are unable to share information as part of the call out, we cannot guarantee your information will be contained in the newsletter.

Social Media

Twitter - [@ScottishPEN](#)

Facebook - [@Scottish.PEN.Centre](#)

Instagram - [@scottish_pen](#)

We post content regularly through our social media accounts and the accounts are maintained by staff members between 9-5pm every working day. If you believe there are any issues relevant to our work that we should share, please let us know on info@scottishpen.org.

Ongoing Campaigns

Protecting At-Risk Writers

Writers around the world are threatened by censorship, legal threats, imprisonment, violence and even death for doing their job. Whether they are journalists, writers, editors or publishers, it has never been a more dangerous time to be a writer. Scottish PEN works with key partners including PEN International, Index on Censorship, ICORN, Article 19 and Reporters Without Borders to protect writers around the world, raise awareness of threats to free expression and press freedom and advocate to policy makers for better and more robust protections. This includes working to establish Glasgow as a City of Refuge – as part of the International Cities of Refuge Network (ICORN) – to ensure at-risk writers can seek and secure protections in Scotland from persecution, imprisonment or violence.

Defending Human Rights

In a time of change, it is vital that nothing is done to weaken our fundamental freedoms. Scottish PEN works with leading partners and PEN centres around the world to ensure that nothing is done to

water down protections and leave our rights vulnerable to political point scoring. While the UK Government has put on hold their attempts to replace the Human Rights Act with an ill-defined British Bill of Rights, we will work hard to defend the HRA and other legal protections.

Hate Speech & Online Expression

As social media has revolutionised how we communicate and share our ideas to others around the world, it has also transformed how violence or hate can be incited. This highlights a complex balancing act between free expression and the protection of communities and individuals. Scottish PEN is working to facilitate debate on this issue to ensure that Scotland remains a place where robust and challenging issues can be raised, while protecting groups from the threats of violence.

Committees

For a number of key issues, Scottish PEN manages and runs a number of committees made up of Scottish PEN members.

Women Writers Committee

The Women Writers Committee leads on Scottish PEN's work showcasing and defending women writers both in Scotland and around the world. Challenging ideas of consolidated power, misogyny, prejudice and violence, the committee works with writers from a range of backgrounds to take action for all women writers who have been silenced, censored or threatened for expressing themselves.

Every year the committee organises the annual Naomi Mitchison where a woman writer working at the top of their field is invited to share their work and words with us, alongside an event marking International Women's Day in March, which brings together leading women, genderqueer and non-binary writers and activists to explore important issues of the day. To join the Women Writers Committee please email info@scottishpen.org



The Naomi Mitchison Lecture held at the CCA by the Women Writers Committee

Writers at Risk Committee

The Writers at Risk Committee (formerly known as the Writers In Prison Committee) campaigns for and stands in solidarity with writers at risk across the world, who are threatened by violence, prison, censorship and other means that prevents them from speaking out. Over the years, this committee has campaigned on behalf of Liu Xiaobo (China), Raif Badawi (Saudi Arabia), Lydia Cacho (Mexico), Behrouz Boochani (Iran/Australia) and Ashraf Fayadh (Saudi Arabia) and many others through a range of events and campaigns. The committee also leads on work in Scotland to mark the Day of the Imprisoned Writer every year on 15th November, which involves readings and events held across the country and work at Scottish Parliament.



First Minister, Nicola Sturgeon at our Day of the Imprisoned Writer event in Scottish Parliament

As well as this the committee works with international partners to raise awareness of cases where writers, including journalists, are at risk and campaigns through political lobbying, letter writing

campaigns, the hosting of vigils and digital campaigning to call for their release or safety. To join the Writers at Risk Committee please email info@scottishpen.org

Writers in Exile Committee

The Writers in Exile Committee leads work on PENning, a biannual literary journal that is published online with work from Scottish writers, Scottish PEN members and writers living in Scotland but born elsewhere. Work produced for this publication over the last few years also made up the recent anthology published to mark the 90th anniversary of Scottish PEN, *I'm Coming With You*. Events and readings are organised by the committee alongside the anthology to promote the work and celebrate the voices that now call Scotland home. To join the Writers in Exile Committee please email Liz Niven: ln@lzniven.com

Writers for Peace Committee

During episodes of conflict, instability and division, oftentimes writers are all we have to piece together the truth. However, they also face a disproportionate threat doing their job. The Writers for Peace Committee use fiction, poetry and non-fiction to explore issues around conflict and peace through public events, readings and debates. To join the Writers for Peace Committee please email info@scottishpen.org

PENning

PENning, the Writers in Exile Committee's biannual online journal, presents work by Scottish PEN's members alongside writing from people living in Scotland who are from other parts of the world.

We offer a literary community to established writers exiled from their own countries. We also welcome those who have come to live in Scotland and have an urge to write. We work with community refugee organisations and TESOL groups, encouraging work and organising peer-to-peer translation, furthering intercultural dialogue. Conflict or clampdown on freedom of expression in other parts of the world can make it necessary for a writer to leave their home. Being exiled can cause personal and professional suffering, endangering access to the usual sources of writerly support, publication and readership. We try to make that experience a little less lonely.



What should I send to PENning?

Send us up to 3 poems of no more than 50 lines each OR one prose piece of no more than 2,000 words. Writing may not have been previously published. Submissions may be in any language, provided that they are accompanied by a translation into English or Scots. This translation can be the author's or the work of another writer. Collaborations with those writing in other languages are very welcome.

How do I submit?

Please send your submission to pensubmissions@googlemail.com and make sure that you complete and attach our submission form to your email, which can be downloaded [here](#).

Please do not include your name anywhere on your submission. Your name should only appear on the submission form. This allows our editorial team to consider entries anonymously.

Ideas for Campaigning

There are a number of ways you can help campaign for the rights of writers in Scotland and around the world. However big or small your actions may be, you have help raise public awareness of at-risk writers across the globe, laws that target writers and other restrictions to free expression.

- **Take part in Scottish PEN events and initiatives** – All of our events and initiatives are a success through the involvement of our members across Scotland. So whether this is readings, vigils and events, or letter writing campaigns, petitions and consultation responses, everything you can do to join us and share our work will help us reach our goals.
- **Encourage your friends, family and network to join Scottish PEN** – The more members we have, the stronger the foundation to represent writers and protect their rights both in Scotland and around the world. The funds we receive from our members also enable us to continue our work.
- **Use your free speech to defend others' right to free speech** – If you are a writer, why not use your skills to promote and defend writers around the world? Whether this is writing poetry, essays, opinion pieces or pieces of fiction on relevant issues, or writing letters to the media, every act enables us to raise public awareness of these important issues.
- **Write letters of solidarity to writers currently in prison or at risk** – Oftentimes being in prison robs writers of their support network. By writing a letter to someone in prison you can remind them that they are not forgotten and allow them, for a moment, to engage with the world outside the prison cell.
- **Write letters to foreign governments (through their UK embassies)** – If a government imprisons or threatens writers, they need to know that the international community of writers will not be silent. By writing letters you can pressure the governments to release them and stand by the international protections for free expression.
- **Host events in your local community** – Whether this is readings, vigils, panel discussions, open mic nights, workshops or other events, by raising awareness of at risk writers and free expression with your local community you can engage with a broader audience and encourage others to take action on these important issues.
- **Mark important dates such as the Day of the Imprisoned Writer (15th November)** – By joining commemorations for these important dates we can join the international community marking the day around the world standing in support of at-risk writers.
- **Read and share work produced by at risk writers** – By imprisoning writers, states hope to silence their voice. But by reading and sharing their work we can oppose this crude censorship, while also celebrating their work.
- **Share content online via social media** – You can use whichever social media platform you like to promote information about free expression and at-risk writers to reach out to your online community and raise awareness of these important issues.

Things to remember

As a Scottish PEN member, you are entitled to identify yourself as a member, but if you are organising a local event or sharing information about these key issues, we would ask that you do not present yourself as speaking on behalf of Scottish PEN. We are an organisation made up of staff, committee members and governed by trustees. We cannot speak for the issues or editorial decisions made by yourself for your event. To this end we would ask that you do not use the Scottish PEN logo to promote your events.

We generally run free events for our members and supporters, but if you want to charge a ticket price or ask for donations you are free to do so. We would recommend that this is only enough to cover the costs of the event, or offered as donations to causes that are relevant to the event or important to you as the organiser – of course, if you would like to raise money for Scottish PEN we would be more than happy to oblige!

For more information about fundraising here is the [Code of Fundraising Practice](#) established by the Fundraising Regulator.

If you are organising an event, we would ask that you take care to be as inclusive as possible. This includes who you reach out to in terms of the audience, ensuring the venue is as accessible as possible and that the speakers represent the diversity of Scotland. Free speech is vital for different marginalised and protected communities to ensure they can take part in society and Scottish PEN believes it is vital that they should be able to take part in these conversations and events.



Vigil held at Scottish Parliament in honour of murdered Maltese journalist, Daphne Caruana Galizia

Key Dates

Scottish PEN marks a number of relevant international days to further our campaigning and work with international partners to promote our core issues. While we do not mark all of the dates below, these are a number that are relevant to our work. If you are interested in campaigning on behalf of Scottish PEN, these dates may be helpful for you.

Many of these dates are organised by external partners such as the United Nations and other 3rd sector arts, literature and human rights organisations around the world. Each day may have themes and resources connected to them that would help you.

21st March – International Mother Language Day

8th March – International Women's Day

21st March – World Poetry Day

23rd April – World Book Night

3rd May – World Press Freedom Day

8th September – International Literacy Day

30th September – International Translation Day

2nd November - International Day to End Impunity for Crimes against Journalists

15th November – Day of the Imprisoned Writer

19th – 25th November – Book Week Scotland

10th December – Human Rights Day

Beyond these dates there are a range of book and literature festivals hosted annually in different locations across Scotland. Scottish PEN or Scottish PEN members may be present at a number of these throughout the year.