

Elsewhere launched at Book Festival

✘ The Minister for Culture, Fiona Hyslop, today launched a programme of brand new writing celebrating the best of Scottish, international and children's words and ideas at the Edinburgh International Book Festival. With the support of the Scottish Government's Edinburgh Festivals Expo Fund, the Book Festival has commissioned fifty authors to write short stories or essays, all on the theme of 'Elsewhere', which are being exclusively digitised on the Book Festival website.

Leading writers, including Michel Faber, Alasdair Gray, Ali Smith, A L Kennedy, Alan Warner, Roddy Doyle and Amy Bloom together with authors best known for their writing for children and young adults – such as Michael Morpurgo, Andy Stanton, David Almond and Margo Lanagan – will be producing their work throughout this year and next and it is intended that the final collection will be collated into an anthology in 2011. In addition the Expo Fund will support the development of the "Word Alliance" programme of collaboration between seven international Book Festivals and the inaugural programme of international author exchange, which will include appearances by Scottish writers at Book Festivals in Jaipur, Beijing and New York in spring 2011.

Nick Barley, Director of the Edinburgh International Book Festival, said "Edinburgh has always been a showcase for promoting the best of Scottish writing to the world, and the best international writing to Scottish audiences. Commissioning this series of new work is a major development for the Book Festival and publishing the pieces online offers a unique opportunity for us to reach a truly worldwide audience.

"We are also delighted to be working with a number of our

fellow book festivals around the world to bring the best of international writing to Scotland, and also take some of our home-grown authors to book festivals in India, China and the USA next year.”

Attending an event at the Book Festival with Scottish writers, Denise Mina and Alan Warner (who have written pieces for Elsewhere) the Minister for Culture said, “Edinburgh’s world renowned International Book Festival welcomes the finest authors to Scotland, celebrating the very best writing from across the globe on an international stage. Our Expo Fund is shining the spotlight on established and emerging Scottish-based writers in an exciting and innovative way and showcasing our talent at International Festivals year round.”