

Calls go out for 'Scotland's Stories Now' from Edinburgh International Book Festival

In response to Scotland's Year of Stories 2022, Edinburgh International Book Festival today (Tue Feb 15th) announced a new project gathering and creating stories from and for people across Scotland . The year will spotlight, celebrate and promote the wealth of stories inspired by, written, or created in Scotland. 'Scotland's Stories Now' is a mass participatory project that will see people of all ages and from all backgrounds creating and telling stories about Scotland today.

The Book Festival will not only work with community groups across the country but is also calling for the public to submit stories of their own experiences of life in Scotland. 'Scotland's Stories Now' is supported by EventScotland as part of the Year of Stories 2022.

From 16 February, the Book Festival is calling for people across Scotland to submit their own 500-word stories responding to the prompt 'On this day'. These can be fiction or non-fiction, in the form of prose, poetry, songs or play-

scripts and can be submitted in a range of formats including text, sound files, video files or images.



Nick Barley, 2021 Edinburgh International Book Festival Launch, Edinburgh College of Art © 2021 J.L. Preece
Storytellers can draw inspiration from any number of uniquely Scottish sources, from the landscape to myths and legends, or tackle the current issues which matter most to them from Climate Change to the country's post-Covid recovery. Submissions open on 16 February and close on 3 April, and all stories should be uploaded onto the On The Road blog page of the Book Festival website – ontheroad.edbookfest.co.uk/scotlands-stories-now/.

Noëlle Cobden – Communities Programme Director at the Edinburgh International Book Festival, said “At Edinburgh International Book Festival we believe everyone has a story to tell and that through stories we can make sense of our world. As we emerge from the pandemic we want to gather ‘Scotland’s Stories Now’. Using the prompt ‘On this Day’ we are calling on people across the country to help us build an online story archive and create series of events at this year’s festival to celebrate Scotland’s Year of Stories.

Seeking stories from all genres including fiction, non-fiction, poetry, comic and drama, we will accept submissions in both written and recorded (audio or video) formats. We would also encourage speakers/users of both indigenous and non-indigenous languages to submit their story”



Joan Bakewell and Richard Holloway – 2021 Edinburgh International Book Festival, Edinburgh College of Art, Edinburgh. © 2021 J.L.Preece

Nick Barley – Director of the Edinburgh international Book Festival, said: “Stories are entwined in Scotland’s DNA. This project teases out some of the reasons why stories remain relevant to our lives today, not only explaining where we’ve come from but helping us make sense of the challenges ahead.’

Paul Bush OBE, VisitScotland’s Director of Events, said: “We are delighted to be supporting ‘Scotland’s Stories Now’ as part of Scotland’s Year of Stories 2022. From icons of

literature to local tales, Scotland's Year of Stories encourages locals and visitors to experience a diversity of voices, take part in events and explore the places, people and cultures connected to all forms of our stories, past and present.

“‘Scotland's Stories Now' will be at the heart of an engaging, celebratory nationwide events programme by encouraging people and communities to create and tell their stories, which will then be showcased as part of the Edinburgh International Book Festival in August 2022”.



Nick Barley, 2021 Edinburgh International Book Festival Launch, Edinburgh College of Art © 2021 J.L. Preece
Additionally, the Book Festival will embed Writers in Residence with community groups in five of Scotland's Local Authorities – Eleanor Thom and Ryan Van Winkle will work with groups in Edinburgh, Andrew O'Hagan will be in East Ayrshire, Mae Diansangu in Aberdeenshire, Bea Webster in Clackmannanshire, and Roseanne Watt in Shetland.

Working with partners, including Stepping Stones and Royal Hospital for Children and Young People in Edinburgh and HMP Kilmarnock in East Ayrshire, the Book Festival will gather stories from those who often do not have a voice.

The project will culminate at the Edinburgh International Book Festival in August 2022, at Edinburgh College of Art, where visitors will be able to create and share stories, as well as hear the stories that have already been told through the open submissions process. The community groups working with the Book Festival's Writers in Residence will contribute their own reflections to produce a rich and multi-layered tale of Scotland in 2022.