

Barley to step down as Director of Book Festival

Nick Barley, Director of Edinburgh International Book Festival, has announced he is stepping down as Director of the festival this year.

Barley has delivered 14 festivals which have included some of the world's renowned thinkers, writers, performers, artists and activists. His own contributions have included the free nightly festival Unbound with performers like Nile Rodgers and the Fun Loving' Crime Writers, Outriders with local authors making journeys across Africa, America and Europe, Playing with Books which inspired theatre productions and in general wide conversations about books and stories while highlighting important issues such as class, society, economy, race and politics.



Nick Barley, Edinburgh International Book Festival Launch, Edinburgh College of Art, 6th July 2021

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Mr Barley said: "Overseeing this great festival has been both a privilege and a challenge. As well as helping maintain Edinburgh's role as a global capital for culture, I have aimed to create a festival that is full of joyful encounters: a forum for thoughtful conversations between writers and readers. I'm particularly proud to have been able to build on the festival's strength and reputation during the devastating pandemic period, giving people all over the world continued access to the quality of discourse for which we are rightly celebrated. It's been an honour to work with such a stellar team: the festival is so much more than its Director and the team is primed to work with my successor on the next phase."

Allan Little, Chair of the Edinburgh International Book Festival Board, said: "On behalf of the Book Festival Board, I would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to Nick for steering the festival through both exhilarating and turbulent times, and for leaving it in such robust good health for his successor. Nick has led the organisation to its position as one of the most recognised and respected literary festivals in the world and recent circumstances might well have proved insurmountable without someone of Nick's experience and passion at the helm. While we will miss him, we wish Nick all the very best and know he will continue to be a friend of the Book Festival for many, many years to come."

Nick Barley will remain in his post until after this year's book festival. His successor will be chosen following a recruitment process which will begin in a couple of weeks time.



Nick Barley 2020 EIBF launch in Charlotte Square Garden PHOTO
JL Preece