

Edinburgh welcomes eleven new UNESCO Cities of Literature

As the first UNESCO City of Literature, Edinburgh has a special place, and the Edinburgh UNESCO City of Literature Trust has welcomed eleven new Cities which have joined the Creative Cities Network.

The City of Literature programme is part of a wider [Creative Cities Network](#). While there are 350 Creative Cities from 100 countries there are only 53 designated Creative Cities of Literature from 39 countries.

The Lord Provost of the City of Edinburgh, Robert Aldridge said: “Through the City of Literature Trust, Edinburgh has used its designation as impetus for a host of new activity, from showcasing the work of our creatives in Edinburgh internationally to global writing residencies for our writers in the city. Over the years we have hosted international networking opportunities, one-off conferences and monthly Literary Salons, whilst supporting our literature professionals. With Edinburgh at the core of this network, this news furthers international scope and future opportunity.”

Chair of Edinburgh UNESCO City of Literature Trust, Gerald Richards, said: “We are delighted to expand our network of UNESCO Cities of Literature to include these creative new

cities. An idea which took root in Edinburgh has now grown to a global scale and is an enlightened work of international collaboration. At Edinburgh City of Literature HQ, we look forward to diversifying the network to champion those that represent our literature sector.”

- The new eleven cities are:
- **Bremen** (Germany)
- **Buffalo** (South Africa)
- **Hobart** (Australia)
- **Iasi** (Romania)
- **Kozhikode** (India)
- **Kutaisi** (Georgia)
- **OkayamaCity** (Japan)
- **Rio de Janeiro** (Brazil)
- **Taif** (Saudi Arabia)
- **Tukums** (Latvia) and **Lyon** (France)

The UNESCO Creative Cities Network (UCCN) was created by UNESCO in 2004 with Edinburgh as the founding city. It gathers Cities that have positioned culture and creativity as strategic enablers for the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The Network recognises Cities from the seven creative fields of Craft and Folk Art, Design, Film, Gastronomy, Literature, Media Arts, and Music. Designated Creative Cities place creativity at the core of their development to enhance inclusivity, safety, and sustainability.

The Cities of Literature network has continued to grow and evolve since 2002, when Edinburgh worked with UNESCO to create the designation. In 2004, an Edinburgh delegation travelled to UNESCO’s Paris headquarters to present its submission. It was designated the same day, becoming the founding city of the Creative City Network and the world’s first UNESCO City of Literature. Edinburgh UNESCO City of Literature Trust looks

forward to working with these newly designated cities to support readers and writers, champion freedom of speech and build international partnerships to benefit writing communities.

Cllr Val Walker, Culture and Communities Convener said: "It is inspiring to welcome these creative cities to our ever-growing network. We are, as always, extremely proud of being the founding city of this international cohort of UNESCO Cities of Literature and look forward to working with the new cities in the years ahead, collaborating on projects that will allow us to celebrate the rich and vibrant literature sector that we have here in Edinburgh, and how it can impact on others across the globe."



Author Sir Walter Scott. Photo: Martin P. McAdam
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