

Festivals and events taking place in the first City of Literature this year

This is the 20th year of Edinburgh becoming the first City of Literature, and it is evident that this has influenced books, authors and literature in Edinburgh over the two decades.

One of the positive impacts is the many festivals with a literary flavour which have grown to populate what's on in the city during the year.

The UNESCO City of Literature Trust kindly provided us with their list but we and the charity recognise that it is always evolving and growing, so if you are organising any kind of literary festival then please get in touch and we can add your event to the roll.

[Society of Young Publishers Conference \(Spring\)](#): The SYP Scotland host an annual all-day conferences packed full of lectures and workshops run by senior industry figures on various skills and ideas relevant to working in publishing in spring.

[World Book Night \(April\)](#): World Book Night brings people from all backgrounds together for one reason – to inspire others to read more. Organisations and individuals hold events up and down the country to celebrate the difference that reading

makes to our lives, from book themed parties at home to books swaps in offices.

Christian Aid Book Sale (May): The annual Book Sale for Christian Aid at St Andrew's and St George's West Church is thought to be one of the biggest charity book sales in the world.



Book Sale Launch for Christian Aid Scotland 2023 Photo of author James Robertson – Colin Hattersley Photography

Imagine (May/June): The Edinburgh International Children's Festival showcases high quality, distinctive Scottish and international performances to an audience of around 19,000 children, their teachers and their families, as well as programmers and artists from all over the world.

Cymera Book Festival (June): Cymera Festival is an annual celebration of Science Fiction, Fantasy and Horror (SFFH) writing that aims to celebrate the enjoyment of those genres

by bringing together writers and readers from Scotland and beyond, to share ideas, create stories and nurture imaginations.

Independent Bookshop Week (June): Independent Bookshop Week is a celebration of independent bookshops in the UK highlighting the vital role independent bookshops play in their communities.

Summer Reading Challenge (June-August): The Summer Reading Challenge is an educational competition held annually in public libraries in the UK, organised by The Reading Agency.

Edinburgh International Book Festival (August): The Edinburgh International Book Festival is a distinctive international showcase celebrating the written word, literature and ideas. It brings leading and emerging international, British and Scottish authors and thinkers together to inspire each other and audiences in an extensive programme of public events.

ALT Book Fringe (August): Argonaut Books, Lighthouse Bookshop and Typewronger worked collaboratively to organise Edinburgh's Book Fringe in August, ALT.

International Literacy Day (September): Since 1967, International Literacy Day (ILD) celebrations have taken place annually around the world to remind the public of the importance of literacy as a matter of dignity and human rights, and to advance the literacy agenda towards a more literate and sustainable society.

Edinburgh Women's Fiction Festival (September): The Edinburgh Women's Fiction Festival is a literary festival celebrating writing for, by, and about women. We are an inclusive event and welcome everyone who finds joy in reading women's stories – commercial, romance, historical, literary, book club and beyond.

International Translation Day (September): International

Translation Day is meant as an opportunity to pay tribute to the work of language professionals, which plays an important role in bringing nations together, facilitating dialogue, understanding and cooperation, contributing to development and strengthening world peace and security.

Portobello Book Festival (October): Portobello Book Festival was started by a group of local people who are interested in books and wanted to share their enthusiasm. It takes place each year over the first full weekend in October.

Bookshop Day (October): Bookshop Day is one-day nationwide celebration of all high street bookshops and aims to highlight the cultural importance of books and bookshops, and celebrate the people that bring the two together, our wonderful booksellers!

Scottish International Storytelling Festival (October): The festival is the world's largest celebration of storytelling. It's an annual programme packed with stories, conversations, dance, talks and live music.

Robert Louis Stevenson Day (November): Several days of events in Edinburgh and online in the run up to Robert Louis Stevenson's birthday on 13th November.

Book Week Scotland (November): Book Week Scotland is an annual celebration of books and reading that takes place across the country.

Radical Book Fair (November): The Radical Book Fair has been a staple of Edinburgh's political and literary landscape for over 20 years, originally run by Word Power Books, it's now hosted by Lighthouse Books.

Push the Boat Out (November): Push the Boat Out is a new festival for Scotland where a Venn diagram of artforms come together, cross pollinate and collide: poetry, spoken word, live music, hip hop, songwriting, film, sound, gaming, visual

art and concrete poetry.

Pentlands Book Festival coincides with Book Week Scotland and is organised by local folk for the community in conjunction with Currie and Colinton libraries.

Burns and Beyond (January): A celebration of the life & legacy of Robert Burns through traditional and contemporary art and culture.

International Mother Language Day (February): this is a worldwide annual observance held on 21 February to promote awareness of linguistic and cultural diversity and to promote multilingualism.

Gray Day (February): Gray Day is the 25th February, an annual day-long celebration of Alasdair Gray's life and work.

Artist's Bookmarket and Edinburgh Zine Festival (February): Artists' Bookmarket is Edinburgh's annual celebration of artists' book culture which runs over two weekend days with stalls laid out to showcase a wide array of work. It's held in tandem with Edinburgh Zine Library who bring their Zine Festival to Fruitmarket's Warehouse.

World Book Day (March): World Book Day changes lives through a love of books and reading. World Book Day was created by UNESCO on 23 April 1995 as a worldwide celebration of books and reading, and is a UK and Ireland charity.

World Poetry Day (March): World Poetry Day is celebrated on 21 March, and was declared by UNESCO (the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) in 1999, "with the aim of supporting linguistic diversity through poetic expression and increasing the opportunity for endangered languages to be heard".



'Push the Boat Out' Festival launch, The Watershed, Union Canal, Edinburgh, 8th Sept. 2021
© 2021 J.L. Preece