

## Interested in joining the TA Committee?

Find out more and read about the experiences of some of our current committee.

*I have been working as a professional translator for over a decade, but I still felt like an impostor when I first joined the Society of Authors, as most of my translation work is academic and non-fiction, with only a bit of fiction mixed in. But I'm glad colleagues and peers encouraged me to join the TA and the Committee, as it made me realize that translators can come in all different shapes and sizes, and they are all just as valid.*

*Rebecca De Wald, TA Co-Chair*

## What does the Committee do?

The aim of the TA is to advocate for the rights and needs of literary translators – a literary translator being anyone translating literary texts, such as fiction and non-fiction, children's literature, but also academic writing, plays, screenplays and anything else that requires the skills and expertise of a literary translator. You can also join the TA as an emerging literary translator.

The activities of the committee vary in response to issues raised by the wider TA community, and the particular skills and interests of committee members. As such, a considerable amount of time and thought has been given to developing and improving diversity and inclusivity in both the TA and the SoA. A working group has been set up to continue this work, alongside the committee's other commitments. Two other working groups were also set up to look at theatre translation and film rights. These are currently the committee's three ongoing areas of focus.

The Committee aims to be a safe space for discussion where all members can share their experiences and concerns. The agenda helps to structure the discussion with regular items and space to discuss other topics raised by members.

In the current year, we have worked closely with the SoA communications team to give statements in connection with the Amanda Gorman debate in the early spring, and more recently in connection with the anti-LGBT law introduced by the Hungarian government in June. We have also helped draft an open letter in support of Ukrainian writers, illustrators and translators, and facilitated its translation into Ukrainian and Russian.

The committee has been intentional about raising the profile of the Translator's Association on Twitter, using the hashtag *#TAonTwitter*. The social media representative is currently a rotating position, changing every three months. So far, it has only focused on Twitter, but future committee members can develop the role as they see fit, using other platforms such as Instagram and TikTok to talk about translation issues. In addition to increasing visibility,

the aim is to foster more conversations around translation where individuals feel they can bring issues to the committee to address at an organisational level. (eg: payment for book blog tours, etc.)

In addition, the committee organises the annual *TA@Home* festival, the AGM, the TA's presence at the London Book Fair (as part of the Literary Translation Centre's Steering Group) and other ad-hoc activities throughout the year. It also leads campaigning activity around translator visibility and working conditions – initiatives like *#namethetranslator*, for example.

The committee is always open to new ideas on both campaigning and events, and happy for its members to take the lead on things they feel passionately about. Recently, these things have included rates for sample translations, mental wellbeing, theatre translation contracts and L2 translation. Being on the committee is also a great way to engage with authors and the wider work of the SoA.

### **What's involved?**

It is important that the committee represents the whole of the TA, with a broad range of languages and types of work. We particularly welcome potential members who work from non-European languages, and those with experience in academic and non-fiction translation, as well as fiction, theatre and poetry translators.

The committee has 8 elected members who serve for three years from the AGM in November. The committee appoints two members as Co-Chairs who serve for two years each, with a one-year overlap – meaning that no new co-chairing team has to start from scratch. The TA is a member of CEATL (the European Council of Literary Translators Associations) and the current representative is a co-opted member of the TA committee.

Read more about the current committee [here](#).

Meetings are held quarterly; usually in February, May, September and November on a weekday for 2 hrs. All meetings are held online as the most accessible and inclusive way for members to meet. We recognise that meeting in person is also valuable so up to two meetings a year will also be hybrid, streamed from the SoA offices in London (committee members are reimbursed for travel expenses).

In between meetings the committee stays in touch by email. Some emails will be for information only and others will be for action. The Co-Chairs and TA Co-ordinators will always tell you if a response is needed and give a clear deadline.

Whether you live in Paris or Peckham or Phnom Penh there's no reason to let geography get in the way.

*The last two years have been difficult for many and I have felt humbled and grateful to see the TA committee come together to take action to try to address some of the challenges our association, our profession and wider society have faced. In particular I have felt the powerful, positive impact of recent additions to the committee, proof if it were needed of the value of TA members taking the opportunity to stand for election, bringing their skills and experiences to bear in everything we do.*

### **I would like to join the Committee. What do I do next?**

Email [Catherine Fuller](#) (joint TA Co-ordinator) saying that you wish to nominate yourself for the committee. You'll also need to send a brief statement – no more than 250 words – on why you want to join and what you can bring to the committee. Your nomination does not need to be supported by any other TA member. Please note you must be a Full Member and not an Associate. Check with [membership@societyofauthors.org](mailto:membership@societyofauthors.org) if you are unsure.

The committee currently has two vacancies. If we receive more nominations than vacancies we will hold an online ballot in the autumn. The successful candidates will be invited to attend the hybrid TA committee meeting on Thursday 27 October (2-4pm) and the results will be confirmed officially at the online TA AGM on Thursday 3 November.

All nominations should be sent by email to the TA Co-ordinator. The closing date for nominations is **Friday 23 September**.

### **Any questions? Please get in touch.**

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