



TRANSLATORS ASSOCIATION AGM

10 November 2021

Co-Chairs' Report

Introduction

TA membership is currently 773 which is an increase from 750 last year. There are 699 Full Members, 61 Associates and 13 Student members. The total SoA membership is currently 11,797.

Administration

The TA Group Co-ordinators are Catherine Fuller (cfuller@societyofauthors.org) and Ambre Morvan (amorvan@societyofauthors.org) Catherine is a Senior Contracts Advisor and also manages special projects for the SoA. Ambre has recently joined the SoA as Contracts and Public Policy Advisor from the Société des Gens de Lettres (equivalent to the Society of Authors in France). All SoA Groups and Networks now have two Co-ordinators to share the administrative support.

The SoA offices in Bedford Row have re-opened and the SoA is moving towards a structured hybrid work pattern as circumstances permit. Meanwhile these changes have enabled us to offer space to other tenants. We are delighted to share our building with English PEN, the Reading Agency and the Sasakawa Foundation. All four organisations will share the ground floor and staff social space and we look forward to growing 24 Bedford Row into an exciting cultural and literary hub.

Committee

The TA Committee for 2021-22 will be Rebecca DeWald (Co-Chair), Sawad Hussain (Co-Chair), Roland Glasser (CEATL), Kari Dickson, Rosalind Harvey, Rosie Hedger, Vineet Lal, Natasha Lehrer, Anju Okhandiar and Clare Richards.

This is our last report as Co-Chairs and we are pleased to welcome Sawad Hussain and Rebecca DeWald as new Co-Chairs. Sawad and Rebecca were elected by the TA Committee and will take up office from the AGM.

Our warmest thanks to outgoing members Ruth Ahmedzai Kemp, William Gregory, Marta Dziurosz and Christina MacSweeney for their commitment, support and enthusiasm.

Six nominations were received for three vacancies on the TA Committee. Many thanks to candidates Gwen Clayton, Margaret Morrison, Rosie Hedger, Hebe Powell, Anju Okhandiar and Clare Richards.

Following an online ballot of TA full members Rosie Hedger, Anju Okhandiar and Clare Richards were elected to join the committee for three years from the AGM.

The TA committee has been restructured in line with proposed changes to ensure greater consistency across all SoA Groups and Networks. The committee now has 8 elected members with the option to co-opt up to another two members. Our co-opted members are TA CEATL representative, Roland Glasser, and outgoing co-chair Kari Dickson. The committee will no longer have *ex-officio* external representatives and so we give our warm thanks to colleagues Duncan Large from BCLT and Kate Griffin from the National Centre for Writing. We continue to work closely with these organisations.

This year the Committee set up 3 working groups to focus on the following areas: translation for theatre, diversity and inclusivity and film rights.

The Committee is always keen to hear from potential new members. If you are interested in serving on the committee from November 2022, please contact Catherine Fuller, who will be happy to give you more information about what is involved. Committee meetings will remain online with the option of up to two 'hybrid meetings' per year enabling committee members to meet in person if they wish.

CEATL

Despite the inevitable travel constraints imposed by the pandemic, CEATL – the European Council of Literary Translators' Associations –has maintained a high level of activity over the past twelve months. After a zoom AGM in May a new Board was elected, with Shaun Whiteside, one of the TA's two CEATL delegates along with Roland Glasser, appointed as President, taking over from Denmark's Morten Visby. I will continue to make sure that the TA's voice is heard as clearly as possible within CEATL.

Our authors' rights group, often working closely with the copyright specialists in the Translators Association, has produced an initial report from a survey among our member associations on general legal and practical conditions for translators across Europe. The results can be found at <https://europeanwriterscouncil.eu/ceatl-contract-survey2021/>

The survey confirmed that in most European countries literary translators continue to suffer from unfair payment schedules and receive lump sums without royalties. There is much work to be done in terms of transparency and treatment of translators by publishers across the continent.

In July CEATL wrote a letter of protest when a bookshop in Budapest was fined for displaying the translation of a children's book by Lawrence Schimel without indicating that it contained images of 'nonstandard' family life. The text of the letter (along with some context) can be found here:

<https://societyofauthors.org/News/News/2021/July/TA-SoA-condemn-Hungarys-retrograde-LGBT-law>.

We also wrote a letter of support for the Austrian Literary Translators' Association in response to the Austrian government's proposed implementation of the EU's Copyright Directive.

<https://www.ceatlmembers.eu/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/CEATL-Support-Letter-Austrian->

[Implementation-2.pdf](#). Our member associations are telling us that in different European territories the directive is being tweaked in such a way as to favour publishers over authors and translators. CEATL, working in tandem with the European Writers' Council, is determined to ensure that this doesn't happen. In October, CEATL held an Extraordinary General Meeting, one long-planned and long-postponed, on the island of Åland, between Finland and Sweden (and jointly organized by the Swedish and Finnish associations), at which the Icelandic Writers' Union was admitted as a member, taking the number of our member associations to 35.

Don't forget our bi-annual publication, *Counterpoint*, which is now in its 5th edition and which has been attracting the attention of the European literary press – particularly with reference to recent articles on CAT and machine translation. You can find it here: <https://www.ceatl.eu/ceatls-e-zine-counterpoint>. CEATL's online *Companion for Literary Translators' Associations* is due for publication very soon and we'll let you know as soon as it's available.

Shaun Whiteside, President, CEATL

Activities and Campaigning

AGM 2020: The AGM on 10 November was followed by a panel discussion, "Is that my job? Negotiating professional boundaries with translators" which formed part of the SoA's autumn/winter events programme

TA@Home Festival: Originally planned for the spring, the festival was postponed until the end of June. The programme was revised to reflect more the TA's policy of diversity and inclusivity, with the resulting four events: Editing prizewinning translations, How to be a successful literary translator, Translation as writing and writing as translation, and Translating women's non-fiction. All events were well attended, with figures between 60-130, including both members and non-members. The festival was a huge success and the programme was praised for its diversity and inclusivity.

Literary Translation Centre at London International Book Fair 2021: The Literary Translation Centre at LIBF has some of the best visitor numbers, so the organisers were keen to keep a programme. It was decided that all literary translation events would be held on Wednesday 30 June, and include the LTC and Pen Literary Salon. The TA contribution to the programme was: Implosion. Redefining the centre and periphery in Spanish language writing. This was very well attended and drew much interest, and was a part of the American Literary Translators' Association (ALTA) conference in the autumn.

The TA issued joint statements with the SoA in connection with the Amanda Gorman translation debate, and with the SoA and CEATL on the Hungarian government's anti-LGBT stance in connection with the sale of translated books.

The work with the TA@Home events and the statements has allowed the committee to work closely with a greater number of SoA staff and helped to increase the committee's understanding of how the SoA works, which has been invaluable.

It was noted that there has been a general slowdown in the sale of translation rights over the past year, which will impact on both translators and authors.

Translation Prizes

The annual Translation Prizes, administered by the SoA were awarded online on Thursday 11 February. A short film including interviews and readings celebrated each prize. In 2022 the prizes will again be awarded online. Save the date for Thursday 10 February at 6pm. The announcement will be followed by a TA online social.

Communications

TA Forum: This is a free discussion group run by TA members for TA members only and provides a safe and friendly environment to exchange news, view and ideas. Please note that the Forum is independent and not managed by the SoA or the TA committee. Many thanks to the Forum administrators Trista Selous and Christine Shuttleworth. To sign up, please send an email with your name and confirmation that you are a TA member to: ta-members+subscribe@groups.io

TA News: Regular e-newsletters are sent to TA members; if you have any news or events that you would like to share with TA members, please let Catherine Fuller know. A paper copy can be sent on request if you do not have email access. It is not always possible to send a dedicated email flyer to promote all TA events and activities but details are always included in the main SoA newsletters and events bulletins so do make sure you read those as well. Contact the SoA if you are not receiving newsletters and the Membership Services team can check your subscriber options for you.

The Author: The committee is very grateful for the increased visibility of translation in The Author and looks forward to working more closely with the Editor, James McConnachie. Members are welcome to pitch ideas for articles to theauthor@societyofauthors.org

Professional Advice and Support

Contract Vetting

TA members are always entitled to unlimited advice and vetting of individual contracts from the SoA advisory team. The team are happy to advise on queries and issues which arise at any stage in the translation and publication process.

When negotiating a contract, you and the publisher will want to consider a number of factors. In the experience of the SoA, translators and publishers negotiate fees starting in the region of £95 per thousand words for prose. This fee may be considerably higher, depending on various factors including the translator's experience, the timescale for the translation, the difficulty of the prose, the amount of research required and the availability of translation funding. The word count for genres such as children's literature or graphic novels may be calculated differently. The agreed sum may come as a flat fee, an advance against royalties, or a fee plus royalties from the first copy sold.

Read our [**Negotiating Payment for Translations blog**](#)

Read more about [**Ask An Advisor**](#)

Resources

The SoA has three specialist translation guides available free of charge to members.

- Translator-Publisher Contracts
- Author-Commissioned translations
- Relay translations

These guides are currently under revision. The Relay translation guide has been updated and will be available shortly. The others will follow in 2022 along with new guides on Translating for the Theatre and Film Rights.

Don't forget there are now a wide range of films available on the SoA@Home Vimeo channel. These are free to view. They include general talks about contracts issues as well as translation-related interviews and discussions.

Grants and Funding

A reminder that translators can apply to the SoA for [grants for work in progress](#) and to the [Authors' Contingency Fund](#) for hardship grants.

Looking Ahead to 2022

10 February	TA online social following online presentation of the Translation Prizes
4-6 April	Literary Translation Centre at the London International Book Fair
Autumn	TA@Home. A week of events celebrating translation and translators
November	TA AGM and panel discussion. [date tbc]

Kari Dickson and Christina MacSweeney

November 2021

The Society of Authors AGM will be held online on Thursday 18 November. [Book now](#) via the SoA website.