

NOMINATIONS FOR TA COMMITTEE 2020

CANDIDATE STATEMENTS

Rebecca DeWald

Nominated by Kari Dickson and Marta Dziurosz

I welcome the opportunity to apply to become a member of the TA committee, as it gives me the chance to give something back to the translation community, which I have found to be very inclusive and welcoming. Though I am an emerging literary translator, I have over ten years of commercial translation experience (marketing, legal, tourism, EU institutions) and have in recent years developed a strong focus on non-fiction and academic translations (a PhD in Translation Studies helps with that). I am based in Scotland, where I co-ordinate the monthly Translators' Stammtisch and Translation Theory Lab (both on Zoom at the moment), in the endeavour to create an active translation community: after all, we all studied languages to communicate, not to shout at our computer screens! I also coordinate the Literature and Translation programme at Cove Park, Scotland's international artist residency centre and a member of Literature Alliance Scotland, offering work residencies for writers and translators alike.

As a TA Committee member, I would be keen to

- highlight opportunities for translators organised outside the South-East of the UK
- organise and champion events that make translators visible players in the literary sector, and the arts more generally
- make the translation world more accessible to emerging translators by offering training and insight into the publishing and pitching process
- cross bridges between the academic and the applied translation world
- support the cause of making L2 translators more visible and accepted within the field

Miranda France

Nominated by Shaun Whiteside and Rosalind Harvey

I've been a professional writer for thirty years and a translator from Spanish for half that time. I really enjoy both the process of translation and the sense of advocating for a writer. I like feeling a part of a community and for six years sat on English PEN's Writers in Translation committee, some of that time as vice chair. I've also worked on committees at Spain's ICEX office.

After a degree in Spanish and Latin American Literature, I lived for three years in Argentina. My book *Bad Times in Buenos Aires*, was about the legacy of dictatorship there. Next came *Don Quixote's Delusions, Travels in Castilian Spain*, which investigates how the world's first modern novel came to be written (and translated). *The Guardian* included it in their 'essential library'. I've also written two novels and regularly write essays, features and criticism.

My long career as a critic specialising in Spain and Latin America has been a wonderful education. I've championed both writers and translators, from Gabriel García Márquez's *The General in his Labyrinth* (Edith Grossman, 1990) to Andrés Neuman's *Fracture* (Nick Caistor and Lorenza Garcia, 2020). In fact my TLS *Fracture* review asked why the translators weren't credited on the title page. My 2019 essay on Translation for *Prospect* was taken up by Arts and Letters Daily and tweeted to 77,000 followers.

Throughout my career, both the Society of Authors and the Translators Association have been invaluable supports. I'd welcome the chance to give something back and share some of my ideas for future events.

Ian Giles

Nominated by Alice Menzies and Alex Fleming

I am an Edinburgh-based literary and non-fiction translator of Swedish, Norwegian and Danish into English with around a dozen publications to my name. I have taught Translation Studies at the Universities of Edinburgh and Manchester. I am the current Chair of the Swedish-English Literary Translators' Association (SELTA) where we maintain a strong focus on continuous professional development by means of events and workshops. I have long held an interest in the role and status of professional literary translators in their industry: I research British readers' consumption of translated Scandinavian literature, completing my PhD on this topic in 2018, writing articles for Swedish Book Review and guest lecturing in Lund and Glasgow. I have been a member of the TA since 2013.

As a member of the TA based in Scotland, I firmly believe that the circumstances in 2020 are an opportunity to be seized in engaging with a wider geographic spread of the organisation's membership. I believe I would be able to contribute positively to this aim: I would take advantage of my experience in organising (virtual and in-person) events, in addition to calling on my extensive personal and professional networks spanning academia, the translation sphere and the third sector. I am passionate about representing the interests of those members who make a decent living from translation. Becoming a committee member would be my opportunity to offer my expertise back to what I've experienced as a supportive national trade union for professional literary translators.

Rosalind Harvey

Nominated by Charlotte Collins and Miranda France

Rosalind Harvey is a translator and educator based in Coventry in the West Midlands. She has worked on books by several Latin American and Spanish writers, including Juan Pablo Villalobos' *Down the Rabbit Hole* (shortlisted for the Guardian First Book Award and the Oxford-Weidenfeld Prize), Enrique Vila-Matas' *Dublinesque* (with Anne McLean; shortlisted for the Independent Foreign Fiction Prize and longlisted for the IMPAC Award), and Herralde Prize-winner Guadalupe Nettel's *After the Winter*.

She is a 2018 Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature, a 2016 Arts Foundation Fellow, and a founding member and chair of the Emerging Translators Network, a lively online community for early-career literary translators. Recently she was awarded an 'International Changemaker' bursary from the Coventry City of Culture trust to travel to Mexico and forge

new cultural and literary links between Mexico City and Coventry (a project on hold until international travel becomes viable again!)

She has taught translation and Spanish at the Universities of Warwick, Bristol and Roehampton, and continues to teach on an ad-hoc basis for various institutions, as well as offering individual mentoring for early-career translators.

Sawad Hussain

Nominated by Rosalind Harvey and Gitanjali Patel

I would like to join the TA committee to increase the visibility of BAME translators as well as translators working from non-European languages, particularly those from the African continent. Using my current networks of BAME translators and those on the African continent, I'd like to pitch ideas for panels at the LBF and other events during the year. As so many events are now online, it'd be easier to draw in our counterparts working on the African continent to hear about their translation practice.

I have been a literary translator for ten years now, and what I can bring to the committee is insight into the literatures of the African continent, in detail when it comes to those written in Arabic. Current projects of mine include a novel from South Sudan, a short story collection from Libya, and a novel from Eritrea. I'd like to encourage through my networks, more BAME translators to join the TA, and those who are already members, to be given opportunities to share their experiences.

Vineet Lal

Nominated by Kari Dickson and Daniel Hahn

It has been exactly a decade now since I first attended the BCLT Summer School in the summer of 2010, which was a life-changing experience. I had always been interested in literary translation – I had done languages at university, but other than translation as a means of language acquisition I'd never really explored being a translator as a career. That summer was the beginning of what has become one of the most enjoyable, and fulfilling, periods in my life. I was given the opportunity to be mentored by Sarah Ardizzone, as one of the first participants in the Emerging Translator Mentorships scheme, and this was a truly inspirational experience. Since those first days I've been on quite a journey, having translated three novels, a children's book (a co-translation with Sarah) and two anthologies of short stories for children.

I'd like to give something back to the translation community by serving on the TA Committee, bringing not just my passion for translation, but also my experience as one of (very) few BAME translators working from Romance languages into English, and also as a "regional" translator based in Scotland. Being from a BAME background adds an interesting dimension to my work, and I'd be keen to share some of those experiences. And not being based in London or the South East also gives me a fresh perspective on the world, particularly in this time of change and unpredictability. Translation has given me so much, and I would love to return the favour.

Karen Leeder

Nominated by Ruth Martin and Charlotte Collins

I was on the TA Committee many years ago before I gave up because of family commitments. Now my daughter is doing A-levels and I have a bit more time, I would love to get involved again. It is such a vibrant world and one that has developed hugely over the last decade and I would enjoy reconnecting with it. For the past twenty years I have been publishing translations (from the German) for a range of different publishers and have been actively involved with many festivals (also curating events) and have myself performed at or facilitated many events for experienced translators but also for school children and beginners. I have also sat on the committee of various institutions and Trusts involved with translation (the Spender Trust, the Poetry Trust, the BCLT, MPT) and interacted with many more general arts institutions, so would hope to bring some experience and also wide connections. As part of my day job as an academic I am used to chairing committees and managing process, but also to helping very different people to work together happily. My passion is poetry so I hope I could fly the flag for that too. I would love to put my skills at the service of the committee, but also to learn from all the changes of the past decade.

Steph Morris

Nominated by Ruth Martin and Laura Watkinson

Having found myself voicing thoughts at translator events recently it's time to stand for the committee and put them into action. Now I have a less hectic schedule of literary translation I have more time for such voluntary work.

I have always been part of groups as a translator and value our community. I am also very interested in boosting diversity within the profession. As someone who learned my foreign languages as an adult, outside of a university context, I do not think a languages degree need be the only route into translation. Encouraging people who know languages thanks to their biography not their education to enter the profession could be a good way to open it up – both in terms of the range of languages translated and the range of backgrounds translators come from. We should never forget we are fighting the insidious, all-pervasive xenophobia that is British *Leitkultur* however; opportunities to translate books from a wider range of languages will remain limited. Furthermore the average working conditions of literary translators are not great, rendering the profession structurally inaccessible in many ways. My main campaigning focus is therefore likely to be pay and working rights. Like many of us, what keeps me going, however, is that I really enjoy translating literature, and get positive feedback on my work, so the many ways the TA celebrates translation are vital to me.

In short, there's work to be done.