



National Centre
for Writing

The Inside Story

A YEAR IN
REVIEW 2021-22

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The National Centre for Writing is supported by:



Welcome

Dear Friends,

It's a huge pleasure to welcome and introduce you to the National Centre for Writing's FY21-22 annual report. As for many arts and cultural organisations around the country, the last year was one of challenge, experimentation and partnership working as we coped with the second year of a global pandemic and its stuttering impact on our ability to open and gather physically. We're very proud that despite the challenges, we maintained and even exceeded our previous levels of activity in service of early career writers, literary translators and communities who find personal and collective support and growth through their engagement with writing of all sorts.

We delivered the second year of the Desmond Elliott Prize for debut novels, the International Literature Showcase in partnership with British Council, a programme of national and international engagement as part of our Norwich UNESCO City of Literature designation, and an education and outreach activity that saw us deepen and broaden our community reach and partnerships to bring the benefits of writing and reading to schools and audiences across our city.

We learned an enormous amount too. From committing and recommitting to diversity, inclusion and anti-racism across our organisation and programme, to supporting the campaign for a National Living Wage and undertaking vital consultation work with the communities who live and work around our amazing home at Dragon Hall, we have entered the next chapter of NCW's development with greater knowledge, appreciation, and awareness of our responsibilities as an organisation and charity.

We hope you join us in helping to write that next chapter.

Cllr Alan Waters
Chair of Board

NCW Patrons

Margaret Atwood CH
John Boyne
J.M. Coetzee
Anthony Horowitz OBE
Jon McGregor
Kei Miller
Sarah Perry
Elif Shafak
Ali Smith CBE
Dame Rose Tremain BE



DRAGON HALL © HANNAH HUTCHINS

Introduction

Hello and welcome,

Thank you for picking up our Annual Report. Inside you'll find statistics, facts, numbers, pictures and most importantly stories. The stories are those of the writers, translators, communities, event goers, partners and places with whom we work and about where we work. Even the statistics and finances are just stories dressed in different clothes: all that we do at the National Centre for Writing is focused on the range of impacts offered by and opportunities opened up by writing, translating and telling stories.

Last year was one of uncertainty, hope and challenge. But it was also a time of learning, engagement and deep appreciation for the solace and challenge that books, writing, reading, translation and stories brought into our lives. We're enormously proud of the work we've done to support writers and translators in their artistic and professional journeys – from prizes and development programmes to exchanges, residencies, workshops, toolkits, publications and broadcasts. We're similarly proud of the learning opportunities we've offered – from school visits to Dragon Hall in Norwich to providing access to routes into working in the creative sector, online courses, drop-in sessions for parents with young children, community sessions for some of the Refugee and Asylum Seeker community in our city and writing groups for the over 70s.

We delivered online festivals, virtual residencies and supported networks globally, nationally and locally over the year to ensure that our audiences and communities had access to each other, to high quality activities and to the conversations and spaces that enrich their lives in all sorts of ways.

We learned a lot over the past year and we're very excited to move forwards into our Next Chapter that will see NCW open its physical and virtual doors in a whole range of new ways.

Chris Gribble
Chief Executive

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STORIES FROM THE QUARTER © ANDI SAPEY

Our impact



Artists

348
ARTISTS AND PRACTITIONERS

174
NEW COMMISSIONS

14
WRITERS AND TRANSLATORS IN RESIDENCE

37
EARLY-CAREER WRITERS AND TRANSLATORS SUPPORTED

1,124
ARTIST EMPLOYMENT DAYS

34%
BLACK AND ETHNICALLY DIVERSE ARTISTS



Audiences

2,159
IN-PERSON AUDIENCES AND PARTICIPANTS

738,918
AUDIENCES TUNED INTO DIGITAL PROGRAMMES

22%
AUDIENCES FROM NORWICH

35%
AUDIENCES FROM THE EAST OF ENGLAND

75%
AUDIENCES FROM THE UK



Reach

3,561
DOWNLOADS OF RESOURCE PACKS

647,099
WEBSITE PAGE VIEWS

243,019
WEBSITE UNIQUE USERS

54,902
SOCIAL MEDIA FOLLOWERS

329
STORIES IN THE PRESS

44
PODCAST EPISODES PRODUCED

78,200
PODCAST DOWNLOADS



Impact

12
WRITERS AGED 70+ PARTICIPATED IN A LIFE WRITTEN

4,488
YOUNG PEOPLE PARTICIPATED ACROSS OUR L&P PROGRAMME

60
PARTICIPANTS FROM NORWICH'S BENGALI COMMUNITY

711
ADULTS TOOK PART IN WORKSHOPS



OUR WORK WITH SCHOOLS © MARTIN FIGURA



NCW ASSOCIATE ARTIST JAY BERNARD © JOSHUA VIRASAMI



STORIES FROM THE QUARTER © ANDI SAPEY



COLLABORATION PLACE CHANGE © LUKE WITCOMB



TREVOR WOOD © REECE JAMES MORRISON



BANG WANG, ESCALATOR MENTEE © JO MILLINGTON

Our story: words and audiences

A poem that has insinuated itself (as poems do) over the last few years, in the face of the pandemic, was Miroslav Holub's magical 'The Door'.

This poem sings of the gardens, trees and woods outside, of possibility and promise, and calls to mind the audiences, participants and friends of NCW going about their lives and seeking connection, in spite of everything. We looked forward to 2021 and all its myriad possibilities, keen to open our doors ever wider, and to invite new worlds in. While COVID continued to exert its impact on us all, 2021 is a year in which we worked hard to bridge our physical presence with our digital one, to ensure all our artists, audiences and participants felt valued in and via our work.

Engaging audiences

Through a year-round calendar of events and workshops, we invited audiences of all ages and stages to explore



PROVENANCE © JOANNA MILLINGTON

their personal writing journey and learn and grow from listening to others. Many of our events were delivered online – including London Book Fair, the Emerging Translator Mentorships showcase, Meet the World and the British Centre for Literary Translation Summer School – allowing us to meet and greet **738,918 audiences** from around the world, as well as from Norwich. Others, like the City of Literature strand of Norfolk & Norwich Festival, were a hybrid affair, encouraging audiences and participants to connect with NCW within Dragon Hall or from home.

Many of the events took place for free via YouTube, resulting in an increase in international attendance. Noirwich Crime Writing Festival, our annual partnership with University of East Anglia, saw a **14% increase in audiences from outside the UK**, while digital showcases for Escalator and the East Anglian Book Awards allowed us to spotlight local emerging talent to the rest of the world.

Growing artists

We worked with more than **50 international partners** to support **348 artists to create 174 commissions**, culminating in **1,124 freelance employment** days via a year-round portfolio of work. Of those artists, **37 were early-career writers and translators** participating in our long-running talent development programmes Escalator and Emerging Translator Mentorships. Programme partners including UEA Live, Norfolk & Norwich Festival, London Book Fair and a network of regional literature development agencies across England made delivery and experimentation across the UK and internationally, in person and online, possible.

Running festivals and events digitally presented us with an opportunity to commission innovative experiences that engaged with the world around us, enabling people to remain creative and engaged as audiences. These included:

- **Provenance; a vivid, emotional and immersive installation written by acclaimed novelist Ayòbámi Adébáyò. Performances took place online and in person at Dragon Hall**

Continues...

OLIVIER NOREK © BRUNO CHABERT



ELLAH P. WAKATAMA © JULIAN KNOX



ISABELLE HIGGINS © JOANNA MILLINGTON



KHAIRANI BAROKKA © MATTHEW THOMPSON



AYOBAMI ADEBAYO © CANONGATE



- **Looking Large & Small**, a free downloadable walking guide to the seasons by Jessica J. Lee and Rowan Hisayo Buchanan (part of our Open Doors programme, made possible by Arts Council England 'Ambition for Excellence' funding)
- **Harriet Martineau Lecture** delivered by Ellah P. Wakatama, with a visual score by Julian Knxx
- **Tombland**, an interactive virtual gaming experience set in Dragon Hall from Jay Bernard and Mwen

Our Early Career Awards portfolio celebrated its second year of success, combining the power of literary prizes with a unique, tailored year-long package of support for the winning writers. We rolled out an independent bookshop campaign for the Desmond Elliott Prize which saw booksellers and readers engage with the longlist nationally, with hundreds also tuning in for the live video announcement of the winner, *The Manningtree Witches* by A.K. Blakemore.

Translation partnerships

The 2021 Sebald Lecture was given by Pulitzer Prize-winning writer Jhumpa Lahiri, organised by the British Centre for Literary Translation (BCLT) and hosted online by the British Library. Titled 'In Praise of Echo', the lecture reflected on the myth of Echo and Narcissus in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* considering Lahiri's own practice as a translator, self-translator and teacher of literary translation.

We also partnered with English PEN to develop an International Translation Day (ITD) platform for all ITD events taking place in the UK. British Council sponsored an ITD event between NCW and BCLT, focusing on the political and practical challenges of literary translation from the perspective of translators from Argentina, Vietnam and Nepal.

348

ARTISTS AND PRACTITIONERS

174

NEW COMMISSIONS

14

WRITERS AND TRANSLATORS IN RESIDENCE

37

EARLY-CAREER WRITERS AND TRANSLATORS SUPPORTED

1,124

ARTISTS EMPLOYMENT DAYS

158

WORKSHOPS AND COURSES DELIVERED

23

PARTNERSHIP PROJECTS

189

EVENTS HOSTED ONLINE AND IN PERSON

2,159

DRAGON HALL AUDIENCES

738,918

VIEWERS OF OUR DIGITAL PROGRAMMES



EMERGING TRANSLATOR MENTORSHIPS



LIVANA DHAMIRAH



A.K. BLAKEMORE © SOPHIE DAVIDSON



JHUMPA LAHIRI © ELENA SEIBERT



JESSICA J. LEE © RICARDO RIVAS



HANNA LEIV



JORDI NOPCA © PERE TORDERA

Residencies

In 2021 we partnered with international UNESCO cities of literature to programme our first virtual writers in residence.

Imagining the City commissioned **five writers from Dunedin, Dublin, Edinburgh, Reykjavík and Krakow** to take a stroll through Norwich via the virtual lens and write about this imaginary experience. They wrote stories of their journeys, shared exercises for aspiring writers on social media and built connections with bookshops and artists in Norwich via podcast conversations.

At Dragon Hall, we recognised the need for a 'residency' model for women who couldn't commit to extensive time away from home by creating 'A Room of One's Own' (part of Open Doors): a week of quiet writing space within the Smith for **five artists** between April and July.



We also offered a residency in the Dragon Hall cottage in May to the Desmond Elliott Prize winner Derek Owusu and in August to the winner of the UEA New Forms Award, Charlotte Geater.

We ran **three virtual residencies** and **five residencies in the Dragon Hall cottage** for UK-based Black, Asian and Ethnically Diverse literary translators through our Visible Communities programme, supported by the Jan Michalski Foundation and the Francis W Reckitt Arts Trust. Visible Communities aims to diversify access routes to literary translation; to strengthen links between the literary translation community and diaspora communities; contribute to the debate around decolonising literary translation; and expand the range of literature published in translation. The programme also funded **six bursaries** for UK-based Black, Asian and Ethnically Diverse literary translators for the BCLT summer school.

During her residency, Arabic translator Sawad Hussain ran a pitching workshop for ten Black, Asian and Ethnically Diverse translators from around the world, exploring ways of approaching publishers, and contributed her top five tips on pitching to publishers to the NCW website. Sawad also wrote a translation diary about translating humour, focusing on a collection of short stories by Libyan author Najwa Bin Shatwan. Sawad continued her journey with us in 2022 as a BCLT translator in virtual residence.

During her Visible Communities virtual residency, Shash Trevett researched and translated Tamil war poetry from Sri Lanka, challenging conventions and establishing her own approach, resulting in her blog 'Creativity and Claustrophobia: translating Sri Lankan Tamil poetry'. She said:

'I have grown so much as a translator and will always be grateful for this time and support that the NCW gave me. I can honestly say that this residency will be one of the milestones in my journey as a translator.'



DRAGON HALL COTTAGE © HANNAH HUTCHINS

Creative people

The pandemic reinforced how important storytelling and shared creative experiences are to our lives.

Participating in creative activities helps us to make sense of the world around us and positively impacts on our health and wellbeing, supporting wider resilience. Continuing with the success of our 'Stay creative and connected' campaign which was launched in March 2020 to maintain connections with audiences and participants throughout the pandemic, we continued to offer high-quality digital creative resources, activities, and opportunities to our local and international audiences throughout 2021 and beyond.

Our 'Creative People' programme connects with individuals and community groups, third-sector organisations, grassroots arts organisations, and charities from across Norwich and Norfolk to ensure that as many people as possible can take part in and experience NCW and Dragon Hall as audiences and as artists.

Our activity from this year included:

- **Dragon Hall socials:** our dedicated monthly Socials for writers, translators, readers and anyone interested in a life with books
- **A Life Written:** a quarterly six-week course for over 70's exploring memoir writing
- **Bengali Stories:** a monthly gathering for the Bengali community in Dragon Hall to celebrate and share their cultural heritage
- **Neverending Stories:** storytelling sessions for families with children under five years
- **Dragon Hall Heritage Tours:** free behind the scenes tours, led by our valued and knowledgeable Dragon Hall Heritage Volunteers
- **Free ticket scheme:** tickets for community groups, charities and voluntary organisations who wouldn't ordinarily be able to visit NCW for a variety of reasons



YOUNG AMBASSADORS © THOM LAW



ASHLEY HICKSON-LOVENCE © LUKE WITCOMB

Get involved –

Children, young people and families

Through our 'Get Involved' programme we aim to connect and inspire children, young people and families with writing and reading.

By encouraging creativity, curiosity, and storytelling, we aim to make young lives richer, fuller and more imaginative. Our family-friendly activities focus on those with under 5's and pre-school age children, with storytelling and making sessions supporting confidence in parents to make and tell stories and encourage reading. Our Neverending Stories drop-in sessions featured bounce and rhyme-style storytelling ideas, tips on how to engage babies with books and how to make your home storytelling and book friendly.

We facilitated one-off half term holiday activities for under 8's alongside writing groups for 8-11-year-olds using themes across science fiction and fantasy to zine making.

Lit From the Inside

Our annual creative development programme supported **10 young people across 25 sessions** to explore their creative skills through writing and zine-making workshops, digital resources and live events, as well as gaining hands-on experience of working in the arts industry from professionals.

Young Norfolk Writing Competition

Delivered in partnership with Young Norfolk Arts Trust, the sixth annual competition for 11-18-year-olds in Norfolk received **349 entries from 186 entrants across 51 institutions**, including home schooled young people. A celebration and winner showcase event took place in July, forming part of the Young Norfolk Arts Festival programme.



THE
young
NORFOLK
WRITING
COMPETITION
WANTS YOU



BUILD A BOOK WORKSHOP © JOANNA MILLINGTON

Get involved

Communities, schools and colleges

Our creative engagement programmes make spaces for people of all ages to be creative with words and imagination; in schools, community centres, on the street and in our building.

It enables participants to explore and tell their own stories through their own creations, words, and ideas. Taking part in our programmes enables new thinking, debate, the creation of new work and an opportunity to meet, connect and join in with others. Working with partners such as New Routes, Age UK Norwich, Access Creative College and Anglian Ruskin University, as well as residential communities around Dragon Hall, has enabled us to connect to new audiences, participants and groups.

Stories From the Quarter

Stories From the Quarter is a Norfolk-wide 18-month programme funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund, starting in mid-2021. It aims to connect people with the medieval and migrant heritage of Norwich's medieval quarter, which runs from Lower King St to Magdalen Street. To date, **11 members of the Bengali community** have recorded stories of how their families came to Norwich and what Bengali life looks like in the city today, alongside community events with over **100 Bengali community residents**.

Schools and colleges

Our Schools, Learning Providers & Colleges programme uses creative writing, thinking and imagination to enrich students' learning. From work-based placements for further and higher education projects to our year-round Primary and Secondary school work, we've engaged with over **25 schools** across Norfolk and over **6,751 children and young people**. **Fifty-four learning institutions** engaged with our Young Norfolk Writing Competition, which received 341 entries in 2022. The six winners aged 13-16 studied at Acle, Bungay, Long Stratton, Hellesdon and Hobart High Schools, alongside Norwich School for Girls.

Multilingual Creators

Multilingual Creators is a school's programme connecting our learning, participation and translation work; we trained **four Norfolk-based emerging literary translators** to deliver workshops in secondary schools for **180 young people** who are Additional Language Speakers or have an interest in languages. This work was part of a network with our sister regional literature development organisations in the North and Midlands, with **15 translators in total** delivering similar sessions in their areas.

'I really enjoyed hearing all your knowledge and literature journey. Today will remain memorable for me'

'It's been a pleasure to attend a lively presentation of Stories From the Quarter...our children thoroughly enjoyed the programme'

66%

SAID THEIR CHILD DID NOT HAVE ACCESS TO SIMILAR OPPORTUNITIES ELSEWHERE

100%

SAID THEIR CHILDREN WERE CONTINUING THEIR CREATIVE WRITING JOURNEYS...

...6

WEEKS AFTER A PROGRAMME HAD FINISHED

100%

SAID IT HAD A POSITIVE IMPACT ON CREATIVITY AND IMAGINATION

66%

SAID IT HAD A POSITIVE IMPACT ON ENTHUSIASM FOR LEARNING



STORIES FROM THE QUARTER © ANDI SAPEY

Health, wellbeing and environment

Focussing on health and wellbeing, the environment and how words and ideas help connect people, raise awareness, and drive change, we use creativity to promote physical and mental wellness, combat loneliness and to create a society that reflects and values a diverse range of stories.

This strand of our work focuses on people in and around Norwich, and was co-developed with a range of community organisations, third sector and grassroots arts and cultural partners.



NEVERENDING STORIES

Dragon Hall Social and the NCW Book Club

We offered a monthly social at Dragon Hall for our writer-focused community in Norwich and a parallel book club (both virtual and in person) to support readers. Over **100 people** have participated this year.

A Life Written

A Life Written is a ten-week memoir writing course for the over 70's, developed in partnership with Anglia Ruskin University. The short course explores the impact of life writing on wellbeing by providing participants with the tools to tell their own stories, family histories, myths and emotional challenges. Across 2021-22, over **20 older people** have participated, with an anthology produced celebrating the creative motivations and achievements of each cohort.

Wakulla

Steve Downey

Goodbye to Jena in Coconut Grove,
Her sadness turned to joy and love.
To Key West, sawfish, rays and conches.
To the tropical rain forest of Wakulla.
The mysterious waters, the deepest springs,
Where Tarzan called out in victory
To the small boy at Saturday morning pictures,
And the Creature from the Black
Lagoon became my hero.
I glide down the river, watched by the vultures and you.
Chimney swifts circle and dive.
Moorhens bob. Turtles queue.
Alligators sleep, dreaming of food and sex.
A manatee glides under the water.
A mermaid to lure the sailors.
At my studio these images become my art.
Sixteen memories joining you in my heart.

Poem featured in A Life Written anthology



PAGE AGAINST THE MACHINE AT NORFOLK & NORWICH FESTIVAL © JOANNA MILLINGTON

Norwich UNESCO City of Literature

Norwich was awarded UNESCO City of Literature status in 2012, the first city in England to join an international network then comprising just six cities.

Fast forward to 2022, and Norwich celebrates 10 years as part of a network of over **40 global cities of stories**. Looking forward, a fruitful conversation with the city's cultural and civic leads in January 2022 covered topics ranging from a shared city strategy and UNESCO Sustainable Development Goals to street furniture, book benches, and big ideas. The next chapter takes shape!

Our UNESCO activity included: the City of Literature strand of Norfolk & Norwich Festival, the Sebald Lecture, New Writing Live, and working with Norwich Business Improvement District and VisitNorwich on their Cities of Stories campaign. We continued to commission and publicise Walking Norwich, a series of 'walking' commissions by visitors to Norwich and award-winning writers with links to the city.

Then

Shey Hargreaves

In the garden at St Giles, the sisters crush lavender in their palms before the morning round.
Burn out plague with sage,
gather rosemary to wind the bodies in.
The village women, who do not read,
know nonetheless that a little henbane –
not too much –
can soothe the ache
of worn-out joints.

Poem featured in Translating Science anthology

Translating Science brought **seven scientists** from the Norwich Research Park together with established writers from Norwich to explore and celebrate Norwich's strengths as a city of words, books, of ideas and discovery. The result was a digital anthology of stories, poems and essays which inspire, excite, and trigger a deeper understanding of the benefits of science-based research for tackling the many challenges we face today.

For the second year in a row, we commissioned a poem for the Real Living Wage Week Campaign, entitled 'Living', by Harry Josephine Giles.

Our UNESCO status gives us the opportunity to ensure literature and writers are at the heart of the civic conversation, articulating and celebrating our cityscape, putting their words to work in different settings.

Living

Harry Josephine Giles

Spells are desires in clear enough action
to turn the elements. Here is a spell:
when the bargain we are made to make
for food and shelter is to force
our bodies beyond their own wants, to place
the gold of our agency at the service
of another's thirst, to give up the gifts
of time and breath to clocks and smoke,
then those who say they value life
shall pay in return enough for life.
And when you do not we will take it.

Commissioned for the Real Living Wage Week campaign

THE BOOK HIVE © BOB PIKE



HARRY JOSEPHINE GILES © RICH DYSON



SHEY HARGREAVES VISITS NORWICH RESEARCH PARK



PAGE AGAINST THE MACHINE © JOANNA MILLINGTON



ABIR MUKHERJEE

Dragon Hall and NCW operations

Dragon Hall continues to be an inspiring space for meetings, conferences, weddings and parties, as well as for our programme of work.

Commercial hire of our unique Grade 1-listed building provides valuable income to help support our charitable objectives as well as the necessary maintenance that enables us to ensure that the building is cared for and open to the public. 2021-22 saw the building come alive again, and thanks to the launch of a new Dragon Hall brand, we were glad to welcome live events and private hires back after the restrictions of the pandemic. It was exciting to witness couples getting married in our stunning Great Hall, parties hosted in our impressive Foyle glass gallery, and corporate customers meeting in our education space. We hosted birthday parties, celebration of life events, staff away days, conferences and more.

We were delighted to welcome more than **20 corporate clients** back to live events at Dragon Hall. Our thanks to key customers including Leaders Estate Agents, Flagship Housing Group, Norwich Film Festival, British Museum, Norfolk Construction Excellence and Norwich City Council for bringing their activity to our space. We were proud to continue to work closely with partners and stakeholders including UEA, Norwich City Council, Sue Lambert Trust, Young Norfolk Arts Foundation and MAP amongst others.

We were also able to re-commence tours by our brilliant

heritage volunteer group, sharing architectural and social history and many stories about our 15th Century merchants trading hall. The Dragon Hall Heritage Volunteers keep alive the colourful history of Dragon Hall and its immediate environs. They were able to offer monthly tours initially on a reduced capacity basis, an online presence as part of Heritage Open Days, and they restarted their regular study group meetings.

Our commercial activity is fundamental in supporting the wider ambitions of National Centre for Writing as a literature house, a heritage resource, community space and a cultural performance venue: a building nearing 600 years old that is fit for our many purposes and resilient for our times and the times to come.



OGEE ARCH

15
EMPLOYMENT-BASED
LEARNING WORK
PLACEMENTS,
INTERNSHIPS
AND TRAINING
OPPORTUNITIES

10
HERITAGE TOURS

2
HERITAGE
OPEN DAYS

12
PRIVATE WEDDINGS
AND EVENTS
SINCE REOPENING
POST DEC 2021

50+
COMMERCIAL
ROOM HIRES AND
BOOKINGS



EMILY AND BRAD © WINSTON SANDERS

Finance

This year we were awarded new funding for our Stories From the Quarter and International Literature Showcase programmes and continuing funding for our Collaboration:Place:Change strategic project. Our Commercial Activity income has started to recover after COVID and we continued to deliver a large scale and diverse programme of work locally, regionally, nationally and internationally.

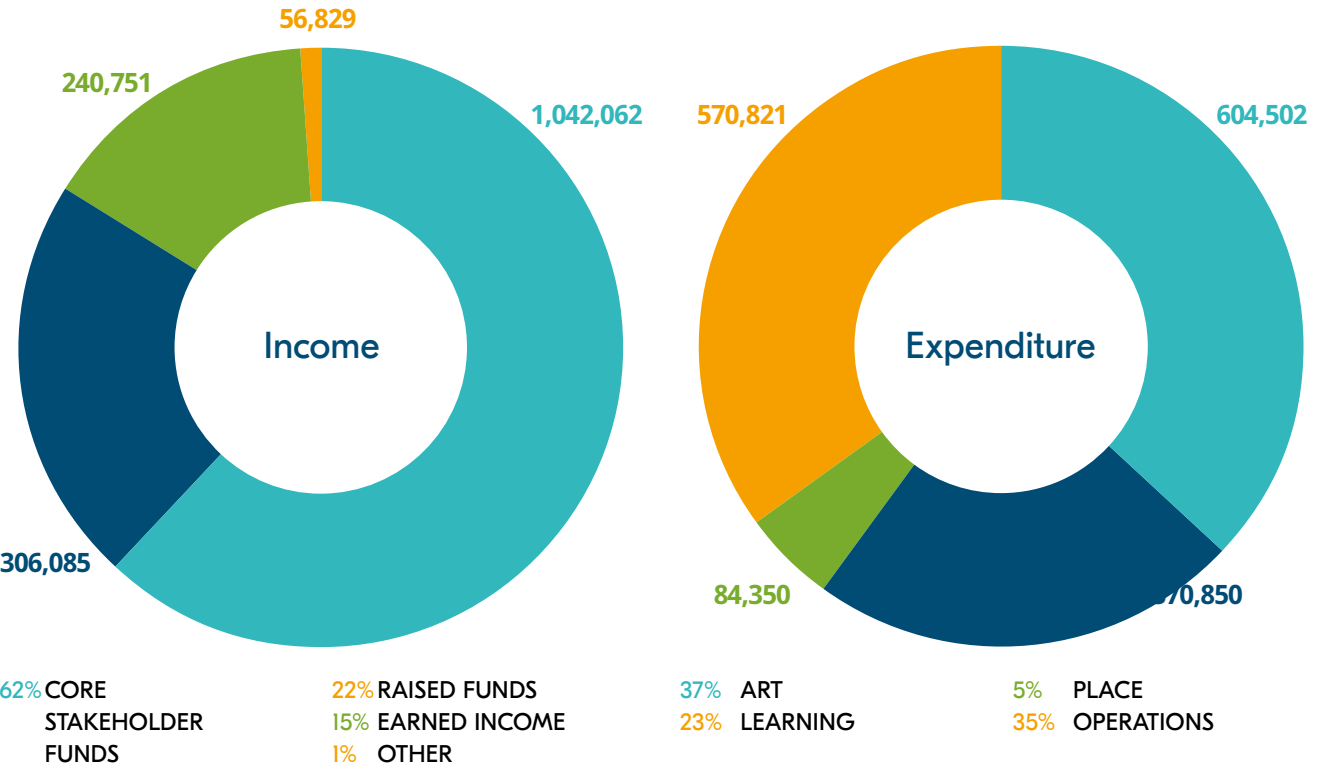
COVID Recovery Funds from DCMS through Arts Council England and other post-COVID funding through Norwich City Council assisted with investment into facilities at Dragon Hall such as improved lighting and shelter within our courtyard garden; improved catering and hospitality functionality; and updated AV and PA equipment to support the move to online and hybrid events.

At the end of the year, we made a successful bid to the Arts Council England Capital Investment Programme

which will see us redevelop some of our public spaces, open the building for community use, create a writers' hub and restore and renovate the historic Arches in the building in 2023.

The analysis of income shows that for 2021-22 we generated the majority of our income (45%) from our Core Stakeholder Funds (funding from: Arts Council England, Norwich City Council, Norfolk County Council, and the University of East Anglia). Raised Funds include trust fund and partnership income, other strategic funds and foundations, and partnership income, in support of our wide ranging programme. Earned Income is income from fundraising, ticket sales, course fees, and trading activities.

60% of our expenditure is connected to delivery of our artistic and learning programmes. 'Place' relates to the cost of local programmes and initiatives. 35% of our expenditure related to operational costs across the organisation.



SELECTION OF PUBLICATIONS PRODUCED OR SUPPORTED BY NATIONAL CENTRE FOR WRITING

Development and funders

We are incredibly thankful to all our donors, supporters, funders, partners and stakeholders, without whom our work would simply not be possible.

Though the pandemic and subsequent reopening and recovery period has been challenging and continues to be so, this vital support enables us to continue delivering our work.

As we focused on reopening and reconnecting to in-person audiences and participants, we successfully applied to National Heritage Lottery Grants for a heritage-focused community and oral history project with the Bengali community across the Cathedral Quarter in Norwich. Local grants, Trust and Foundations and individual donors are

vital to us, and we remain supported via project grants for our programmes with young people through The Geoffrey Watling Charity, Norwich Freeman's Charity and Paul Bassham Trust.

Our Escalator Talent Development Programme is supported through Amazon Literary Partnerships and individual donors, and bursary places on our programmes are supported by Malcolm Bradbury Trust, Anglia Ruskin University and Kit de Waal and Linbury Trust – all crucial to developing new and emerging writers from backgrounds historically under-represented on our bookshelves.

Escalator supports 10 emerging new writers from East Anglia and costs £27,000 each year to run. The programme not only supports new voices but provides valuable freelance employment for writers as mentors.

In 2021-22 we ran Escalator with a full cohort of ten writers, following a successful individual giving fundraising campaign and a generous donation of £6,600 from the Amazon Literary Partnership. This is the second year that we ran the programme in a 'hybrid' format, making the most of both online platforms and opportunities to meet up in person (subject to COVID-19 restrictions).

Our ten writers for 2021-22 were: Melody Bowles, Ben Cartwright, Shirley Day, Isabelle Higgins, Adam Leeder, Joanna Miller, Carrie Patten, Rick Roydes, Mark Stocker, and Bang Wang. Their mentors were: Megan Bradbury, Michael Donkor, Yvette Edwards, Owen Nicholls and Kate Worsley.

'The Escalator scheme does essential work to support writers both practically and creatively at a critical point in their writing lives.' – Sarah Perry FRSL, author and NCW Patron



NOIRWICH CRIME WRITING FESTIVAL © JOANNA MILLINGTON



ESCALATOR COHORT AND THEIR MENTORS © JOANNA MILLINGTON



NATIONAL CENTRE FOR WRITING AT DRAGON HALL © HANNAH HUTCHINS

Partnerships

Collaborations, partnerships and co-created programming is at the core of our organisational values, our business model and programming practice.



Our writer and translator development programmes are structured around a mentorship learning model, and we co-create community programmes and projects with third sector partners, grassroots organisations and participants.

This year, a co-created **Inn Crowd Pubs+** programme with Creative Arts East and Applause Touring saw us commission and tour new work into rural community centres and pubs, supporting new writing from artists and connecting audiences to high-quality cultural activities in their locality. **Noirwich Crime Writing Festival** was first established with UEA to support our visitor economy, building on Norwich's literary ecosystem, and bringing new audiences to the city while connecting the city to UEA.

Our commitment to working with our cultural peers has led to deep roots and firm friendships with local organisations such as **Norwich Arts Centre, Young Norfolk Arts, Norfolk & Norwich Festival, Out There Arts** and **Primadonna Festival**, as well as further afield with **Cheltenham Literature Festival** and **Edinburgh Book Festival**. Our network of Regional Literature Development Agency partners – **New Writing North, Literature Works, New Writing South, Spread the Word, Writing East Midlands** and **Writing West Midlands** – provide vital partnerships and perspectives.

Working with research, HE and FE partners **Norwich Research Park, University of East Anglia, Norwich University of the Arts** and **Anglia Ruskin University** provides a lifelong learning framework for some of our collaborations; including our **Creative Writing Online** programme and **New Writing** events which connect UEA

students to Norwich and events at Dragon Hall.

Strategically we connect to place making and visitor economy through our **Norwich UNESCO City of Literature** programme, our role within the **Norfolk & Suffolk Cultural Board** through the Local Enterprise Partnership, **Norwich Business Improvement District** and **VisitNorwich**. Our leading role for cultural development, developing audiences and supporting capacity across the sector is supported through our connection to both Norfolk County and Norwich City Councils. Our role in managing **Collaboration: Place: Change** on behalf of the New Anglia LEP Culture Board, delivered in partnership with Clore Leadership, Achates Philanthropy and the University of East Anglia, manifested a shared desire to create more diverse leaderships across Norfolk and Suffolk, with three cohorts receiving a programme of place-based learning and enrichment.

Internationally we are connected to a global literary translation network, the **UNESCO Creative Cities Network, ICORN** and through our partnership with **London Book Fair** and **British Council**. This year saw us work with over **25 countries** and the **42 UNESCO cities of literature**.



A.K. BLAKEMORE AT CURT FESTIVAL 2022 © CURT INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF LITERATURE



COLLABORATION: PLACE: CHANGE © LUKE WITCOMB

A year in publications and digital resources

Creating writing resources, commissioning new work, producing 'The Writing Life' podcast and contributing to a wide range of publications is vital to how we continue to engage, develop, and grow audiences of readers and writers.

Free and digital resources remained an important way for NCW to connect with creative audiences and provided creative comfort during a time of crisis and uncertainty. We employed **348 writers and translators** to create **52 online resources** for writers and translators that are continuously accessed from our digital channels. To expand the impact of NCW's Early Career Awards portfolio, we released bi-monthly packages of **digital resources for early career fiction writers**, supported by Arts Council

England. These attracted an average of **400 downloads per month** from users across the world who want to develop their skills in character, world building, plots, dialogue, editing and more. Commissioned writers included Mary-Paulson Ellis, Ella Micheler, Geoff Dyer, Michel Faber and Eva Verde.

Our Prizes and Awards programme enables us to showcase and support the literary and publishing industry, from marketing resources for bookshops to connecting our Escalator mentees to publishers. The **Desmond Elliott Prize** 2021 shortlist featured *The Manningtree Witches* by A.K. Blakemore, *The Liar's Dictionary* by Eley Williams and *little scratch* by Rebecca Watson, with Blakemore winning the coveted prize. We also celebrated this year's winner of the **East Anglian Book Awards**, *The Stubborn Light of Things: A Nature Diary* by Melissa Harrison.

The Writing Life podcast broadcasted interviews with writers and translators from all walks of life to an average of **2,000 listeners per month**: connecting artists from the full breadth of our programme – from emerging writers on our talent development schemes to Booker Prize-winning novelists – to a large and growing audience. Episodes included the poetry process with Khairani Barokka (part of her **Associate Artist** role with NCW), Megan Abbott's **Noirwich Lecture** on the power of crime writing to change society, writing fantasy with our writing resident Nuraliah Norasid, Kate Mosse on the Women's Prize, Booker Prize writer Tsitsi Dangarembga on representation, feminism and Zimbabwean literature, and Andy Hamilton on writing in *Longhand* (highlighted on BBC Radio 4 Xtra as an introduction to our podcast).



The Stubborn Light of Things by Melissa Harrison, winner of the Book of the Year at the East Anglian Book Awards

Our next chapter

For you: get involved with an event, workshop or course at Dragon Hall or download our latest podcast and resources.

For literature: a 2023 iteration of the International Literature Showcase in partnership with British Council and another chapter of our City of Literature programme at Norfolk & Norwich Festival.

For communities: new spaces in Dragon Hall to get involved, connect, write and play with words; to welcome in a multiplicity of stories and voices.

For writers and translators: our writers' hub will open in autumn 2023, with hot desks and bookable spaces for writers to work, meet and collaborate.

For young people: the time, tools, opportunities and networks to develop creatively, to explore the options available in a life professionally engaged in words.

For families: more opportunities for families to connect with us and each other and to be inspired by storytelling, story making and wordplay.

For Dragon Hall: capital funding from Arts Council England means we'll be working in 2023 to make our spaces more accessible, and to open to the public more regularly.

For Norwich: ensuring NCW is playing its part in making Norwich, a UNESCO City of Literature and City of Stories, a rich and creative place to live, work and study.

For ideas: commissions and partnerships, new work and new ways of working, leading the way with a spirit of enquiry singular to the country's most unique space for literature.

For us: to create a greener future for Dragon Hall and open one of Norwich's oldest buildings to more people; to connect to new audiences, and inspire more people to get involved and be creative.



33 NATIONAL CENTRE FOR WRITING AT DRAGON HALL © LUKE WITCOMB

Thanks

We are incredibly thankful to all our donors, supporters, partners and stakeholders; without their ongoing support our work would be significantly reduced and, in many cases, not exist.

Main Funders

Arts Council England
Norwich City Council
University of East Anglia

Strategic Programme funders

Arts Council England Transforming Leadership Fund
New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership for CPC Programme
DCMS Cultural Recovery Fund
Norwich City Council COVID Recovery and Reopening Grants

Project Funders

Amazon Literary Partnership
Anglian Ruskin University
Anguish’s Educational Foundation
Arts Council Korea
British Council
British Centre for Literary Translation
Creative Europe programme of the European Union
Creative Scotland
Danish Arts Foundation
Embassy of Portugal
Embassy of Slovenia
EUNIC London
Francis W Reckitt Arts Trust
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The Desmond Elliott Trust
The Francis W Reckitt Arts Trust
The Royal Norwegian Embassy
Garrick Charitable Trust
Harvill Secker

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Latvian Literature
Laura Kinsella Foundation
l’Entente de développement culturel entre le gouvernement du Québec et la Ville de Québec
Literature Translation Institute of Korea
Literature Wales
Lithuanian Cultural Embassy
Lithuanian Culture Institute
The Martineau Society
The Malcolm Bradbury Trust
National Arts Council of Singapore
National Lottery Heritage Fund
National Museum of Taiwan Literature
The New Anglia Small Grant Scheme (part funded by the European Regional Development Fund)
Norfolk County Council
Norwegian Embassy
Norwegian Literature Abroad
Norwich Business Improvement District
Norwich City Council
The Norwich Freeman’s Charity
PACCAR Foundation
Paul Bassham Trust
PEN Translates
Polish Cultural Institute
Pro-Helvetia
Québec Government Office in London
Royal
Ramon Llull Institute
Russian Institute for Literary Translation
Suffolk County Council
Sylvia Waddilove Foundation
Taipei Representative Office in London
Tadashi Yanai Initiative for Globalizing Japanese Humanities at UCLA
University of East Anglia
Waseda University
Welsh Literature Exchange

The 2021 BCLT summer school

British Council | Cultural Division of Taipei Representative Office in the UK and the National Museum of Taiwan Literature | the Danish Arts Foundation | the Dutch Foundation for Literature | Pro Helvetia | the Goethe-Institut and New Books in German | the Italian Cultural Institute | the Tadashi Yanai Initiative for Globalizing Japanese Humanities at UCLA and Waseda University | Arts Council England

Thank you to our major capital funders for their generosity and support, who helped with the transformation from Writer’s Centre Norwich to National Centre for Writing in 2018.

FCC Communities Foundation |
The Fidelity UK Foundation | The Foyle Foundation | Garfield Weston Foundation |
The Geoffrey Watling Charity |
New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership |
The Norwich Freeman’s Charity |
The Trusthouse Charitable Foundation |
Wolfson Foundation

NCW Supporters’ Circle members

Briony Bax | Jim Johnston | Caroline McCormick | Laura McGillivray |
The Passingham Family | Martin Pick |
Jane and David Steward |
Peter Wilson and those who wish to remain anonymous.

Partners

Eastern Daily Press
English PEN
Literature Across Frontiers
London Book Fair
Norwich Research Park
RECIT
Strangers Press
The Literary Consultancy
Translators Association

Translating Science Project

Writers: Megan Bradbury, Anthony Vahni Capildeo, Shey Hargreaves, Jess Morgan, Edward Parnell, Alexander Gordon Smith, Heidi Williamson

Scientists: Dr Federico Bernuzzi, Dr Nasmille Larke-Mejía, Dr Bethany Nichols, Professor Anne Osbourn, Dr. Jeff Price, Vincent Were , Professor Pete Wilde

UNESCO Cities of Literature

Angoulême | Baghdad | Barcelona | Beirut | Bucheon | Dublin | Dunedin | Durban | Edinburgh | Exeter | Gothenburg | Granada | Heidelberg | Iowa City | Jakarta Kraków | Kuhmo | Lahore | Leeuwarden | Lillehammer | Ljubljana | Lviv | Manchester | Melbourne | Milan | Montevideo | Nanjing | Norwich | Nottingham | Óbidos | Odesa | Prague | Québec City | Reykjavik | Seattle | Slemani | Tartu | Ulyanovsk | Utrecht | Vilnius | Wonju | Wrocław

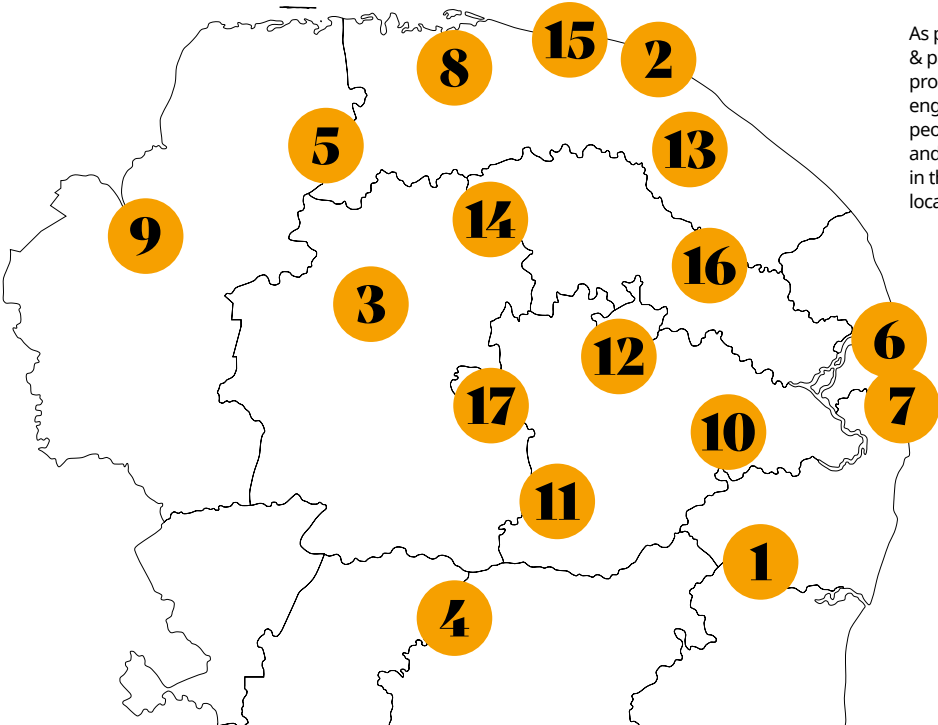
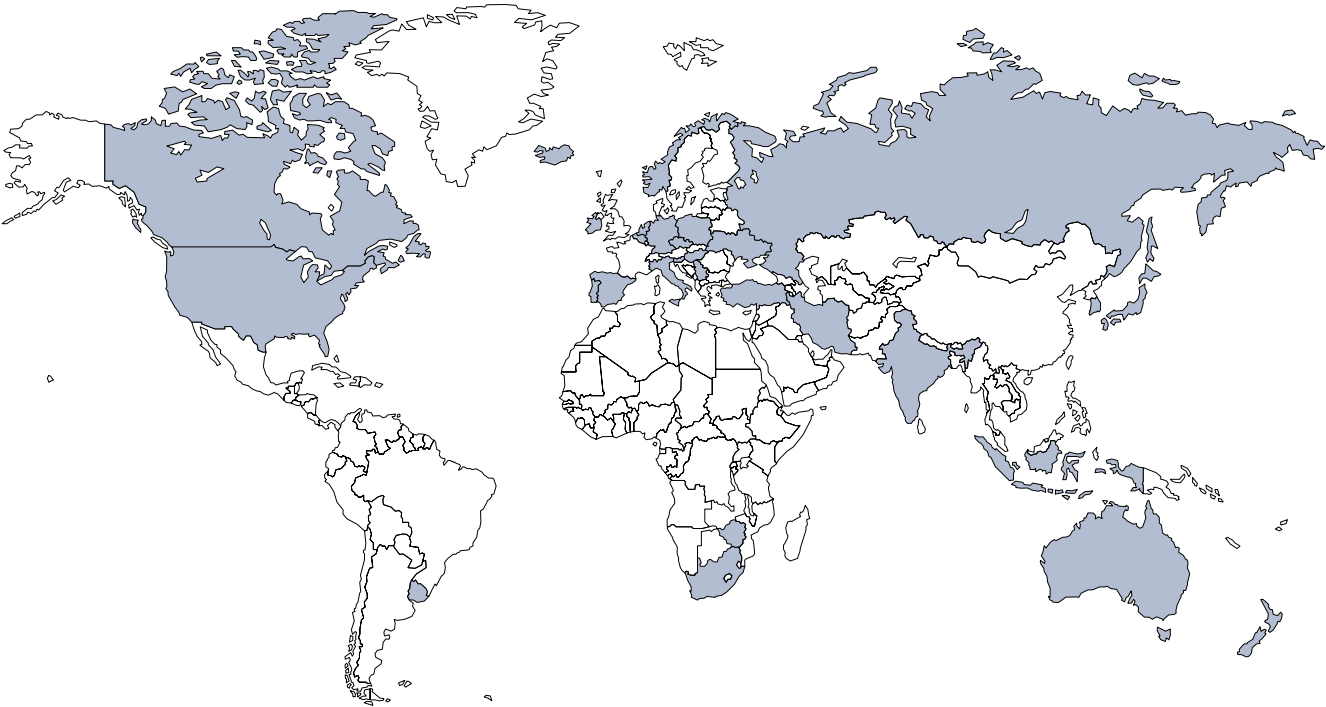
NCW Staff and Duty Managers Volunteers

We would like to acknowledge a special thank you to the Dragon Hall Heritage Volunteers for their ongoing support for the conservation of Dragon Hall’s heritage and for ensuring public tours of the building continue.

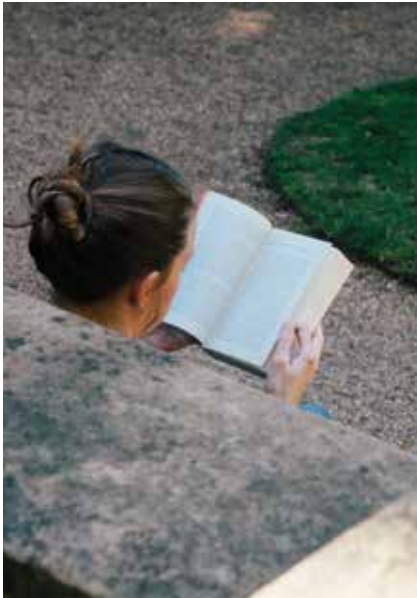
Our Reach

In 2021-22 we welcomed writers, translators and cultural partners from 37 countries to the National Centre for Writing at Dragon Hall in Norwich.

- Argentina
Belgium
Bulgaria
Cote d’Ivoire
Denmark
Finland
France
Germany
Hungary
Iceland
- India
Ireland
Italy
Japan
Korea
Latvia
Lithuania
Mexico
Myanmar
- Nepal
Netherlands
Norway
Philippines
Poland
Portugal
Russia
Singapore
Slovenia
South Africa
- Spain
Sweden
Switzerland
Taiwan
UAE
USA
Ukraine
Vietnam



- As part of our learning & participation programme we have engaged with young people across Norfolk and Suffolk, including in the following locations:
01. Beccles
02. Cromer
03. Dereham
04. Diss
05. Fakenham
06. Great Yarmouth
07. Gorleston-on-Sea
08. Holt
09. King’s Lynn
10. Loddon
11. Long Stratton
12. Norwich
13. North Walsham
14. Reepham
15. Sheringham
16. Wroxham
17. Wymondham



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