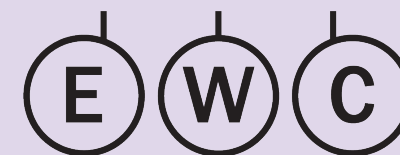




TOOLKIT FOR ORGANISERS

HOW TO ORGANISE A PERFECT AUTHOR'S MEETING



European
Writers'
Council



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PREFACE

It is often said that the authors' job is a solitary task, based on isolation and concentration. And although having a good and nice space to focus and to imagine is important, it is also true that **many authors enjoy sharing their work with the audience and with readers of all ages.**

Exchanging opinions and impressions, reading excerpts aloud, talking about the creative process behind a particular book and discussing scenes and ideas are just some of the pleasures and surprises that this kind of event can offer, while it also **helps guarantee citizens' access to culture and a wider dissemination of the cultural conversation and debate.**

Apart from that, readings are also a notable **source of income for writers**, along with the earnings they receive from copyright royalties resulting from the sales of their works. For this reason, **readings and all the preparation involved in them should be understood as a valuable yet rigorous part of our job**, and it is desirable that various aspects are considered when inviting, hosting and presenting authors in this context.

BEST-PRACTICE PRINCIPLES for how to Organise a Perfect Author Event

**Respect the author
and its authors' rights**

Communication is key

**Everyone – public,
organisers, author –
should enjoy the event**





THE AUTHOR'S PARTICIPATION in Detailed Steps



INVITATION

For a successful author's meeting, the **first step is to decide which author to choose regarding to genre, age of the public, gender, diversity and which format of meeting, such as reading, discussion, workshop.**

There are many offers to support in decision-making, e.g. **websites of authors, literary awards, literary venues** (e.g. literary houses), **literary events** (including festivals) or **publishing houses** or the local **bookstore**.

Once this decision is made and the author is chosen, **the invitation should be made well in advance** (for example, around six months, or even earlier if the author has just published a new book and is in the middle of a promotional tour).

Likewise, the proposal for a literary event **should be sent preferably by email, or to the contact facilitated by the author** at their website or public profile.

The invitation should include all the information the author needs to decide whether to participate:

- Detail the **date, time, duration**, and exact **location** of the event.
- Provide clear information about the event's **fee** and **travel and accommodation expenses** (see section 4), which should be covered by the organisation, as well as a **cancellation policy** (see page 20).
- Inform the author of any **political sensitivity** around the event, such as which **sponsors** will be involved, which **other organisations** collaborate in it, or whether it has any **ideological or political** implications.
- Outline the **topic** that the author will address (or invite the author to have an input to this if the agenda is still open for discussion).
- Explain the **format of the event** and the **role** the author will have in it.
- Provide clear indications about the **length and structure of the event**, if they prefer to be presented or introduced or to present themselves and their book, if there is going to be a time for open questions and comments by the audience as well as if preparation is expected either from the public or from the author.
- In the case of discussions or round tables, it is also preferable to tell the author **which other authors will participate** in the event.

- If a **book-signing session** is expected, ask the author in advance. In this case, it is important to specify how long the signing is expected to last and to arrange for a bookstore to handle the book sales, if there are any, since most authors are not allowed to sell their books, depending on national laws.
- Detail the **remuneration** the author will perceive for their participation (see page 17).



PREPARATION

Once the author has agreed in principle to attend the event, you can proceed by covering the following points to ensure that everything is prepared before the event takes place:

- Check that the author has no **special access needs** e.g. wheelchair access, a companion, or disability parking.
- Confirm the author's expected **arrival time** on the day of the event and give directions on how to get there (see meeting the author below).
- Communicate how you intend that the author will be portrayed in event publicity: confirm with the author their **biographical details** and **image use** (making sure copyright is respected) before putting these into any publicity.
- Provide the **contact details** (email and phone) of a person assigned to communicate with the author before and during the event.
- Ask the author's advice for **contacting a publisher** with news of the event. The publisher may wish to promote it on their social media and send books or staff to the meeting, or also contribute to the event with some posters or other promotional materials.

- If the event is in an **educational context**, ensure the school or university staff involved are preparing for it e.g. having the students look up the author and prepare questions. If it is about a specific text by the author, inform the author if the text has been read in advance or not.
- It is advisable for the organisation to ensure that the event receives **media and public attention** in the region where it will take place: arranging interviews with local or regional media or agreeing on a prior collaboration with the author on social media, for instance.



THE EVENT

There are also some aspects to keep in mind on the day of the event, to ensure that everything goes as planned and that the conversation and the meeting can be enjoyed by everyone:

The author will be anxious about finding the venue and the room. Best practice is to assign someone to **meet and guide the author** to the stage, so that they can concentrate on their talk. This might mean collecting the author at a hotel or railway station or airport, after asking them whether they need this assistance or would prefer some time alone to focus before the event. In any case, it is preferable to have someone ready to greet the author at the venue.

Ensure there is **drinking water** available for the author. If the event venue has a capacity of more than 20 people, a **sound system** should be provided with a microphone for each participant who will be speaking (at a minimum, one for the author and another for the person introducing them, or for the audience if there is a Q&A



session). If the capacity is fewer than 20 people, the author can be consulted on whether they will need a microphone or not.

It is also important to agree with the author on the **arrangement of the space** (for example, whether they will speak standing or seated, in a low armchair or sofa or on a stool) and whether there will be **sufficient lighting** in case readings of excerpts are required. When the chairperson is **introducing** the author, it is important to have checked with the author their **biographical details** in advance. Wikipedia, for example, is not always correct, nor does it emphasise the relevant experience of the author for a particular event.

Stick to the format you have agreed with the author in advance of the event.

If **technology** is needed (projectors, online meeting program, etc.), ensure there is someone responsible for the smooth running of this and that it is not left to the author.

It is the **chairperson's responsibility** to make the event an enjoyable one for all. The chair should be aware of the event's policies around diversity and inclusion and incorporate them, especially in relation to Q+A sessions. The chair should be considerate of the author and intervene to **close the meeting** if necessary, e.g. because of hostile heckles and disruption.

In case of a **book-signing session** after the event, ensure a structured calm process.

Ensure the **comfort of the author** after their session. Is there a room they can use in relative privacy? What is the venue's WiFi password? Are there refreshments available?

RECORDINGS, PUBLICATIONS AND COPYRIGHT

An author's ideas, words and speech are their raw material, and also their intellectual property. For this reason, before recording the event and publishing its content, it is essential to take the following aspects into account:

Respect the right of the author **not to be recorded or published** in the event they decline such requests. Some of them might prefer not to appear on certain platforms due to the terms of use or the way they handle intellectual property, for instance.

It is also advisable to discuss with the author before the event whether the audience is allowed to **take photographs or video recordings** during the session. When an author does agree to be recorded or published, they own the copyright to what they say. Check also **further authors' rights and copyright** you will have to respect in this regard.

The author's fee should reflect this wider use of their presentation. The author's content cannot be altered without their consent. **Do not use or grant third parties the use of author's contribution for any form of AI** without the consent of the author. You will protect the author from generative AI, also by not knowingly, allowing the right to use the author's contribution in any manner that can be used to train AI.

If the author's contribution is edited, the edit must be **agreed** by the author before use.

Define in advance where and to whom to **publish recordings**. The right to use the author's contribution should not be an indefinite one. The event should make it clear what the duration is e.g. one year, after which a new agreement will be reached if the event wishes to continue to use it. Before recording an event, don't forget to **ask also the public** for consent.



REMUNERATION AND OTHER WORKING CONDITIONS

As mentioned in the introduction of this toolkit, meetings and events are an important source of income for authors, essential for their professional development. For this reason, it is important to consider the following points regarding the remuneration of the events and other working conditions:

There must be a **clear fee, communicated from the beginning**.

Fees vary across the world, according to local circumstances but they need to take into account that with preparation and travel the author will be assigning a lot more time to the event than that of the duration of the talk itself.

Please contact your **local authors' organisation**, as they might have recommended rates. Sometimes, event organisers under budget pressure will suggest that publicity and possible book sales alone are sufficient recompense for the author. **This is unacceptable**. Organisers would never suggest to venues, or phone companies,

or designers and printers, or the shops they use that these organisations accept publicity instead of payment.

Travelling and accommodation costs should be covered by the organisation, and in cases in which the event involves a considerable amount of time for travelling by the author, this could also be compensated by an additional fee. If the author is traveling to the event by car, the organisers should cover the travel expenses based on the mileage.

If the event takes place in the evening, especially in countries or regions where **restaurants** close early, it is important for the organisation to ensure that the author will have something to eat afterwards.

If (with the agreement of the author) recordings or publications arise from the event that use the author's contribution (see page 15), the author should be **compensated** for these appropriately.

POST EVENT

Just as an event with an author begins long before it actually takes place, it also continues after it concludes. In this regard, it is important to consider aspects such as:

Best practice is to give the author **feedback** from the event and opportunity to provide feedback on their own experience.

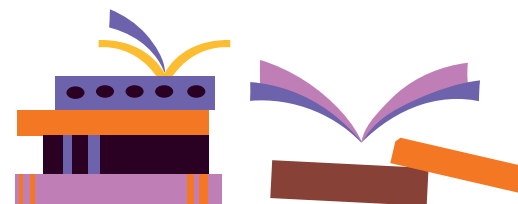
After receiving the author's invoice, the fee should be paid **promptly and definitely** – as is legally the case in many countries – within 30 days. Ask the author in advance on their working status and if they are VAT-registered. Most authors are self-employed. In this case, do not deduct tax or national insurance from the fee or expenses. The author will have their own reporting procedure for that and will have included their international tax ID in their invoice.

CANCELLATION OF THE EVENT

Finally, there is also the possibility that an event that has begun to be organised may not take place for various reasons. In this case, the following points should be taken into account:

Clarify cancellation policy **in advance**.

It is common practice to pay the **whole fee or part of it** if the organiser is cancelling the event. If the author cancels the event (unavoided events, e.g. weather incidents excluded), no fee is payable.



SOME NATIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS (in alphabetical order)

Denmark

The Danish Authors' Society doesn't offer a written policy for remuneration, but the clear recommendation is to follow the policy set out by Danish Arts Foundation. Danish Authors of Fiction and Poetry insists on fair remuneration for author's meet sessions, and recommends an absolute minimum fee mirroring the policy of the Danish Arts Foundation. The Foundation give grants to organizers to supply fees for the author with 6.000 DKK for solo-writer readings and DKK 5.000 for multiple writer readings. Thus, the remuneration per reading should be considerable higher than the amounts mentioned. Link to grants for Authors' meets at the Danish Arts Foundation: <https://slks.dk/tilskud/stamside/tilskud/forfattermoeder-for-voksne>

France

Règlement d'instruction des dossiers de demande d'aide (Sofia) – in French <https://www.la-sofia.org/action-culturelle/reglement/>

Malta

The Akkademja tal-Malti offers Guidelines for Literary Events in Maltese language which can be ordered at its secretariat (akkademjatalmalti@gmail.com).

Spain

Document with recommendations in literary events by the Associació d'Escriptors en Llengua Catalana (AELC) – Association of Catalan Language Writers – in Catalan (<https://www.escriptors.cat/temes-professionals-bones-practiques-activitats>)

Switzerland

Brochure with recommendations on authors' presentations in schools by A*dS – Swiss writers' and literary translators' association, incl. links to offer of official organised programmes – in German (<https://www.a-d-s.ch/wissenswertes/schullesungen/>), French (<https://www.a-d-s.ch/bon-a-savoir/lectures-scolaires/>) and Italian (<https://www.a-d-s.ch/buono-a-sapersi/letture-nelle-scuole/>) Guidelines for digital events and workshops – in German (<https://www.a-d-s.ch/wissenswertes/digitale-veranstaltungen/>), French (<https://www.a-d-s.ch/bon-a-savoir/manifestations-numeriques/>) and Italian (<https://www.a-d-s.ch/buono-a-sapersi/manifestazioni-digitali/>) Guidelines for moderators of panels, interviews etc. – in German (<https://www.a-d-s.ch/wissenswertes/moderationen/>), French (<https://www.a-d-s.ch/bon-a-savoir/entretiens/>) and Italian (<https://www.a-d-s.ch/buono-a-sapersi/moderazione/>)

United Kingdom

"Engaging freelancers for speaking events", guide by the Society of Authors (SoA) – in English (<https://societyofauthors.org/resource/engaging-freelancers-for-speaking-events/>).



About the European Authors Day



The European Authors Day was established in 2023 thanks to the initiative of the European Commission. For two years, it was coordinated by Creative Europe, which continues to co-fund the project.

Since 2025, the European Authors Day, under the inviting slogan #ReadForReal, is led by a consortium of seven partners from five countries.

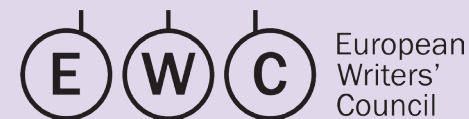
The project leader is the Universal Reading Foundation (Poland). The consortium members are: the Federation of European Publishers, the National Library of Poland (Poland), Ciclic Centre-Val de Loire (France), Stiftung Lesen (Germany), Chetene (Bulgaria), and EUREAD (Belgium).

More information: www.readforreal.eu.

Discover more information about the European Authors Day #ReadForReal on website: www.readforreal.eu.

Find us and follow on facebook & instagram [@read.forreal](https://www.instagram.com/read.forreal).

About the European Writers' Council



The EWC is the only federation worldwide representing the interests of authors in the book sector. It is a non-profit, non-governmental federation constituted by 55 writers' and literary translators' associations in 34 European countries, from the EU, the EEA countries Iceland and Norway, as well as Belarus, Switzerland, Montenegro, North Macedonia, and the UK.

EWC members comprise over 260,000 professional authors in the book sector, writing in 37 languages and publishing in all genres (fiction, non-fiction, educational, academic, children & young adult, poetry).

More information: www.europeanwriterscouncil.eu