



The
International
Sustainable
Publishing and
Industry
Resilience
Plan:

HOW GLOBAL PUBLISHING CAN CHANNEL SOLIDARITY INTO OPPORTUNITY



international
publishers
association

[InSPIRE] Charter

CONTENTS

Foreword:

The Need for Solidarity in Reaffirming the Power of Books and the Value of Publishing	03
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Executive Summary	05
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1. Moving from Solidarity to Collaboration: The Need for a Plan	07
---	----

2. How the Inspire Plan Was Developed	11
--	----

3. The Inspire Plan: Addressing Challenges and Realizing Opportunities	12
--	----

3.1 Regional Publishers Associations: Increasing Digital Expectations and Advocacy Priorities	13
---	----

3.2 Authors, Illustrators, and Other Key Ecosystem Stakeholders: Rebuilding Trust and Resetting Relationships	15
---	----

3.3 Educational Publishing: Navigating an Environment of More Questions Than Answers	19
--	----

3.4 Book Fairs and Rights Trading Events: Going Hybrid on a Path Towards Deeper Business Model Innovation	23
---	----

3.5 International Organizations and Non-Profits: Expanding Cooperation for Bigger Impact	25
--	----

4. Implementing the Inspire Plan	27
---	----

5. Contributors and Acknowledgments	29
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FOREWORD: THE NEED FOR SOLIDARITY IN REAFFIRMING THE POWER OF BOOKS AND THE VALUE OF PUBLISHING

For the International Publishers Association (IPA), 2021 is very significant since it is celebrating its 125th year as the global voice of publishing. This milestone coincides with one of the most challenging years that global publishing and IPA members have ever faced due to the ongoing impacts of the global pandemic on our industry, and new and evolving threats to the IPA's core foundations of copyright and freedom to publish.

From August to October 2020, with the full impact of the global pandemic on publishing still unknown, the IPA interviewed 33 senior publishing executives in over 30 countries accounting for 70% of global publishing sales and 3 billion readers. We wanted to find out how the global pandemic was affecting IPA members and national publishing industries and how the IPA could best support them. The findings from these discussions formed the basis of the International Publishers Association's report [*From Response to Recovery: The Impact of COVID-19 on the Global Publishing Industry*](#).

The IPA's report on the impact of the global pandemic on publishing was one of the first attempts to gather primary research on what was happening to publishers on the ground globally. In my conversations with publishers, nearly all highlighted the importance of industry solidarity in weathering the pandemic and in staging recovery. A clear finding emerged; markets in which publishers, booksellers, libraries, teachers, technology companies, regulators, and other publishing stakeholders came together exhibited more resilience and experienced faster recovery.

For this reason, one of my first initiatives as IPA President was to channel industry calls for solidarity into action. To do so, I formed a taskforce – now called the International Sustainable Publishing and Industry Resilience (Inspire) Taskforce – to lead an extensive industry consultation to identify the key pandemic-induced challenges facing publishers and provide recommendations.

The [*Inspire Charter*](#), signed by over 50 publishing ecosystem stakeholders, was the first achievement of the Inspire Taskforce. By signing the Charter, signatories from across the publishing ecosystem – including publishers, booksellers, authors, educators, bookfairs, international reading and literacy organizations, and free expression groups – have agreed to continue cooperating on supporting publishing's post-Covid recovery.

The Inspire Plan, developed through semi-structured interviews with close to 60 publishing ecosystem stakeholders, is another outcome of this ongoing cooperation. The Taskforce's outreach has been well-received with stakeholders praising the initiative as well-timed and much needed, and this Plan synthesizes the themes that have emerged from these conversations.

I would like to thank all those who contributed. On behalf of the Taskforce – which included Aimee Sawyer, Ben Steward, Catherine Blache, Giovanni Hoepli, Giulia Marangoni, James Taylor, Jessica Sängler, Joachim Kauffman, José Borghino, Karine Pansa, Kenan Kocatürk, Kristenn Einarsson, Li Pengyi, Lis Tribe, Maria Pallante, Michiel Kolman, Pierre Dutilleul, Rachel Martin, Stephan de Valk, and YS Chi – we look forward to working with you on this ambitious agenda.



Bodour Al Qasimi
President
International Publishers Association

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In late 2020, the International Publishers Association's report *From Response to Recovery: The Impact of COVID-19 on the Global Publishing Industry* described an industry suffering from lockdowns but buoyed by unprecedented ecosystem cooperation in the face of adversity. In most markets, the pandemic led to significant declines in book sales as the entire publishing value chain, from authors to readers, came to a near halt. While some markets have staged nearly full recoveries since the height of the pandemic, the national publishing industries in other countries remain in peril. A multi-track publishing recovery seems increasingly likely.

In on-the-ground consultations in late 2020, the IPA asked members how it could best support national publishing industries in transitioning from emergency response to recovery. Two critical member needs emerged from these discussions: a cooperative platform to build back better rooted in systemic resilience and sustainability, and ongoing information on industry developments, trends, and effective initiatives in weathering the pandemic. To meet these needs, IPA President Bodour Al Qasimi formed the Inspire Taskforce in early 2021.

By mid-2021, the Inspire Taskforce had made significant progress in articulating the steps it would take to transition industry solidarity catalyzed in the pandemic to longer-term ecosystem cooperation. The Inspire Charter was conceived as an opportunity for stakeholders from across the publishing ecosystem – including publishers, booksellers, authors, educators, bookfairs, international reading and literacy organizations, and free expression groups – to make a public commitment to deepen their cooperation on supporting publishing's post-Covid recovery.

In July, the Taskforce began conducting semi-structured interviews with ecosystem stakeholders which signed the Inspire Charter. The initial findings from these key informant interviews formed the basis for this study which was released at the Frankfurt Book Fair. In conducting these interviews, it quickly became apparent that many of the core questions being pondered by participants in the IPA's 2020 study on the pandemic are still unanswered. It remains unclear how the pandemic will ultimately impact reading and purchasing habits, and what pandemic-accelerated digitization trends may mean for the entire publishing ecosystem.

This study is an attempt to update the initial findings of the 2020 report and provide a situation report from the frontlines. The findings are based on discussions with the following ecosystem groups:

- Regional publishers associations
- International trade bodies that represent authors, translators, and illustrators
- International trade bodies that represent educational and scholarly publishers
- Book fairs and rights trading events
- International and intergovernmental organizations with publishing interests

These discussions suggested a range of priority challenges and opportunities, summarized below, on which to focus post-pandemic ecosystem cooperation.

Ecosystem Stakeholders	Key Challenges and Opportunities
Regional Publishers Associations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Embracing member service digitization and innovation ■ Engaging governments on the value of publishing ■ Making advocacy strategies more inclusive of the entire publishing ecosystem
Authors, Illustrators, and Other Ecosystem Stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Resetting relationships across the publishing ecosystem ■ Catalyzing multi-stakeholder partnerships to address systemic issues
Educational Publishers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Leading the dialogue on the future of education ■ Supporting the adoption of new business models fit for the times ■ Working across the publishing ecosystem to address the digital divide
Book Fairs and Rights Trading Events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Gaining consensus on global book fair health and safety reopening protocols ■ Catalyzing a publishing ecosystem dialogue on the future of book fairs
International Organizations and Non-Profits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Forming new multi-stakeholder partnerships that translate solidarity into action ■ Growing existing partnerships to be more impactful

As a next step, in the first quarter of 2022, IPA is planning to host a symposium which will further expand on these opportunities and challenges and seek industry consensus on a more formal joint action plan with actionable recommendations.

MOVING FROM SOLIDARITY TO COLLABORATION: THE NEED FOR A PLAN

As countries, cities, and communities around the world entered lockdown, the importance of books and reading to inspire, uplift, and offer escape was underscored. Lockdowns have provided an opportunity for people to discover, or re-discover themselves as readers, which has translated into more time spent reading. Books and reading have offered a sense of belonging and connectivity at a time when social isolation and uncertainty prevails.

While it reinforced the role books and reading play in people's lives, the global pandemic also exposed cracks in the foundations of the publishing industry and how others view it. Despite publishers stepping up to support governments, education systems, and the scientific community in responding to the initial wave of the global pandemic, the publishing ecosystem was ultimately faced with being labeled 'non-essential' in many countries. Not only did this mean that publishers were often bypassed by stimulus programs, it also meant that the publishing ecosystem came to an almost complete halt for long stretches.



Due to the lack of support it received, the global publishing ecosystem was forced to look inward for support as it survived the worst of the pandemic and began rebuilding. Some markets recovered faster than others, some markets are still struggling, and some markets have collapsed. However, if there was any benefit of the pandemic on global publishing, it was the unanticipated impact the crisis had on galvanizing an unprecedented level of industry solidarity. As the only entity representing publishers globally, it was only natural for the International Publishers Association to lead efforts to build and maintain this industry-wide solidarity.

In January 2021, IPA's President Bodour Al Qasimi formed a taskforce – now called the International Sustainable Publishing and Industry Resilience (Inspire) Plan Taskforce – to lead an extensive industry consultation to identify key pandemic-induced challenges facing publishers and crowdsource recommendations on the way forward. Due to the many examples of publishing ecosystem players working in solidarity to weather the crisis, it was clear that the Inspire Taskforce had to cast a much wider net in its consultation. As a result, the Taskforce chose a consultation methodology which focused on diversity and inclusion in an effort to include the views of the entire publishing value chain to reinvigorate the industry, attempt to bridge opposing interests, and realize opportunities from accelerated digitization.

Another important impact of the pandemic on global publishing is that it catalyzed multi-stakeholder cooperation to address some of the long-standing, systemic problems that affect the industry. In fact, the pandemic has had the positive effect of turning global publishing's attention towards making progress on deep seated industry issues like empowering underrepresented voices, cooperating on diversity and inclusion, and revisiting relationships between publishing value chain participants. Endorsed by over 50 publishing ecosystem stakeholders to date, the [Inspire Charter](#) is one of the first achievements of the Taskforce, and it is symbolic of the industry's commitment to working together. Charter signatories have committed to continuing the high level of industry-wide cooperation that emerged in response to the global pandemic.

The Inspire Plan was conceived at the beginning of 2021 as a consultative process that would culminate in an analysis on the state of global publishing and advance recommendations to enhance resilience and sustainability. It was intended to formulate a shared view of the opportunities and most pressing challenges facing global publishing with prescriptive proposals on the way forward. In effect, the Inspire Plan would translate the broad commitments to action and solidarity reflected in the Inspire Charter into actionable recommendations. This study synthesizes the findings from the Inspire consultation.

With global publishing increasingly becoming interconnected, the findings in this report put forward an agenda for ecosystem stakeholders to focus on. The Inspire consultation provided a pulse check on the current state of the industry while highlighting the most pressing challenges and opportunities on the minds of senior publishing ecosystem executives.



Publishing is facing an uncertain recovery if our industry doesn't come together. While developed publishing markets have fared better, our colleagues in emerging publishing markets are facing existential challenges. The global pandemic doesn't just affect publishers – the livelihoods of millions of publishers, authors, illustrators, printers, distributors, and booksellers around the world are at risk. The publishing industry's post-pandemic future will be even more dependent on cooperation, unity, and solidarity. The Inspire initiative is a call for action so the entire publishing ecosystem can learn and move forward together in these unprecedented times.



Bodour Al Qasimi
President
International Publishers Association

2 HOW THE INSPIRE PLAN WAS DEVELOPED

The Inspire Plan was developed by a 20-member taskforce which included IPA's President, Vice President, Secretary General, and volunteer member representatives. The Plan is based on extensive consultations with more than 60 publishing ecosystem stakeholders in 23 countries representing 1.7 billion readers. What makes this consultation different from the IPA's previous studies on the impact of the global pandemic on publishing is the intentional inclusion of a broader spectrum of the publishing ecosystem to build on the industry solidarity galvanized in the pandemic.

This initial draft of the Plan, which The Taskforce views as a living document that will continue to evolve as the consultation widens, is based on discussions with the following stakeholder groups:

- Regional publishers associations
- International trade bodies that represent authors, translators, and illustrators
- International trade bodies that represent educational and scholarly publishers
- Book fairs and rights trading events
- International and intergovernmental organizations with publishing interests

A key limitation of this analysis is just how uncertain the future still is for publishing and publishing ecosystem stakeholders. Many of the key informants in this consultation are themselves undergoing internal organizational reviews, and there are a lot of unanswered questions on how global publishing may evolve post-pandemic. This was an important finding which suggests that the Inspire consultation will need to be ongoing to have the most impact on addressing sector challenges and realizing opportunities.

3 THE INSPIRE PLAN: ADDRESSING CHALLENGES AND REALIZING OPPORTUNITIES

The Taskforce began the process of identifying the challenges and opportunities to be included in the Inspire Plan by reviewing the extensive primary research and findings from IPA's study [*From Response to Recovery: The Impact of COVID-19 on the Global Publishing Industry*](#). Common themes from the study were used to develop and field a semi-structured questionnaire. The data collected from key informant discussions over this three-month consultation forms the basis for the findings detailed below.



3.1

REGIONAL PUBLISHERS ASSOCIATIONS: INCREASING DIGITAL EXPECTATIONS AND ADVOCACY PRIORITIES

In the IPA's previous reports on the impact of the global pandemic on publishing, the in-person dependent, pre-pandemic member service delivery model of publishers associations was highlighted as an approach that could change materially post-pandemic. In response to lockdowns and forced office closures, national and regional publishers associations, were forced to digitize their member offerings and experiment with ways to diversify revenue streams.

At the same time publishing industry trade associations were adapting, the ultimate beneficiaries of much of their work – publishers themselves – have also been implementing rapid digital transformations. This has created uncertainty amongst associations on which tech-enabled member service innovations and alternative revenue generation strategies should remain post-pandemic, and how best they can respond to evolving member needs and expectations. For example, the consultation revealed member expectations for hybrid physical and online events, online transactional and data marketplaces, and online training, which were viewed by associations as pandemic workarounds, are likely to continue post-pandemic. There also appears to be a need for publishers associations to realign their advocacy priorities based on evolving industry dynamics and enhanced cooperation across the publishing ecosystem.



The associations consulted for Inspire were encouraged by strengthened publisher relationships with libraries, teachers, technology companies, regulators, logistic providers, and other publishing stakeholders formed to weather the global pandemic. Many view the increased cooperation during the pandemic as an opportunity to reset relationships to focus on mutual goals that benefit the entire publishing value chain; for example book voucher programs. The pandemic is also being viewed by publishing association leaders as a catalyst to increase cooperation on long-standing, systemic industry issues like empowering underrepresented voices, cooperating on diversity and inclusion, revisiting links between publishing value chain participants, and cooperating on tackling digital piracy.



The Federation of European Publishers welcomed an initiative by the Italian government to provide financial support to public libraires to purchase books from local booksellers. This measure was supported by publishers, booksellers, and library associations to support the entire publishing value chain. It was so impactful, that it is being scaled-up to other European countries. These are the kind of multi-stakeholder partnerships that associations need to steward as global publishing begins to recover, and even beyond the current crisis. There is significant value to be unlocked by continuing industry-wide cooperation post-pandemic.

Peter Kraus vom Cleff
President
Federation of European Publishers



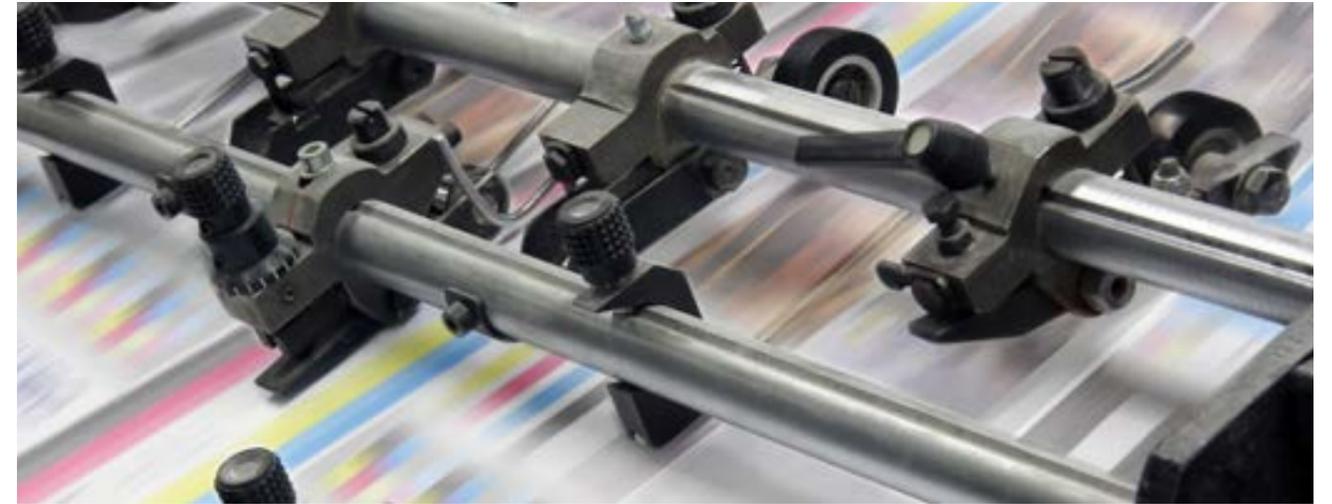
3.2

AUTHORS, ILLUSTRATORS, AND OTHER KEY ECOSYSTEM STAKEHOLDERS: REBUILDING TRUST AND RESETTING RELATIONSHIPS

As shutdowns stretched on, the global pandemic required unique, inclusive publishing value chain-wide cooperation to serve readers. Overcoming the challenges of keeping books in the hands of readers renewed alliances forged out of necessity that have strengthened publisher relationships with libraries, teachers, tech companies, regulators, logistic providers, and other publishing stakeholders.

While the IPA's previous study on the impact of this global pandemic on publishing looked at how these relationships evolved from the perspective of publishers, the Inspire consultation sought to explore how important publishing ecosystem stakeholders, like authors, illustrators, and booksellers, view their evolving relationship with publishers. The overall sentiment is that there is much more to be gained through ecosystem alliances for recovery and adapting to evolving trends. However, sticking points remain in several areas that perhaps can be bridged with the trust rebuilt in response to the global pandemic and more dialogue.

Many of the opportunities for more productive publishing ecosystem dialogues have the evolving distribution of market power and value apportionment in the sector at their core. For example, as the frequency of leveraging new routes to market, like self-publishing, become more common, independent publishers are asking traditional publishers to consider more flexible rights deals that accommodate direct-to-consumer sales channels. Authors want to see more diverse, localized narratives and more books published in indigenous languages. Illustrators see a need for standards to more effectively collaborate with publishers. Literary agents are asking for more protection of the intellectual property rights of their author clients from digital piracy. Publishers and authors also want a more open dialogue with libraries on what the post-pandemic future means for how they work together.



Bridging these differences through dialogue appears necessary to retain the high level of publishing industry solidarity built in navigating the global pandemic. In most cases, these opposing interests are long-standing, but the pandemic has increased mutual trust amongst industry stakeholders which has created an environment in which there is more confidence in engaging in industry dialogues about complex, systemic issues.



Every publisher says that authors are the most important stakeholder for them. However, from the perspective of authors, we don't always feel that is the case. We share a common interest of creating a vibrant, diverse industry that reaches readers across physical, digital, and virtual formats. There is a real need to find a locus of cooperation to bridge the gaps between authors and publishers.

Orna Ross
Founder and Director
Alliance of Independent Authors



The relationship between authors and publishers in response to the current business realities requires cooperation on redefining our partnership. There is a great deal of respect and desire to expand cooperation between publishers and authors, and initiatives like Inspire are very valuable in catalyzing these much-needed dialogues.



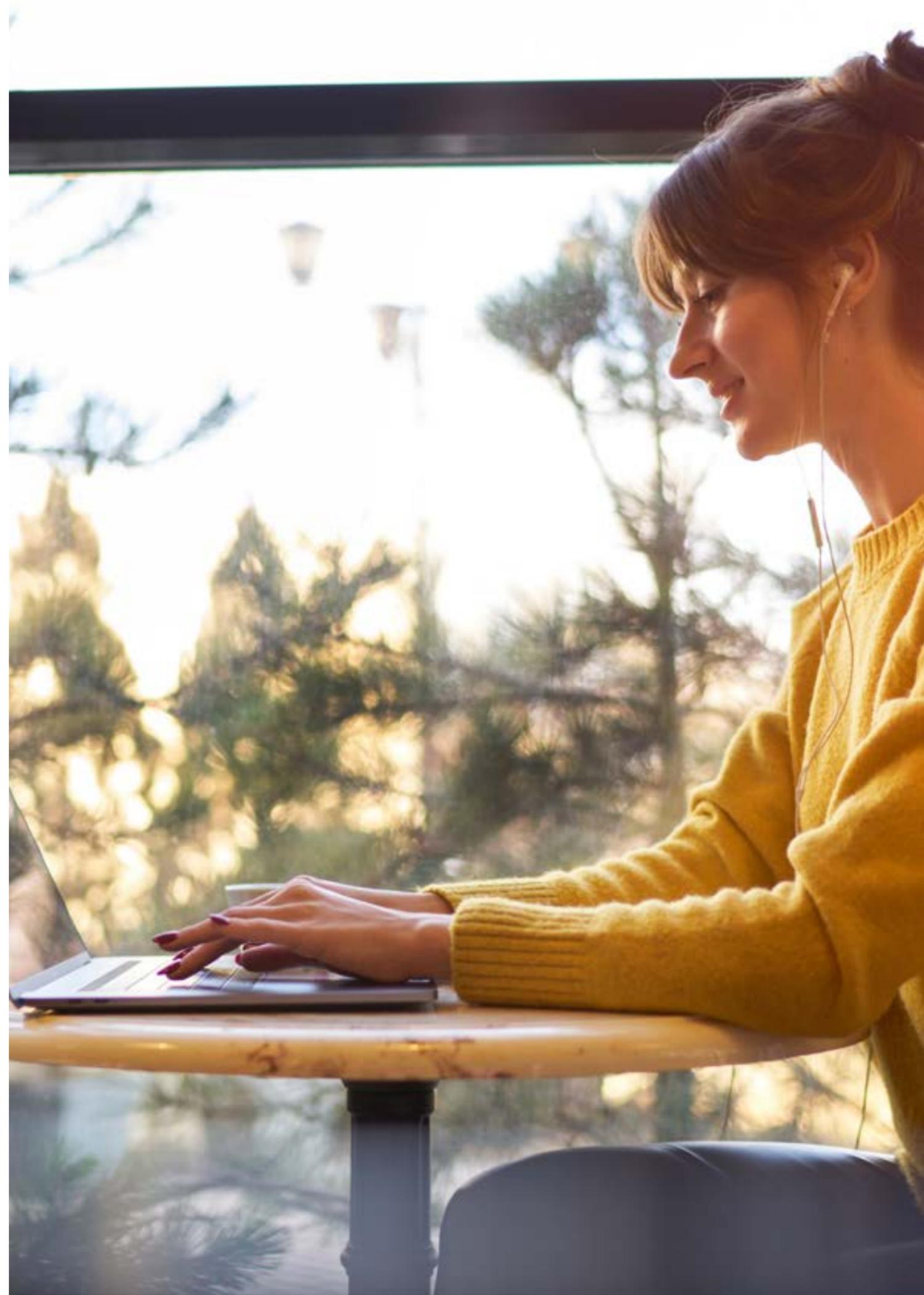
John Degan
Chair
International Authors Forum



We want our writers to publish, but, at the same time, we want to see African publishers thrive. In the past, due to capacity constraints, there was a need for non-African publishers. However, to create strong, indigenous publishing industries we need to ensure non-African publishers collaborate and transfer skills to local publishers. The African market opportunity is significant, but equity is needed in realizing these opportunities.



Dr. Wale Okediran
Secretary General
Alliance of Pan African Writers Association



3.3

EDUCATIONAL PUBLISHING: NAVIGATING AN ENVIRONMENT OF MORE QUESTIONS THAN ANSWERS

The global pandemic created the largest education disruption since World War II with UNESCO estimating that more than 1.6 billion students in 190 countries were out of school in 2020 at the height of the pandemic. With educational and scholarly publishers, education systems, schools, and teachers all focused on maintaining student engagement, participation, and progression, there has not been sufficient time for industry-wide, cross-stakeholder reflection on the future. While adoption of online teaching resources as part of a broader global shift towards blended learning and fully remote learning has been accelerated by the global pandemic, the pace of more widespread, non-crisis adoption remains unclear.

The consultation revealed an uncertain moment in the educational and scholarly publishing sector where there are more questions than answers. However, the IPA's previous study on the pandemic's impact on publishing revealed a significantly improved dialogue between publishers, teachers, and librarians to start addressing this uncertainty. Teachers, policymakers, publishers, learners, and the many other stakeholders involved in education have begun to ask important questions about the post-pandemic future of education: Do teaching and learning approaches need to evolve? Are there better ways of assessing learning outcomes? How should education systems adapt to asynchronous learning? What role should educational publishers play in teacher training? Are open educational resources living up to their promises? How can we cooperate on addressing surging digital piracy?

Within the industry, worries about how government budgets will impact institutional sales to education and public library systems remains a worrisome unknown. In developing markets, in many cases, the response of educational publishers in supporting unplanned, abrupt transitions to remote learning was the first time education officials, teachers, and students were exposed

to blended and online learning. There are also broader sector-wide concerns globally about how the acceleration of the use of digital content in teaching and learning might require publishers to pivot towards new business models, like subscriptions for example, which educational systems may not be fully prepared for. This transition to new ways of doing business is likely to mean much more substantive involvement of publishers in building the digital capacities of education and training institutions, teacher training, defining digital skills and competencies, and the storage and use of student data.

The global pandemic has also highlighted how critical it is for publishing ecosystems to address the digital divide not just from an access standpoint. The digital divide manifests in a multitude of ways — differing capacities to pay for textbooks, inconsistent levels of teacher digital skills, varying levels of national educational publishing system maturity, and emergent copyright systems that don't incent investment in quality resources. Unfortunately, publishers and global educational systems don't appear to have many compelling ways to deal with universal access to quality education as education and training systems adapt to a covid-accelerated digital age.



¹ United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization, One Year into COVID-19 Education Disruption: Where Do We Stand? (1 October 2021), available from en.unesco.org/news/one-year-covid-19-education-disruption-where-do-we-stand

During the pandemic, reaching institutional customers like schools, became increasingly difficult for many educational publishers since in-person meetings were not possible. In response, innovative ways of marketing and selling had to be found. The impacts of the pandemic have changed the way of how educational publishers communicate with their customers for good but what will ultimately replace the established ways is yet unknown.

Helga Holtkamp
Director
European Educational Publishers Group



One of the most lasting impacts from the global pandemic is learning loss due to school closures, lack of book accessibility, and varying levels of internet connectivity. It is unclear how the learning impacts of extended school closures can be mitigated. In Africa, we've also found that teachers have been deeply affected by school closures. The full impact of the pandemic on reading skills, teacher motivation, reading cultures, and national policies to support the publishing sector are not well understood.

Albert Nsengiyumva
Executive Secretary
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3.4

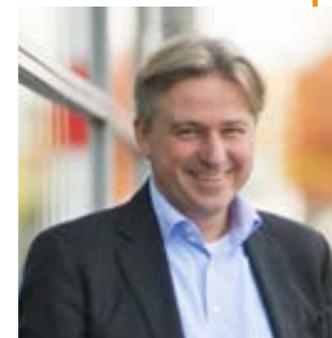
BOOK FAIRS AND RIGHTS TRADING EVENTS: GOING HYBRID ON A PATH TOWARDS DEEPER BUSINESS MODEL INNOVATION

The Inspire consultation revealed that major global bookfairs are planning to continue hosting hybrid events to attract in-person attendees and online audiences due to ongoing travel restrictions and increased acceptance of hybrid event attendance as a way of participating in global literary events. With the adoption of hybrid book fairs looking increasingly likely to stay, event organizers and publishers associations that produce national book fairs, will require different skills than hosting the in-person events of the past. Well-designed, well-run hybrid events require infrastructure like on-site studios and digital production skills to make attendees watching remotely feel involved. With varying guidance on hosting large events, the Inspire consultation also revealed a need for global book fairs to potentially cooperate on an industry-wide health and safety reopening protocol.

The IPA's previous study on the impact of the pandemic on publishing found that book fair organizers and publishers associations were already experimenting with book fair business model pivots early on in the global pandemic. In many of these early innovator countries with less developed digital economies, meant that tech enabled experimentation was essential to support the industry as book fair sales constitute a significant portion of annual publishing sales. For example, to compensate for not being able to host physical book fairs, associations in Indonesia, Philippines, Georgia, and Nigeria created marketplaces and formed partnerships with technology companies to allow members, publishers, and booksellers to sell online. These associations managed fulfillment and also provided marketing assistance and a payment gateway.

Participants in the Inspire consultation suggested that the digitization of marketing, sales, and rights trading has the potential to reduce business travel and have significant impacts on the longer-term business model of book fairs. For now, blended online and offline approaches that enable remote participation appear to be the go-to pivot. However, evidence of a creeping affordability gap in markets like Mexico, for example, suggest that longer-term pivots may need to also accommodate publishing ecosystem participation at varying price points and a transition to digital content sales.

In 2021, major bookfairs are projecting 50% of pre-pandemic attendance levels, and some long-standing book fairs have been canceled due to financial challenges. Book fair and rights trading event attendance looks likely to remain depressed into 2022 adding to the urgency for business model innovation. This echoes previous findings from the IPA's initial study in which several contributors identified a need for post-pandemic alternatives to international book fairs and rights trading events in response to ongoing travel concerns and increasing acceptance of doing business online.



Publishers are good at working together, but they are not always good at working with other stakeholders – like bookfairs, booksellers, libraries, authors, translators, and other organizations. There is an urgent need to bring industry stakeholders together to work together to make sure the publishing industry is resilient and robust. Bookfairs are key stakeholders in these conversations.

Jurgen Boos
President, Chief Executive Officer
Frankfurt International Book Fair

3.5

INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS AND NON-PROFITS: EXPANDING COOPERATION FOR BIGGER IMPACT

With consultative status and ongoing dialogue with several United Nations and international non-profit organizations, the IPA sought to further expand on existing relationships to forge new partnership opportunities through the Inspire consultation. The consultation provided an opportunity to engage these important partners to transition existing relationships beyond consultation towards implementing specific projects that focus on large, systemic mutual goals. Many of the common objectives shared by the IPA and these organizations require the convening of significant financial resources, multi-lateral and bilateral partnerships, and global advocacy strategies which make collaborative action the most effective strategy.

While the grand challenges international organizations and non-profits focus on have not changed, the magnitude of the developmental challenges and the importance of making progress have been accelerated by the global pandemic. Some of the most pressing challenges highlighted in the Inspire consultation for action are long-standing issues with even greater impetus for translating solidarity into action:

- Defining the role of the global publishing industry in sustainable development
- Upskilling publishing ecosystem professionals to counter a growing digital skills gap
- Ensuring access to education and books for out-of-school children
- Addressing learning loss due to school closures and the digital divide
- Supporting indigenous language publishing and empowering underrepresented voices
- Exploring the role of publishers and reading in conflict and community healing
- Making progress on publishing industry diversity and inclusion
- Combatting the rise in digital piracy
- Expanding access to data on the global publishing industry
- Improving government publishing procurement practices



We need to reimagine education for the online world to help young people engage with technology safely and learn outside the national curriculum. We need to do more for indigenous youth by supporting indigenous language publishing, and we need to ensure the publishing industry can partner with organizations like UNICEF in conflict zones like Afghanistan, Iraq, and Syria to keep books accessible to children and facilitate conflict resolution.

Henrietta Fore
Executive Director
UNICEF



We have been overwhelmed by the ongoing support we received from all sectors for Book Aid International's book donation and library development work. There was a true sense of everybody 'being in it together' and people really understanding how it felt to have children denied education and access to libraries. Books provide comfort, education, and entertainment, especially in times of crisis. Our partnership to transform shipping containers into libraries in Tanzania with IPA through the Dubai Cares-funded African Publishing Innovation Fund is a great example of the spirit of cooperation that has been amplified by the global pandemic.

Alison Tweed
Chief Executive
Book Aid International



4 IMPLEMENTING THE INSPIRE PLAN

Publishing this draft of the Inspire Plan is not the end of the IPA’s ecosystem engagement. The broad challenges and opportunities identified in the Plan reflect a snapshot of where the global publishing industry is now in 2021. By supporting ongoing ecosystem cooperation and solidarity building, Inspire is a continuation of the IPA’s efforts to support members and the global publishing industry in defining a way forward, post-pandemic. The Inspire Charter and Plan are unique in their intentional inclusion of a broader spectrum of the publishing ecosystem to build on the industry solidarity galvanized in the pandemic. The push for diversity and inclusion in participation is a response to widespread industry agreement that enhanced cooperation across the entire publishing value chain is required for a future-proof, more resilient, and sustainable industry. This initial work into potential areas of ecosystem cooperation has highlighted several broad challenges and priorities for post-pandemic cooperation summarized below.

Ecosystem Stakeholders	Key Challenges and Opportunities
Regional Publishers Associations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Embracing member service digitization and innovation Engaging governments on the value of publishing Making advocacy strategies more inclusive of the entire publishing ecosystem
Authors, Illustrators, and Other Ecosystem Stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resetting relationships across the publishing ecosystem Catalyzing multi-stakeholder partnerships to address systemic issues
Educational Publishers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leading the dialogue on the future of education Supporting the adoption of new business models fit for the times Working across the publishing ecosystem to address the digital divide
Book Fairs and Rights Trading Events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gaining consensus on global book fair health and safety reopening protocols Catalyzing a publishing ecosystem dialogue on the future of book fairs
International Organizations and Non-Profits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Forming new multi-stakeholder partnerships that translate solidarity into action Growing existing partnerships to be more impactful

As the darkest moments in the pandemic showed, the publishing industry’s post-pandemic future looks likely to be even more dependent on cooperation, unity, and solidarity. A multi-track publishing recovery which produces haves and have nots – a finding that already began to manifest with the nearly full recovery of the most developed publishing markets found in the IPA’s initial report on the impact of the global pandemic on publishing – appears increasingly likely without continued solidarity. Many of our colleagues from across the publishing ecosystem, including authors, illustrators, printers, distributors, booksellers, libraries, retailers continue to be deeply affected by the global pandemic. They need the support of the entire publishing ecosystem to effectively garner government assistance and reciprocal, altruistic peer support.

In order to adopt the Inspire Plan into a more prescriptive agenda for the way forward, a key finding of this study is that more consultation and more time for the dust to settle is required. For this reason, around the second anniversary of the World Health Organization declaring COVID-19 a global pandemic, the IPA plans to convene its members, consultation participants, and other stakeholders at a global symposium in the first quarter of 2022, to agree on a long-term, sustainable, and actionable ecosystem-wide recovery plan.

If you or your organization would like to discuss how you can support the Inspire Plan or be invited to the Inspire Symposium, please feel free to reach out to us on info@internationalpublishers.org

5 CONTRIBUTORS AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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