



Singapore Book Publishers Association

Reports for the Financial Year ended March 31, 2022

CONTENTS	PAGE
1. President's Overview	2
2. General and Trade Publishing Council	3
3. Educational Publishing Council	5
4. Professional and STM Council	6
5. Secretariat Report	7
6. Committees & Projects	
A. Membership	10
B. Training & Professional Development	12
C. Internship Programmes	13
D. Book Fairs	21
E. Book Data & Information	22
F. Singapore Book Awards	23
G. Government Relations	27
H. Copyright	30

1. President's Overview

As we head towards normalcy from over two years of pandemic, we are now able to hold more events and have more constructive face to face discussions and meetings on behalf of our members. Nevertheless, even with various restrictions over the past year, our Exco held many meetings online within the association and also with industry partners and government. We also organized and participated in many events benefitting many of our members and industry.

I am excited and proud to provide a list of the activities from our secretariat and subcommittees who had worked tirelessly over the course of the year.

- #BuySingLit campaign 2021/2022
- Mother Tongue Languages Book Bazaar
- Children's Book Bazaar
- Back to School Bazaar
- Singapore Literature Book Bazaar
- Singapore Book Awards
- SBPA Internship Programme
- SBPA School Library Catalogue and SBPA Members' Directory
- SBPA BookData System & Buy Link Project
- Canadian Virtual Trade Mission
- Meeting with Curriculum Planning and Development Division (CPDD) of MOE
- SPBA Membership Drive
- Book Data Workshop
- Engagement with government and stakeholders on new copyright law, GST and textbook related issues
- Engagement with online retailers on privacy issues

As we move to a new Exco for the 2022-24 term, please lend your support to the new team. They will continue to work hard for the association and our members. Do provide them with any inputs you may have and also volunteer when you get a chance. There will be lots of opportunities to grow our industry together!

Max Phua
President SBPA (2020-2022)

2. General and Trade Publishing Council

Report on completed events from August 2021 till August 2022

The General and Trade Publishing Council looks after the interests of our members involved in general or trade publishing.

The activities of the General and Trade Publishing Council in 2021-2022 were:

1. #BuySingLit Campaign 2021/2022

#BuySingLit is an industry-led movement to celebrate stories from Singapore. Advocating 'Buy Local, Read Our World', homegrown book publishers, retailers and literary non-profits have come together to encourage more people to discover and embrace Singapore's literature through buying and reading local works, which also support the writers who bear witness to our lives, as well as the businesses in our community that deliver these stories to us.

As part of the #BuySingLit campaign, SBPA organised three Book Bazaars in September and November 2021 and March 2022: the Mother Tongue Language (MTL) Book Bazaar, the Children's Book Bazaar and the Singapore Literature Book Bazaar. The primary objective of the Bazaars was to encourage the public to buy SingLit titles, as well as represent a wide and inclusive range of publishers from the literary industry and ensure support for MTL books and children's books. The #BSL Bazaars showcased the best in the local literary publishing scene, featuring established and independent literary content makers. More details on the individual events can be found in the Secretariat report.

2. Singapore Book Awards

Please see the Secretariat report for details on the Singapore Book Awards 2021. The 2022 Book Awards Ceremony will be hosted as a high-profile gala event at the Fullerton Hotel, one of Singapore's most iconic buildings. This awards ceremony will invite 150 industry figures and important stakeholders to attend. It will be a hybrid event reaching out beyond the live audience. It will be held on Thursday 22 September 2022, from 7.00 pm to 9.00 pm at the Hotel Ballroom.

3. Members' Meetings:

The 2022 Members' Meeting was held in-person at the Theatre in Jurong Town Hall on 15 February. Apropos of COVID restrictions, the event was attended by 36 people and the following presentations were made:

- Calendar of Events for 2022
- Singapore Book Awards 2022

- International and Local Book Fairs
- Internship Programme
- SBPA School Library Catalogue and SBPA Members' Directory
- SBPA BookData System & Buy Link Project
- CLASS shared the New CLASS Copy Record Application

4. Meetings with Foreign Publishers

Canadian Virtual Trade Mission

SBPA jointly organised a virtual trade mission with Livres Canada Books (the national association of the Canadian book publishing industry promoting export sales) on Thursday 9 December 2021. Eleven of our local publishers participated and met twelve of the established publishers from Canada. It was a great exchange and provided new potential business opportunities for our trade.

Please contact the Secretariat at info@singaporebookpublishers.sg for more information.

Reported by
Cecilia Woo and Lee Wen-yi
Secretariat

3. Educational Publishing Council

Report for 2021-2022

Singapore Book Publishers Association (SBPA) reached out to organise a meeting with Curriculum Planning and Development Division (CPDD) Ministry of Education (MOE). The meeting was held on 27 May 2022.

The dialogue with MOE touched on 3 key topics: firstly the impact on publishers from rising cost of business, secondly clarifying and understanding the new IP Law covering the use of the new "internet exception" in the copyright act within schools, and thirdly the school library supply procedure with MOE and schools.

During the discussion, SBPA Exco highlighted that in the past 2 years, the cost of printing, paper and distribution has increased due to inflation and global disruptions. The electricity increase and war in Ukraine also added to recent additional cost increases. As a result, we have requested MOE to allow for textbook price increase in the next school adoption. This cost would need to be passed on to consumers and we would like to seek MOE's understanding and approval. The members could not continue to bear the cost of production and distribution of the textbook in the adoption year. MOE has acknowledged the inflation and will review the price of the textbook during the next adoption submitted by textbook publishers.

The Exco's second agenda item was the change of IP law for use of digital learning contents. Our members were concerned that this change would impact the owners of these digital learning contents. MOE assured the members that schools have been informed with respect to the use of these contents, and that the learning contents would remain within MOE SLS. Teachers were advised to ensure proper purchase and use of additional digital learning content. Additional resources could be purchased by the schools for use to complement their current learning materials when needed. SBPA members can also continue to contribute to SLS and pitch any solution to MOE during "Pitch Day" by submitting an application.

Our members would like to promote local titles to school libraries and to have a better understanding with MOE on the procedures to engage with school libraries. It was not clear if the members should approach Civica or schools directly, and there have been difficulties helping schools improve reading programmes and school library collections. MOE clarified that publishers can directly approach schools to promote and discuss how library collections can be improved, and help increase reading among students.

Overall, the dialogue with MOE has been positive and SBPA is looking forward to more engagement with MOE in the future.

Reported by
Yeoh Cheng Poh and Peh Shing Woei
Educational Publishing Council Subcommittee

4. Professional and STM Council

Report for 2020-2021

The Professional Publishing Council did not conduct any formal activities in the past year. However, members were engaged on questions of copyright and book piracy, handled by the Copyright and Government Relations Committees.

Reported by
Peter Schoppert
Professional and STM Council Subcommittee

5. Secretariat Report

Report on activities from 1 August 2021 – 31 July 2022

Overview

FY 2021 - 2022 was a challenging year for the Secretariat as the team continued to adapt to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. There was a steep learning curve to introduce programmes as hybrid events, with both in-person and online audiences. Hallmark events, including the 2021 Book Awards and 2022 Members' Meeting, were held apropos of restrictions with smaller live audiences. The annual internship programme was also successfully carried out with a combination of online engagements and in-person activities. Other events, like the Virtual Trade Mission and the Copyright School Challenge 2021, were conducted online and were meaningful exchanges with Canadian publishers and students across Singapore.

The Secretariat also secured \$150,000 worth of funding from NAC to host three book bazaars: the Mother Tongue Languages Book Bazaar, the Children's Book Bazaar, and the Singapore Literature Book Bazaar, all of which took place over September 2021 to March 2022.

There were some staff changes to the Secretariat with the resignation of Ulric Sin on 31 January 2022. Nur Hanis Bte Hasin resigned from the position of Business Development and Marketing Executive on 21 December 2021. Valerie James assumed the position of Marketing and Admin Executive on 14 Jan and resigned on 19 March. Wen-yi Lee joined as the Project Executive with effect from 8 August 2022.

1. Project Management

Singapore Book Awards 2021

The 2021 Singapore Book Awards Ceremony was held on 24 September 2021 in the main auditorium at Jurong Town Hall as a hybrid event. In view of Covid restrictions, the in-person audience comprised 50 guests including stakeholders, sponsors, publishers and event partners. This year, we also introduced a hybrid book category as well as a readers' choice vote.

Mother Tongue Languages Book Bazaar

The Mother Tongue Languages Book Bazaar was held from 13 September to 19 September 2021, with the participation of 12 MTL publishers including Asiapac Books, Crimson Earth, Global Publishing, Jsim Education, Laimai, Lingzi Media, Maha Yu Yi, Pan Asia Publishing, Persama Enterprise, Pustaka Nasional Pte Ltd and Union Book Co Pte Ltd.

Children's Book Bazaar

In collaboration with the #BuySingLit campaign, the Children's Book Bazaar took place from 29th November to 5th December 2021 as a hybrid event with ten participating publishers. Key programmes in the bazaar included the Virtual Storyland and Kids' Storytelling Competition. The event was promoted online by the ASEAN Book Publishers Association as well as on other platforms, increasing the awareness of SingLit in the region.

Back to School Bazaar

The Back to School Book Bazaar was a fully virtual book bazaar that was held from 13 December to 31 December 2021, with 15 participating publishers offering a wide range of books for children at discounted prices.

Singapore Literature Book Bazaar

The Singapore Literature Book Bazaar took place at the Arts House from 7 March to 20 March 2022, launching with 25 invited guests and with the participation of publishers including Armour Publishing, Asiapac Books, Ethos Books, Experiences & Experiments Books, Jsim Education, Kitaab International, Landmark Books, NUS Press, Pustaka Islamiyah, Pustaka Nasional, TrendLit Publishing, World Scientific Publishing, Reading Edge Academy, Penguin Random House SEA and Crimson Earth. Publishers set up booths as well as hosted various hybrid events throughout the bazaar, and made their catalogue available on Lazada.

2. Members' Meetings

Meeting on 15 February 2022

The Members' Meeting on 15 February 2022 showcased the calendar of events that SBPA would be organising in 2022. These included international and local book fairs, publishing the 2022-2023 School Library Catalogue and Members' Directory, promoting the SBPA BookData System and Buy Link Project, as well as organising the Internship Programme and Singapore Book Awards. A representative from CLASS also shared about the new CLASS Copy Record Application, and SBPA promoted our Facebook and YouTube pages, which provide more access to SBPA updates and events.

3. International Book Events

Virtual Trade Mission

On 8 December 2021, 11 SBPA members met 12 Canadian publishers via Zoom to present on the publishing industries in the respective countries as well as discuss possibilities for potential collaborations. This was jointly organised with Livres Canada Books.

Conclusion

The Secretariat is committed to provide value-added services and events for our members. We remain open to suggestions and proposals from members.

Reported by
Cecilia Woo and Wen-yi Lee
Secretariat

6. Committees & Projects

6A. Membership

Report as of 14 July 2022, for 2021-2022

Introduction

The Membership Committee investigates, processes and recommends applications for membership. The aims of the Membership Committee are:

1. To oversee an active membership recruitment drive to attract new members to the Association
2. To ensure that the membership growth remains healthy; and
3. To promote the benefits of being a SBPA Member.

Activities in 2021-2022

Kathy Low is the current Chairperson of the Membership Subcommittee.

Supported by the rest of the Executive Committee, the new members recruited into the Association were Storytel, a Stockholm-based e-book and audiobook subscription service, and Muse Pte Ltd, a Singapore-based media production company.

In early 2022, SBPA reached out to companies related to the publishing industry such as book distributors, bookstores, and e-commerce websites to expand the pool of potential members.

Please see the table below for the movement in membership numbers in SBPA from the last report on 13 August 2021 to 31 July 2022.

Membership

Members as of 13 August 2021	70
Members left in 2021-2022 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Balestier Press 	1
Members joined in 2021-2022 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Storytel • Muse Pte Ltd 	2
Current Members (as of 31 July 2022)	71

Notes

The committee explored a membership drive in May 2022. The committee proposed waiving the entrance fee (worth \$500) for new members. Under this proposal, the waiver is exclusive for companies with turnover below 1 million and less than 50 employees, and on the condition that the membership cannot be cancelled for the first 3 years.

Under the current SBPA constitution, the entrance fee cannot be waived. The Ex-Co deliberated this proposal and decided to add a clause to the constitution in the next AGM for Ex-Co to reserve the right to waive the entrance fee for new members.

In the meantime, the committee proposed to waive the BookData membership fee (worth \$200 / per year for 5 ISBNs and above) for incoming members. This encourages new members to sign up for BookData while also joining as a member of SBPA. This was brought up in the ExCo meeting on 6 July 2022 and passed by a majority.

Balestier Press decided not to renew their membership due to a shift in their priorities.

Next Steps

The committee will execute the above proposal to recruit new members after the clause is passed in the next AGM.

The Membership Subcommittee is open to proposals and suggestions from members on how to improve the value of SBPA membership, to retain existing members and encourage more companies to join. Please feel free to approach the Secretariat with your proposals.

Reported by
Kathy Low
Chairperson
Membership Subcommittee

With input from Cecilia Woo, Secretariat

6. Committees & Projects

6B. Training & Professional Development

Report for August 2021 – August 2022

Due to the restrictions of the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, there were limited opportunities to conduct training sessions. However, on 28 May 2022, SBPA successfully conducted the Book Data Workshop during the launch of the Singapore BookData project.

Rachael McDiarmid and SBPA committee member Peter Schoppert carried out the free two-hour workshop at the National Library titled “Is Your Book Keeping the Right Company? Book Categories for the 21st Century”. The session intended to increase awareness of book classification questions, including: Were books classified alongside the right titles? Who decides where a book is shelved? In which sections do books appear in online booksellers? How can you efficiently tell bookshops or librarians that a book might be suitable to feature on a specific themed listing? Why do we continue to use categories and classifications that originated in the UK and US?

The session was attended by thirty-one participants comprising various figures of the book industry, from publishers to distributors, who were engaged on the significance of metadata in searching, transmitting and cataloguing book information. The workshop benefitted the various industry stakeholders by enabling easier classification of books and other such printed material based on categories such as genre and country of origin.

Reported by
Edmund Wee
Chairperson
Training and Professional Development

With input from
Cecilia Woo and Lee Wen-yi
Secretariat

6. Committees & Projects

6C. Internship Programme

Reports on the 2022 programme

The programme was conducted in a hybrid mode, remote and onsite, over ten weeks from 18 May to 22 July 2022. The subcommittee proposed changing the previous format of 5 full days to 10 half-days. The changes are also based on feedback from interns citing fatigue after too long hours over a Zoom session.

The below table illustrates the companies hiring interns from 2015 to the present.

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Companies	6	9	7	10	12	4	15	15
Applications	117	66	67	129	136	120	239	85
Interns	9	17	14	19	24	13	37	26
Placement (%)	7	25	21	15	17	11	15	31
Topics	14	16	16	15	16	16	31	33
Speakers	14	15	15	15	17	18	46	34
Income	Free	Free	Free	Free	\$350	\$0	\$520	\$1,470
Format	Phys	Phys	Phys	Phys	Phys	Zoom	Zoom	Hybrid

Healthy sign-up rates for participants, partially due to better publicity and perhaps a stronger programme. More publishers signed up in response to an email from the Secretariat encouraging more members to host interns.

The ten sessions of the Internship Programme were

- (1) Overview of the Publishing Industry
- (2) Publishing: Part 1
- (3) Publishing: Part 2

- (4) Publishing: Part 3
- (5) Design
- (6) Editorial
- (7) Sales & Marketing
- (8) Sector Partners
- (9) Field Trips
- (10) Closing Event

These were packaged as the SBPA Book Publishing Course. Also open to participants beyond the interns, the courses were priced at \$20 per staff per session and limited to 2 staff per Member Company. Members who signed up for all three sessions were charged a special rate of \$50 per person while those who signed up for ten sessions were charged a special rate of \$100. The Secretariat promoted the course through its regular communication channels (e-mail and WhatsApp) and on social media. In total, 7 companies sent 9 staff to attend at least one session of the Book Publishing Course.

The subcommittee also aimed to refresh the programme, focusing on two aspects. Firstly, to expand on the diversity of the genres, languages, sectors, as well as roles within publishing and the literary arts. For example, it was the first time featuring comics publishing, journal publishing, non-English-language publishing, as well as audio books and literary arts programming. Secondly, to focus on the practicalities of getting a job in the industry by adding a session with HR that addresses things like CV, interviews, etc.

Please see **Annex A** for the full programme.

Feedback from Participants - Midpoint Checks

Summarily speaking, most of the interns found the internship programme to be enriching and interesting for them, especially with regard to learning new skills which they had little to no previous experiences in. In this aspect, it is noteworthy to acknowledge that this programme enabled most of the interns to step outside of their comfort zone and embrace learning of new skill sets and knowledge.

As the interns continued to learn more over the duration of this programme, they also shared the varying degrees of guidance and intervention by their immediate supervisors and managers with regard to training. While some stated that they received ample support, others mentioned that little support was provided and that much of their efforts to learn were self-

directed and self-driven. Nonetheless, it is still crucial to recognise that the interns adapted well to their different working environments despite the varying levels of guidance and training. On part of the publishers, it would be ideal for them to provide a comprehensive system of training for interns should the need arise; this depends from intern to intern, based on their proficiencies and existing skill sets and talents.

One particular issue raised by most interns were vague job descriptions in the recruitment drive at the start of the year. While it is important to acknowledge that interns will be expected to learn and take up various duties at work, some interns felt that they were unprepared to have tasks of various natures assigned to them because they had generally assumed that the job descriptions would aptly describe their responsibilities in the workplace.

We also welcome suggestions from members to improve the training programme. Please contact the Secretariat at info@singaporebookpublishers.sg with your ideas.

Acknowledgements

The SBPA Secretariat would like to thank the following persons/organisations for lending their time and support to this meaningful and educational initiative.

- Schools (NUS, NTU, SMU, NAFA and University of Toronto) whose students actively participated in the internship programme
- SBPA Executive Committee who supported the Internship Programme from the start and provided useful advice
- Trainers who volunteered to share their experiences with the interns:
 - Mr Peter Schoppert
 - Ms Cecilia Woo
 - Ms Mindy Pang
 - Mr Mark Garlinghouse
 - Mr Rick Lee
 - Mr Anil Chandy
 - Mr Ang Jin Yong
 - Mr Ali Semait
 - Mr Vijayanand Thamocharan
 - Mr Yeoh Cheng Poh
 - Mr Melvin Neo
 - Ms Viency Lee
 - Mr Shalu Wasu
 - Ms Christine Chong
 - Mr Andrew Fong
 - Ms Elaine Ee
 - Mr Joseph Tey

- Mr Edmund Wee
 - Mr Nikson Low
 - Ms Shoba Nair
 - Ms Arin Fong
 - Ms Khoo Yee Hong
 - Ms Shariza Kamil
 - Ms Celine Chow
 - Ms Sim Wan Hui
 - Ms Lo Hwei Shan
-
- Mr Edwin Ng, Ms Tan Pei Woon and the team at Markono Print Media for taking the time and effort to introduce our participants to the book printing process.

 - Chua Gek Huay of Kinokuniya who kindly hosted the participants at the bookstore.

 - Ms Averil Tan, Mervin Ang and Michelle Lau of National Library Board who efficiently organised the trip for the participants; Ms Barbara Quek who provided an insightful overview of NLB's resources and content as well as an introduction to legal deposit.

 - Everyone else who was involved in this programme and who helped out in one way or the other. Your efforts and support are much appreciated.

Reported by
Christine Chong and Nikson Low
Internship Programme Subcommittee

With input from
Cecilia Woo and Lee Wen-yi
Secretariat

Annex A - Programme

Internship Programme 2022	
17 May - Welcome and Overview of the Publishing Industry (Virtual)	
Time	Session
10.00 - 10.30 AM	Opening Remarks
10.30 - 11.00 AM	Introduction to the World of Publishing
11.00 - 11.15 AM	Introduction to SBPA
11.15 - 11.30 AM	Break
11.30 - 11.45 AM	Administrative Briefing
11.45 - 12.00 PM	Group Discussions (Breakout Rooms)
End of Session	
27 May - Publishing: Part 1 (Virtual)	
Time	Session
9.00 - 9.45 AM	Children's Book Publishing
9.45 - 10.00 AM	Break
10.00 - 10.15 AM	STM Publishing: General Ecosystem
10.15 - 10.30 AM	Academic Book Publishing
10.30 - 10.45 AM	Academic Journals
10.45 - 11.00 AM	Break
11.00 - 11.15 AM	MTL Publications: Chinese
11.15 - 11.30 AM	MTL Publications: Malay
11.30 - 11.45 AM	MTL Publications: Tamil
End of Session	
3 June - Publishing: Part 2 (Virtual)	
Time	Session
10.00 - 10.30 AM	Educational Publishing

10.30 - 10.45 AM	Break
10.45 - 11.15 AM	Trade & General Publishing
11.15 - 11.30 AM	Break
11.30 - 12.00 PM	Comic Books
End of Session	

10 June - Publishing: Part 3 (Virtual)

Time	Session
10.00 - 10.30 AM	Audiobooks
10.30 - 10.45 AM	Break
10.45 - 11.15 AM	New Media
11.15 - 11.30 AM	Break
11.30 - 12.00 PM	Introduction to Copyrights
End of Session	

17 June - Design (Virtual)

Time	Session
10.00 - 10.30 AM	Art Books
10.30 - 10.45 AM	Break
10.45 - 11.15 AM	Book Illustrations
11.15 - 11.30 AM	Break
11.30 - 12.00 PM	Book Cover Design
End of Session	

24 June - Editorial (Virtual)

Time	Session
9.00 - 9.45 AM	Midpoint Check-In
9.45 - 10.00 AM	Break
10.00 - 10.30 AM	Introduction to Editorial Roles

10.30 - 10.45 AM	Break
10.45 - 11.15 AM	Introduction to Manuscript Editing
11.15 - 11.30 AM	Break
11.30 - 12.00 PM	Fiction and Non-Fiction Editing
End of Session	

1 July - Sales & Marketing (Virtual)

Time	Session
10.00 - 10.30 AM	Marketing (Advertising, PR, Event, Publicity)
10.30 - 10.45 AM	Break
10.45 - 11.15 AM	Digital Marketing (Social Media, EDM, etc.)
11.15 - 11.30 AM	Break
11.30 - 12.00 PM	Singapore BookData System
End of Session	

8 July - Sector Partners (Virtual)

Time	Session
10.00 - 10.30 AM	Literary Programmes & Academy
10.30 - 10.45 AM	Break
10.45 - 11.15 AM	Singapore Writers Festival
11.15 - 11.30 AM	Break
11.30 - 12.00 PM	The NAC Literary Department: Support for Literature
End of Session	

15 July - Field Trips (Physical)

Time	Session
9.00 - 11.00 AM	Marketing Video, Volunteer Video, Overview of NLB Resources & Content, and Introduction to Legal Deposit at National Library Building
11.00 - 12.30 PM	Lunch at Bugis Junction
12.30 - 1.00 PM	Buffer / Shopping at Kinokuniya (Suggested)

1.00 - 2.00 PM	Kinokuniya Bookstore at Bugis Junction
2.00 - 3.00 PM	Travel
3.00 - 6.00 PM	Printing & Production at Markono Printing Plant
End of Session	
22 July - Closing Event (Physical)	
Time	Session
10.00 - 10.15 AM	Life in Publishing: Perspectives from Former Interns
10.15 - 10.30 AM	Life in Publishing: Perspectives from Former Interns
10.30 - 10.45 PM	Why I Joined the Book Industry: Perspectives from Publishers
10.45 - 11.00 PM	Why I Joined the Book Industry: Perspectives from Publishers
11.00 - 12.00 PM	Facilitated Networking Session (5 tables)
12.00 - 12.30 PM	Presentation of Certificates & Closing Remarks
12.30 - 1.00 PM	Meet & Chat with Lunch
End of Session	

6. Committees & Projects

6D. Book Fairs

Report on completed trade events as of 30 June 2022

1. International Book Fairs

Although COVID-19 has been declared endemic in 2022 the overseas book fairs for late 2021 and early 2022 were not participated by many due to the Delta and Omicron variants circulating. Some of the international Book Fairs were postponed due to the surge in infection numbers and had limited participation. We do not foresee any overseas traveling for international book fairs except in the late quarter of 2022. SBPA will be participating in the Frankfurt Book Fair 2022. Information to participate has been disseminated to all members.

2. Local Book Fairs

There were no local book fairs organised, as SBPA was busy organising the BuySinglit Bazaars in 2021 and 2022.

3. #BuySinglit 2021/22

Three local book fairs promoting Singlit titles were organised:

- Mother Tongue Language (MTL) Book Bazaar from 13th September to 19th September 2021 at Programme Zone, Basement 1, Central Public Library, National Library Building from 11 am to 6 pm.
- Children's Book Bazaar from 29 November 2021 to 5 December 2021 at the same venue and time as the MTL Book Bazaar.
- Singapore Literature Book Bazaar from 7 March to 20 March 2022 at the Arts House from 11 am to 6 pm. Details were circulated to selected participants based on the theme of the bazaar to participate. A book catalogue was produced for each bazaar and available online too. All events are available to view on SBPA's Facebook and YouTube channel. The next submission phase for Singlit funding will be at the end of 2022.

The subcommittee was headed by Syed Ali Semait, with assistance from Ms. Betty Tan & Ms. Jaye Sim, and supported by the secretariat staff.

Reported By
Syed Ali Semait
Chairperson
Book Fairs Subcommittee

6. Committees & Projects

6E. Book Data

Report for 2021-2022

Database of Singapore Titles

SBPA obtained a grant from Enterprise Singapore (ESG) to establish the SBPA Book Data System. The System is now deployed and was officially launched on 28th May 2022 at the National Library by our President Max Phua. Mr. Ng Cher Pong, CEO of the National Library Board (NLB) and Ms. Kit Ker, Deputy Director of Enterprise Singapore (ESG), were the guests of honour. To date, 224,075 ISBNs have been deployed and can be accessed at <https://www.bookdata.sg/>.

For more information, please contact Melvin Choo or
Email bookdata@singaporebookpublishers.sg

We also conducted a Thema Classification workshop, “Is Your Book Keeping The Right Company?” This 2-hour workshop engaged with various figures of the book industry, from publishers to distributors, on the significance of metadata in searching, transmitting and cataloguing book information. More importantly, these efforts would benefit the various stakeholders of this industry by allowing for easier classification of books and other such printed material, based on several categories such as genre and country of origin. More information can be found in the Training and Professional Development report.

Reported by
Melvin Choo
Chairperson
Book Data & Information Subcommittee

6. Committees & Projects

6F. Singapore Book Awards

Report on Singapore Book Awards 2021

Overview

The Singapore Book Awards is an annual industry award programme for books published in Singapore. Held annually since 2016, the Book Awards shine the spotlight on the quality of published works and celebrate the achievements of the local publishing industry.

Due to the ongoing restrictions of the COVID-19 pandemic, the 2021 Singapore Book Awards Ceremony was held as a hybrid event on the afternoon of 24 September, with 50 in-person attendees at Jurong Town Hall and a livestream on SBPA's Facebook page.

The Book Awards Ceremony was opened with pre-recorded speeches from Mr. Maliki Osman, Second Minister for Education and Foreign Affairs, and Ms. Chonrungsee Chalermchaikit, President of the Publishers and Booksellers Association of Thailand (PUBAT), which is the current President of the ASEAN Book Publishers Association (ABPA).

There were 109 titles submitted by 26 publishers, and the titles covered a range of topics including Asian folklore and fantasy, autobiography and biography, creative non-fiction, graphic novels, Singapore history, local community history, local heritage cuisine, textbooks, supplementary educational titles and local architectural heritage.

Award Categories and Winners

This year, SBPA introduced a hybrid book category as well as a Readers' Choice vote.

The categories of the 2021 Book Awards were:

- Best Hybrid Book
- Best Audiobook
- Best Illustrated Non-Fiction Title
- Best Literary Work
- Best Young Persons Title (7—18 years old)
- Best Education Title
- Best Picture Book (5—7 years old)
- Best Non-Fiction Title
- Best Book Cover Design
- Readers' Choice Award 2021
- Book of the Year 2020

The winners of the award categories, chosen from 38 finalists, are as follows:

Category	Title	Publisher
Best Hybrid Book	One Havelock Square	The State Courts of Singapore
Best Audiobook	Impractical Uses of Cake	Epigram Books
Best Illustrated Non-Fiction Title	How To Cook Everything Singaporean	Epigram Books
Best Literary Work	And Softly Go The Crossings	Penguin Random House SEA
Best Young Person's Title (7—18 years old)	Sherlock Sam and the Seafaring Scourge on Sentosa	Epigram Books
Best Education Title	Under the stars: astrophysics for everyone	World Scientific Publishing Co.
Best Picture Book	Captain Green and the Tree Machine	Marshall Cavendish International (Asia)
Best Non-Fiction Title	lives & times of HRH	NUS Press
Best Book Cover Design	Early Hawkers in Singapore: 1920s to 1930s	Focus Publishing

Readers' Choice 2021	think! Mathematics Textbooks 2A and 2B	Shing Lee Publishers
Book of the Year 2021	And Softly Go The Crossings	Penguin SEA

Special honorary mentions were awarded. How To Cook Everything Singaporean and The Art of Charlie Chan Hock Chye, published by Epigram Books, were awarded Honorary Mentions for Book of the Year and Best Book Cover Design respectively, while Tusitala was awarded an Honorary Mention for the Best Hybrid Book category for Our Blood Runs Red Just Like Yours.

Media Coverage and Marketing

Besides posts across SBPA's social media publicising the ceremony and each finalist, the awards ceremony and the awards winners were also featured in The Straits Times (print and online editions), as well as covered by international publishing media agency Publishing Perspectives. They were also promoted on partner pages and social media by Amazon, Epigram Bookshop, Singapore Book Council, and Lazada. A series of pop-up displays featuring the ceremony, shortlisted books and Readers' Choice voting were also featured at public libraries in Ang Mo Kio, Marine Parade, Tampines Regional Library, and Bedok.

Acknowledgements

We would like to thank the following companies for their support:

- Corporate Sponsors: Rakuten Kobo, HP Singapore, Markono Print Media and Storytel Singapore
- Official E-commerce Partner: Lazada
- Event Partners: Kinokuniya Books, Amazon Singapore and Times Bookstores/GoGuru.sg
- Event Supporters: Singapore Book Council, Info-communications Media Development Authority, National Reading Movement, National Library Board Singapore
- Official Production Partner: Muse

Their generosity and kind support ensured that we were able to organise an exciting and interesting virtual awards ceremony this year.

Conclusion

The Secretariat is always open to feedback on how to improve the Singapore Book Awards.

Please feel free to send your suggestions to the Secretariat by email at info@singaporebookpublishers.sg.

Reported by
Catherine Khoo
Chairperson
Singapore Book Awards

With input from
Cecilia Woo and Lee Wen-yi
Secretariat

6. Committees & Projects

6G. Government Relations

Report on Government engagement activities from July 2021 to August 2022

An important function of SBPA is to communicate about our industry to the government, to ensure that the legal and regulatory environment protects copyright creators and contributes to a vibrant, active books ecosystem that supports Singapore's diversity and values.

Our policy agenda has been quite consistent over the past seven years. We have had six points to pursue:

1. To give industry feedback to Singapore's law- and policymakers on the operation of copyright in Singapore, so as to amend and adjust Singapore's copyright regime to make a more healthy reading and publishing ecosystem in Singapore and to continue to attract publishing investment to Singapore
2. To seek strategic dialogue with the Ministry of Education to have a better, more functional and forward-looking partnership between MOE and our educational publishers
3. To seek support for continued digitalisation of our industry — at all points of the value chain, with the understanding that print books remain essential, especially for young learners, and are anyway, the outcomes of digital processes and affordances
4. To find ways to ensure the continued health of local content-creation ecosystems in vernacular languages and English
5. To continually be vigilant of the health of the book retail and book supply chain; and
6. To work with government partners to further promote literacy, reading, reading for pleasure and reading to satisfy curiosity.

The review of Singapore's Copyright Law that began in 2016 reached its culmination, with the coming into force of the new Copyright Act on November 21, 2022. SBPA gave feedback into this process from the early stages of public consultation to commenting on the draft legislation, in coordination with the International Publishers Association, the ASEAN Book Publishers Association and other groups.

The new law has many implications for our Singapore publishers, most importantly:

- It extends the moral right of attribution to creators for the first time in Singapore law, which means that if publishers do not intend to credit creators for their work, they must deal with the matter of credit in their contracts.

- It gives the right for teachers, students and educators to copy material available free on the internet, and distribute this within the MOE networks like the Student Learning System. Publishers should be aware of this when they or their authors make material freely available online. SBPA feedback helped clarify and narrow slightly the meaning of “free online” in the new law.
- It gives the right to businesses to use publishers’ content to train machine learning models, and other forms of text-and-data mining, if they have lawful access to that content. This is an additional use that many publishers cover under supplementary license; it is hard to imagine that AI users will seek license for this use now that they are given the right to make this copying under the exception. Publishers should take note when they price access to their digital products.

We are anticipating the change announced in 2021 that Singapore will start collecting GST on overseas ecommerce packages under a value of S\$400, beginning in 2023. For some time SBPA has argued for such a move, not because we like taxes on books, but because the lack of this taxation practice gave an unfair advantage to overseas online booksellers like Book Depository and Amazon. Giving them a structural advantage (a 7% tilt in their favour) hurts local content in the market and undermines local physical and electronic commerce. The old practice damaged the book retail and the book supply chain in Singapore.

Singapore is in a decided minority of countries that charges GST for books. We believe that GST should not be applied to books, but if it is to be so, then it should be applied to overseas sellers as well as local ones.

We held a dialogue with the Ministry of Education in May 2022 that raised a number of issues, including the operation of the “internet exception”, textbook pricing and sourcing of mother tongue content. We have seen some changes in policy in the latter field, though textbook pricing remains woefully low, despite the large increase in printing and logistics costs faced by our sector.

As part of the new Copyright Act, our publishing collective management society, CLASS or Copyright Licensing and Administration Society of Singapore, now operates under a government license, from IPOS. We strongly encourage members to familiarise themselves with CLASS operations and governance. CLASS is governed by its members, and publishers are a key category of members. Membership is free, and we are hopeful that CLASS will be able to develop new licenses that will benefit copyright users and creators.

Our recent dialogues with the National Library Board have introduced the prospect of new initiatives with NLB to further promote reading and reading culture, including the culture of

buying books for the home. NLB has been charged by the political leadership to create more mother tongue content. They have tried various schemes to do so that do not help build a healthy ecosystem in our view, and we continue to seek ways to engage with them.

Reported by
Max Phua and Peter Schoppert
Government Relations Subcommittee

6. Committees & Projects

6H. Copyright

Report of activities from August 2021 to July 2022

The big news, of course, was the reading in Parliament, the approval and then the coming into force of the new Copyright Act. Please see the Government Relations report for more detail on the new Act and what it means for Singapore publishers.

The other development over the last year was the discovery of e-book piracy of local and overseas books on the various online shopping platforms, particularly Shopee and to a lesser extent Lazada. This is particularly galling because many of the ebooks pirated on Shopee are available free to Singaporeans (under license) via the National Library Board.

Shopee was named in the US government's "notorious markets" report as follows: "In Southeast Asia, many Shopee sites have poor, slow notice and takedown procedures. Merchant vetting is weak, repeat sellers are common and penalties are non-deterrent. Poor cooperation with Shopee for IP owners on their own investigations into infringing Shopee merchants is a major challenge in some of their country sites."

The same has been noticed by Singapore-based publishers of Shopee Singapore. Accordingly in March 2022 we engaged directly with the Terence Pang, Singapore COO of Shopee, and met with legal representatives of Shopee. As a result of this meeting, all product listings with the word "e-books" were taken off the site. Vendors selling e-books were suspended and their accounts reviewed. If vendors "survive" the review but continue to try to post e-books they will be fined and/or banned from the platform. E-books is still a search term, but as of this morning most of the results are e-book devices or printed books.

While this was a good victory, it was a decidedly partial one. The use of search term filtering to fight e-book piracy does not catch every usage, and can only succeed temporarily, as vendors find new language to avoid filters, etc. These are the next steps to pursue in the following SBPA Exco term:

- To study the feasibility of whether SBPA and/or CLASS can represent publishers in their dealings with the ecommerce platforms, to monitor for piracy, and issue take-down notices
- To continue to educate members and provide support to them to deal with e-book piracy

Reported by
Peter Schoppert
Copyright Subcommittee

END.