

# **“The Flowering of Human Spirit”**: How Festivals Shape Our City of Literature

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Director

# Presentation Structure

- A Festival City
- Edinburgh City of Literature: 2004 to Today
- Our Book Festivals
- Effective Partnerships
- Potential Collaborations





## **“Edinburgh is a Story”**

“This is an old place being forever remade.  
This is a new place forever being born.  
Your time here will become another haunting  
Another story for us to tell  
No beginning – no end.”

by Hannah Lavery



# Edinburgh's Major Festivals

- Edinburgh International Festival (1947)
- Edinburgh Festival Fringe (1947)
- Edinburgh International Film Festival (1947)
- The Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo (1950)
- Edinburgh Jazz & Blues Festival (1978)
- Edinburgh International Book Festival (1983)
- Edinburgh Science Festival (1989)
- Scottish International Storytelling Festival (1989)
- Edinburgh International Children's Festival (1990)
- Edinburgh's Hogmanay (1993)
- Edinburgh Art Festival (2004)



This article is more than 21 years old

## Edinburgh crowned the capital of literature



View over Edinburgh from the Castle

Association

Oct 2004 11.18 BST

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## Edinburgh books literary title

Edinburgh has been named the world's first City of Literature by the United Nations' cultural body Unesco.

Scottish Culture Minister Patricia Ferguson expressed delight at the decision and said it confirmed the city's literary credentials.



The campaign team said Edinburg strong credentials

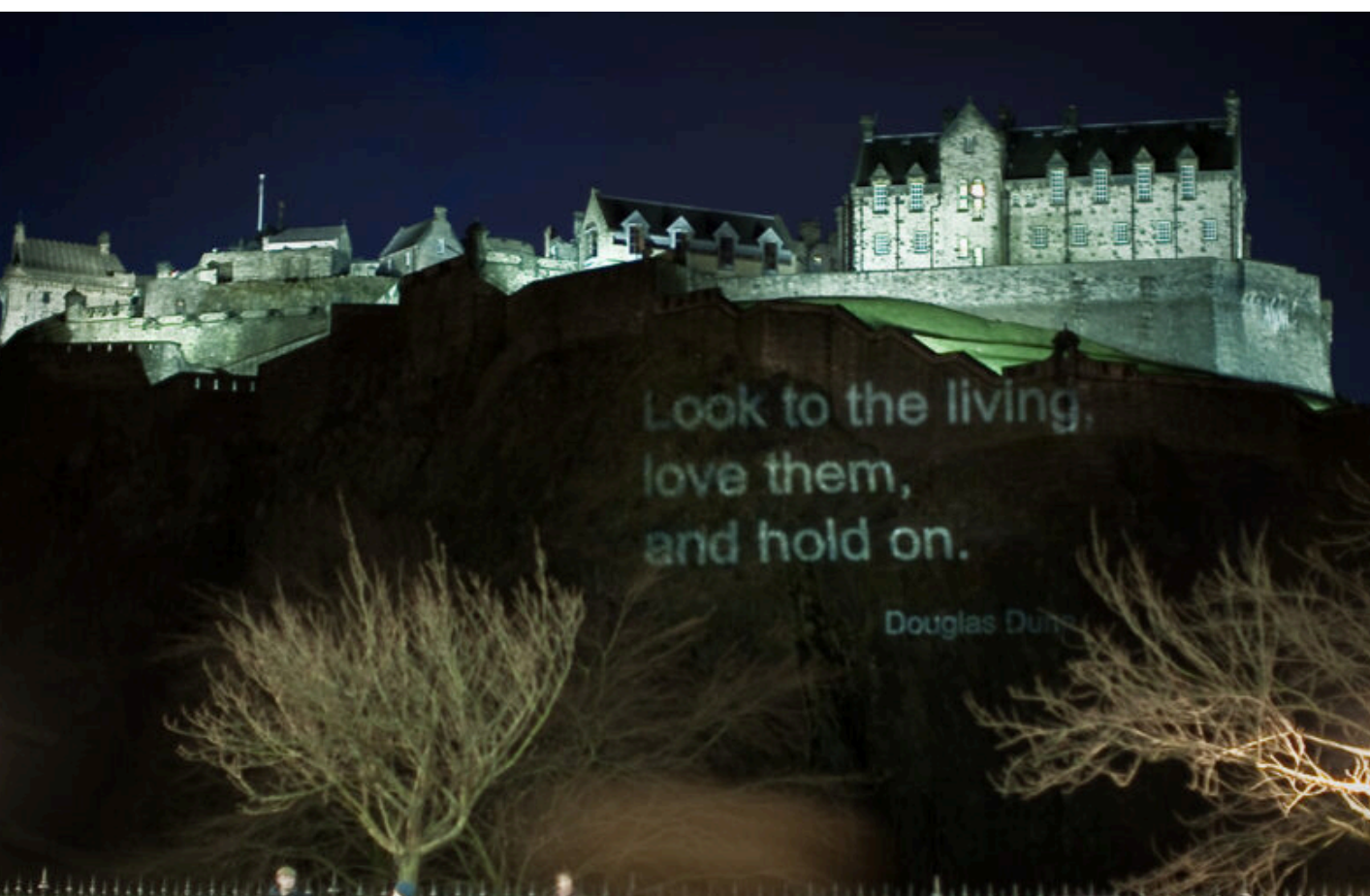
# The World's First UNESCO City of Literature

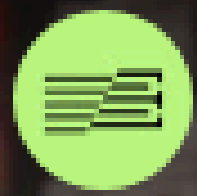
"Our idea in offering this title, UNESCO City of Literature, is for its continuing and proliferating use across the globe. It is not intended to be an exclusive mark for Edinburgh but rather a mantle to don for those whose past merits it and whose ambition is up to it.

The idea of Cities of Literature will find enthusiasts worldwide. We now announce that Edinburgh, capital of Scotland, is ready to welcome partners in developing a worldwide chain of cities of literature."

# Edinburgh UNESCO City of Literature Trust

- Non-governmental non-profit
- Partially funded by our local council, the rest through charitable giving
- 250 partners over 20 years
- Reading campaigns (93,000 free books over five campaigns)
- Placemaking activities
- Writer development
- Literary heritage
- A very small team!





Welcome to the 2025 Edinburgh International Book Festival



Copy link



But you might not know that while you're here,

Watch on  YouTube

# Edinburgh International Book Festival

- Founded 1983
- Largest of its kind in the world
- 700 events in 2025
- Welcomes major international authors
- Hosts YA Prize
- Extensive outreach work with communities
- Cross-artform commissioning



# CYMERA: Scotland's Festival of Fantasy, Science Fiction and Horror Writing

- Launched in 2019
- Genre focus
- Exciting and innovative event programming
- Strong, committed audience
- Writer development for genre authors

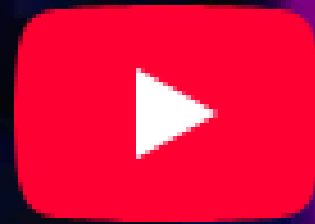




# Push the Boat Out Festival



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Watch on  YouTube

# Push the Boat Out: Edinburgh's International Poetry Festival

- Launched in 2021
- Every November
- Collaborations with hip hop, visual and performance artists
- Commissioning
- Writer development programmes



# First Dates: Edinburgh's Romance Festival



- Launched in 2024
- Focuses discussions on queer, feminist and subversive interpretations of romance
- Hosted by bookshops

## Working in partnership: Edinburgh City of Literature & Book Festivals

- Story Shop
- Inklusion Guide
- Commissioning support
- International links
- Event sponsorship
- Advocacy
- Impact Study

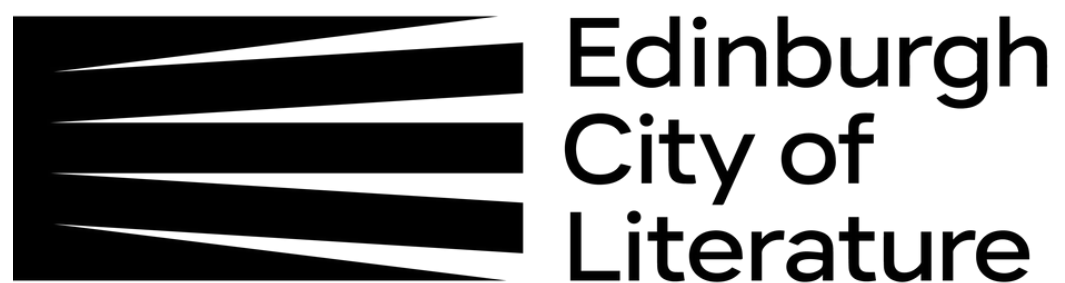




## How can we help?

- Come to Edinburgh, we'll show you around!
- Recommendations for delegate programmes such as Momentum or Global Ink
- Author Travel Fund from Scottish Books International
- Our door is always open





**Thank you very much.  
Please stay in touch!**

**皆さん、本当にありがとうございました。  
今後ともどうぞよろしく願っています。**

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