

Sveriges Författarförbund's guide for authors and literary translators

To be an author or a translator is to be in the business of the most fundamental thing there is: words. Words are a precondition for thought, for self-expression and for taking up our place in the world. Words enable us to reflect and act accordingly: to set the course of our own lives, instead of living at the behest of others. And words are a sine qua non for discovering and speaking new truths about ourselves as human beings.

The freedom to speak as we choose—the freedom of expression—is therefore essential. Around the globe, those at the forefront of the fight for free speech have been, most often, authors and translators. This means that we authors and translators also need each other—plus clear societal frameworks and support—in order to do our work and shoulder the full responsibility our professions imply.

In Sweden we have, over many years, built up just such a literary ecosystem, to which we all belong. It is critical for you to be fully informed about how this system works in order to pursue your work in the best possible way.

This guide from Sveriges Författarförbund is for all literary creators: authors of fiction and non-fiction, poets, translators and others. Welcome!

*Sveriges Författarförbund
15 December 2023*

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About Sveriges Författarförbund

History

Sveriges Författareförening was formed in 1893 and originally included all kinds of writers. The regulations were amended in the 1930s and translators and non-fiction writers were excluded. This led to the formations of Minerva (for science and popular science writers) in 1946, Sveriges Ungdomsförfattarförening (for children's and young people's authors) in 1948 and Svenska Översättarförbundet (for literary translators) in 1954. In 1956, these four associations merged to form the Fria Litterära Yrkesutövares Centralorganisation (FLYCO), which in 1970 was restructured into the present Sveriges Författarförbund, also known as the Swedish Writers' Union.

Today, Sveriges Författarförbund has around 3,400 members. Since 1989, its secretariat has been located in the Författarnas och Översättarnas Hus on Drottninggatan in central Stockholm. The building contains a large conference room that provides a venue for member meetings, classes, social mixers, parties and lectures.

Our mission

The mission of Sveriges Författarförbund is to safeguard the economic and moral interests of its members. In particular, according to its regulations, it shall:

- promote the right of its members to a reasonable return on their work by constantly monitoring copyright and copyright legislation;
- through agreements with counterparties, create economic and social security for its members as individuals and as a professional body;
- oversee members' moral rights so that their works are not misrepresented or made public in ways not intended by them as authors;
- constantly defend freedom of expression and thereby ensure the right to free debate;
- protect and assist members who in the practice of their profession find themselves in conflict with counterparties or authorities or encounter other difficulties.

Board

The Board of Sveriges Författarförbund is composed of professionally active writers and translators. The board consists of the president, eight ordinary members and two deputy members.

Secretariat

The Secretariat of Sveriges Författarförbund provides support and counselling on financial, legal and social issues that concern literary professional practice.

To contact the secretariat, call +46-(0)8-545 132 00 or send an e-mail to info@forfattarforbundet.se. For more detailed information, go to www.forfattarforbundet.se.

Sections

Sveriges Författarförbund has no local or district chapters, but it does have four sections:

- BULT (for children's and young people's literature)
- Minerva (for non-fiction)
- Skönlitterära Sektionen (for fiction)
- Översättarsektionen (for translators).

The mission of each section is to monitor developments in its area and raise section-specific issues at Board level.

Sectional prizes

Through its sections, Sveriges Författarförbund awards four annual literary prizes:

- *Katapultpriset* (the Catapult Prize), for the year's best Swedish fiction debut (Skönlitterära Sektionen)
- *Slangbellan* (the Slingshot Prize), for the year's best debut in the children's and young people's literature genre (BULT)
- Translation of the Year, for a topical translation performance (Översättarsektionen)
- the Elsa Thulin Memorial Translation Prize, for outstanding achievement in translation (Översättarsektionen).
- Other prizes

Madeleine Gustafsson Prize for Literary Criticism

The Madeleine Gustafsson Prize was instituted in 2018 and first awarded in November 2019. This award goes to a literary critic writing in Swedish who has been professionally active during the preceding year.

Radio Prize

Sveriges Författarförbund's Radio Prize is awarded to literary creators who have contributed to strengthening and expanding the position of sound broadcasting as a medium for performances of fiction, non-fiction or children's and young people's literature.

Regional representatives

Since 2011, Swedish state funds for arts and culture have been allocated according to so-called regional cultural plans. Sveriges Författarförbund appoints regional representatives from among its members to oversee its interests when these plans are developed. The appointments are time-limited and based upon which regions are next in line to renew their cultural plans.

The Library Council

Biblioteksrådet (the Library Council) is an expert body and advises the Board of Sveriges Författarförbund on library matters.

International operations

Sveriges Författarförbund has extensive international operations, focused primarily on exchanges with writers and writers' organizations in other countries. Foremost responsibility for this work rests with its four sections, which all work on international projects to varying degrees.

Sveriges Författarförbund decides on proposals for international collaborations and events received from other organizations, embassies and individual members. It also receives a number of individual international visits every year, and in connection with these visits often arranges gatherings for members with presentations by international writers.

Sveriges Författarförbund is a member of several international cooperation organizations and attends the annual meetings of (for example) the European Writers' Council (EWC), the International Authors' Forum (IAF) and the European Council of Literary Translators' Associations (CEATL). Sveriges Författarförbund is also a member of the board of the Baltic Centre for Writers and Translators (BCWT).

Membership

Legal counselling

As a member of Sveriges Författarförbund, you are entitled to legal counselling. Counselling is limited to those matters that concern the industry, i.e. writers' and/or translators' exercise of their profession. This means, for example, that we do not deal with matters of family law or other non-industry-related areas of legal expertise.

Courses and seminars

Discounted and free courses and seminars.

Magazine

Sveriges Författarförbund publishes the quarterly literary magazine *Författaren*. The magazine, for authors and translators, is politically unaffiliated.

Mailings for members

Members receive periodic e-mails informing them of about upcoming activities, currently available grants and scholarships, members' meetings of the sections and other events.

Help with tax returns

Free filing advice and an annual free course on how to file your income tax return.

Residency grants

Sveriges Författarförbund offers grants for residencies at the following locations, available solely to its members:

- Runmarö Island in the Stockholm archipelago (month-long residencies from May to October)
- Ariane Wahlgrens Hus in Athens (Acropolis), Greece (two-week residencies, year-round)
- Kavalla, Greece (month-long residencies, March to November)

Financial support

Members are eligible to apply for small stipends from benevolent funds connected to Sveriges Författarförbund.

Cottages to rent

Three small cottages on Runmarö Island in the Stockholm archipelago are available for members to rent from May to October.

Gothenburg Book Fair discounts

Free admission to the Gothenburg Book Fair upon production of a Sveriges Författarförbund membership card; discounted price on the seminar card.

Member activities

The board and of Sveriges Författarförbund organize members' meetings that include lectures, classes and social mixers.

Getting involved as an elected representative

As an elected representative, you have the opportunity to serve on various boards, committees and working groups. Our elected representatives are active in many different arenas: the sectional boards, the Library Council, the editorial board of *Författaren* magazine, expert advisory groups for Sveriges Författarfond (a body that administers the Public Lending Right and other grants for authors in Sweden) Swedish Authors' Fund), grant committees, international cooperation organizations, delegation trips abroad, etc.

Membership is also an act of solidarity. The larger our numbers, the more forcefully we can stand united for freedom of expression, intellectual property rights and other issues that affect our professional standing and our standing in society.

Annual meeting

Members may attend and vote at the annual meeting. Financial support for travel and lodging is available to members outside the Stockholm area.

Residential centres and rooms for writers

Författarnas Gästhem – rooms for international writers

Författarnas Gästhem (the Writer's House) at Drottninggatan 88C in Stockholm is open to authors, playwrights, translators, publishers, etc. visiting from abroad. Room reservations may be made at bookaroom@writershouse.se.

Baltic Centre for Writers and Translators (BCWT)

BCWT is an international residential centre for writers and literary translators, located in Visby on the island of Gotland. BCWT is a working and meeting place for literary professionals. The centre has eleven studios/rooms and is open all year round. It welcomes applicants from all countries, but priority of residence is given to literary professionals from the countries of the Baltic Sea region and Scandinavia, i.e. Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Iceland, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Poland, Russia, Sweden. The centre is financed mainly by the Swedish Arts Council and the Municipality of Gotland.

Other residential opportunities

Many other guest lodgings and residential centres, in Sweden and around the world, offer grants for which our members may apply. For more information about available grants, go to www.forfattarforbundet.se/boende/.

Honorary members: Dawit Isaak, Gui Minhai and Barys Pjatrovitj

Sveriges Författarförbund has three honorary members, Dawit Isaak, Gui Minhai and Barys Pjatrovitj. The first two are Swedish citizens currently imprisoned in their countries of birth.

Sveriges Författarförbund is one of the members of the Free Dawit media campaign. This is a cooperation organization working to secure the release of Isaak, a Swedish-Eritrean author and journalist who was arrested in Eritrea on September 23, 2001, and has been held since that date without charge or trial.

For more information about the activities of the Support Committee for Dawit Isaak and the Free Dawit campaign, and to learn how you can get involved, go to www.freedawit.com.

Gui Minhai is a Swedish publisher who was kidnapped in Thailand on order of the Chinese government in 2015. He remained in detention in China without a trial for four years, until finally receiving a 10-year prison sentence in 2019 for a slew of fabricated crimes. The sentencing was, however, simply a further attempt to conceal the real reason for his detention: namely, his authorship and publication in Hong Kong of writings critical of the Chinese regime.

Sveriges Författarförbund is fighting to free Gui alongside a number of other Swedish organizations for journalists, authors and publishers, including

Journalistförbundet, Svenska PEN and Förläggareföreningen. Together with Swedish media, we are resolved to protest, raise awareness and challenge decision-makers to apply pressure for Gui's release.

Barys Pjatrovitj chairs the independent Union of Belarusian Writers (UBW), the existence of which was outlawed by the government of that country in 2021.

Who can join?

Sveriges Författarförbund organizes writers and translators of fiction and nonfiction for children, young people and adults. Membership is by application. Applications are reviewed by a selection board (or, for translators, by the board of the translators' section). The selection board makes a recommendation to the Board of Sveriges Författarförbund, who then decide to admit or reject the applicant.

Members must be Swedish citizens or permanent residents of Sweden, but it is not required that members write in Swedish.

The basic requirement for membership is to have published two works (or translations) that meet a certain standard of quality.

In the case of books with multiple authors, authors will be evaluated individually based on either their responsibility for the work as a whole or their own written contribution to the work.

Journalists are eligible for membership only if they have published works in book format (or equivalent long works in digital form). Authors of works intended solely for classroom use are referred to the textbook authors' association, Lärmedelsförfattarna.

Getting paid

Sveriges Författarförbund has drawn up a list of recommended fees for various kinds of engagements. In addition, when you are offered an engagement, keep the following in mind:

- As a basic point of departure, all work should be paid work.
- When you are offered a fee, it is important to know whether the amount includes social security contributions and excludes VAT.
- Specify the nature and extent of the engagement. How many participants? How long will your appearance last? What will you be expected to do as part of the job? Are the participants paying a registration or entrance fee?
- Will an audio or video recording be made of you or of the event?
- Agree in advance on the number of hours you will be paid for.

- Agree in advance on remuneration for travel costs, and lodging costs if applicable.
- For long jobs that require an overnight stay, you can also agree on a per diem rate.
- Agree on what will happen if the employer calls off the event. Even if your engagement is cancelled, as a contractor you are entitled to reasonable remuneration that takes account of the originally agreed fee and any costs you have already incurred.
- Engagements that include additional work beyond your actual appearance warrant a higher fee.
- Always have a written contract or negotiate over e-mail. Författarcentrum (the Writers' Centre) can assist with bookings and contracts. For more information about Författarcentrum, go to www.författarcentrum.se.

Recommended fees

The amounts below are recommended *minimum* fees. The same recommendations apply for both in-person and digital engagements.

Minimum fee

Minimum SEK 3,400 (SEK 2,582 excl. of social security contributions) for appearances up to 15 minutes.

Minimum SEK 8,500 (SEK 6,468 excl. of social security contributions) for appearances up to 2 hours.

Should an appearance and Q&A sessions or similar in conjunction with the appearance last more than two hours, payment for subsequent hours should be *at least* SEK 1130 (SEK 860, excl. employee benefits) per commenced hour.

For more information about moderator engagements, consultant work, panellist fees, remunerations and other types of contracts for authors and translators, go to www.forfattarforbundet.se/radgivning.

Important note: remember that you do *not* add VAT to fees for appearances at schools or appearances that consist mainly of reading your own texts.

Further information about VAT can be found at <http://forfattarforbundet.se/radgivning/arvodesrekommendationer/moms>.

Contact details

Mailing address

Sveriges Författarförbund
Box 3157
103 63 Stockholm

Address for visitors

Drottninggatan 88B
Stockholm

E-mail

For general questions:

info@forfattarforbundet.se

For legal and financial counselling:

juridik@forfattarforbundet.se

For questions about membership:

medlemsansokan@forfattarforbundet.se

Apply for membership at:

www.forfattarforbundet.se/medlem

Telephone

Switchboard: +46 (0)8-545 132 00

Tuesday–Friday: 9–11 a.m. Friday: 9–11 a.m.

Legal and financial counselling: +46 (0)8-545 132 00 (press “1”)

Tuesday–Thursday: 9–11 a.m.

For information about currently available grants

www.forfattarforbundet.se/?s=stipendier

Partner organizations

National

Författarcentrum www.forfattarcentrum.se/

Sveriges författarfond www.svff.se/

Svenska PEN www.svenskapen.se/

Konsten att delta www.konstenattdelta.se/

Reportrar utan gränser www.reportrarutangranser.se

Svenska Journalistförbundet www.sjf.se/

Baltic Center for Writers and Translators www.bcwt.org/

International

ICORN www.icorn.org/

Amnesty www.amnesty.se

EWC www.europeanwriterscouncil.com/

CEATL www.ceatl.eu/

NFOR www.danskforfatterforening.dk/nordisk-samarbejde/