

### BOLOGNA CHILDREN'S BOOK FAIR



### BOLOGNA BOOK PLUS



In cooperation with  
**AIE** Associazione  
Italiana  
Editori

### Bologna Licensing Trade Fair



Events by  
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# Immerse Yourself In Children's Content!

The 61st edition of the world's premium trade show for children's content



Bologna Children's Book Fair (BCBF) is the world's leading professional event for the world of publishing for children and young adults. For more than 60 years it has been welcoming the international book community to Bologna for four days during which it becomes the stage for discussions, exchanges and debates between different cultures and visions, giving life to new ideas and projects.

2024 welcomes BCBF's **61st edition**, inaugurating a new decade of activity with new features to lead the debate on the main issues concerning the present and future of the publishing industry, together with its two brand extensions: **BolognaBookPlus** (BBPlus), organised in collaboration with AIE – the Italian Publishers Association and dedicated to general publishing, and **Bologna Licensing Trade Fair/Kids** (BLTF/K), for brands in the children's sector.

Eagerly awaited authors and illustrators featuring in Bologna include: **Ximo Abadia, Beatrice Alemagna, Mac Barnett, Anne Brouillard, Nat Cardozo, Kitty Crowther, Julia Donaldson, Oliver Jeffers, Joëlle Jolivet, Benjamin Lacombe, Leonard S. Marcus, Lorenzo Mattotti, Bart Moeyaert, Jérémie Moreau, Neal Packer, Axel Scheffler, Øyvind Torseter, Paloma Valdivia**, to name but a few.

Thanks to the collaboration and financial support of the **Italian Trade Agency-ITA and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation-MAECI**, the fair has been able also this year to strengthen its international reach and foster opportunities for the publishing industry. ITA and MAECI supported initiatives include a large **Invitation Programme** involving **140 top-level foreign professionals** from many different countries and business areas – World Lounge, Comics Corner, Spotlight on Africa and BolognaBookPlus. The Invitation Programme is a key feature to consolidate BCBF as a reference point for the most important buyers in the publishing sector and as an international market for Italian publishing exports. Direct contact with Italian publishers is facilitated by the **matchmaking programme** carried out in collaboration with the Italian Publishers Association.



## SLOVENIA GUEST OF HONOUR COUNTRY

For the 2024 edition **Slovenia** is **Guest of Honour Country**, an opportunity for publishers from all over the world to experience the country's rich publishing scene, promoted at the fair through the exhibition **And then what happens?** – presented by the expert committee of the Slovenian Book Agency, in cooperation with the Slovenian Center of Illustration – that showcases the works of 59 contemporary Slovenian illustrators, plus numerous discussion panels, as well as various activities in the city for the general public.



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## BOLOGNABOOKPLUS

Now in its fourth year, BolognaBookPlus – this newer addition to the global roster of book fairs – is making its mark. With a dedicated exhibit area, BBPlus (Hall 29, Mall 1) welcomes this year about 50 publishers from 19 countries and regions and an extensive programme of seminars and exhibitions.

Among others, the area features the **Italian Publishers Pavilion** – in partnership with AIE –, expanded to incorporate a new theatre and to accommodate more companies in order to enhance the excellence of Italian publishing on the fair's international stage, and a new space on the show floor entitled **Audio HQ**, dedicated to audio content. BolognaBookPlus also showcases current and future trends, insights, opportunities and challenges of today's general publishing industry: as such, the huge growth in **Audio Publishing, Self-Publishing, English Language Exports** and **AI's** role in general publishing are at the forefront of the discussion forum within the content programme. The programme also includes the seminar **"The Italian General Book Market – Including a focus on the children's market"**, providing a presentation of the Italian vibrant publishing scene; **The Translation Forum**, with a spotlight on Taiwan, and an offer of different contests and exhibitions on book covers design. In addition to these, three training events focusing on important publishing sectors: **"How to Sell Rights and Understand Licensing in Children's Books"**; **"Call Your Agent: How to Become a Successful Literary Agent"** and **"Self-Publishing: How to Succeed in Italy and Abroad"**. Also returning are the **Author Ambassador** initiatives, whose guest this year is author **Neal Packer**, as well as a **special focus on India's publishing market**.



**BOLOGNA LICENSING TRADE FAIR/KIDS**

**Bologna Licensing Trade Fair/Kids** (BLTF/Kids) is the leading international licensing event dedicated to brands for children, teenagers, and young adults, located at the very heart of the Bologna book fair. New for 2024 is the **Licensing Portfolio Review**, an opportunity to bring together consumer goods and audiovisual companies with new illustration and design talents to create new business opportunities. BLTF/Kids also organises the 4th edition of the **International Kids Licensing Days** (IKLD), three days of in-depth discussions with the main international players in the sector, on the most important and topical issues related to content for children and young adults, organised in cooperation with Licensing Magazine. In addition, the **Bologna Licensing Awards** reward both licensors/agencies, licensees and retailers with the aim of enhancing even more the link within the entire supply chain as the basis of any great success, and with a new category dedicated to the **Best Licensed Sustainable Project**.



**THE NEW TV/FILM RIGHTS CENTRE**

For at least twenty years, visitors to BCBF have regularly included producers and professionals from the world of TV and film "on the hunt" for new stories and characters to turn into TV and film productions and animations. Starting with this edition, BCBF is offering professionals from these sectors the new **TV/Film Rights Centre**, a business area created as part of BLTF/K with the collaboration of Book on a Tree, to welcome film and TV producers by fostering networking opportunities with the publishing world to encourage more book-to-screen projects. This space complements the **Rights Centre**, which this year has a completely renovated layout. As of last year's edition the Rights Centre is not only open to publishing rights professionals involved in the children's sector, but also to those active in the adult sector as well as publishers exhibiting at BCBF and BBPlus, thereby serving as a priority venue for the trade in copyrights for children's content.



**SUSTAINABILITY AND CHILDREN'S RIGHTS: THE COLLABORATION WITH THE UNITED NATIONS**

New features for 2024 include the important collaboration between BCBF and the United Nations. The UN partnership has led to the creation of shared initiatives on sustainability and the seas: the panel discussions **"Reading for a Healthy Planet: Inspiring Children's Books to Help Achieve a Sustainable Future"** – sided by an **exhibition of the best titles concerning sustainability issues** – and **"Sea of Stories: The Science, History, and Cultural Importance of the Sea in Children's Literature"**, both organised in collaboration with the International Publishers Association. These events

look at how children's books can help convey complex ideas about the impact of our actions on the environment and empower kids to start making a difference in their communities from an early age. In addition, **a collective reading of the International Convention on the Rights of the Child** takes place at the Illustrators Café, with the participation of authors and illustrators from all over the world, each reading in their own language.

**THE ORIGINAL ART – THE EXHIBITION OF THE SOCIETY OF ILLUSTRATORS**

After the presentation in New York of the "Italian Excellence" exhibition, which represented a new chapter in the collaboration between BCBF and the Society of Illustrators, for the first time the Society is presenting in Bologna **The Original Art**, the annual exhibition founded in 1980 to present the illustrations of the year's best children's books published in the United States. Since 1990, the



exhibition has had its home at the Society of Illustrators, where the works are selected for exhibition by a jury of illustrators, art directors and children's book publishers. In Bologna, **a selection of 48 works from the 2023 edition of the exhibition are shown for the first time** at the Illustrators Survival Corner, which is also hosting activities (portfolio reviews, workshops, etc.) held by some of the illustrators whose works are on display. The exhibition features guided tours on each day of BCBF.

### MARKETS FOCUS

Space is also given at the fair to **foreign markets**: from the aforementioned **Slovenia to China**, a country with which BCBF has built a solid relationship based on collaboration over a number of years, also as co-organiser of the China Shanghai International Children's Book Fair (CCBF). This has inspired the development of a new exhibition series: **Chinese Excellence in Children's Illustration**: an over-

view of contemporary Chinese illustration organised by BCBF/BolognaFiere, China South Publishing & MediaGroup and Sidee Cultural Communication.

The **Spotlight on Africa** also continues in 2024, the programme developed with the support of the Italian Trade Agency and the Italian Ministry for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, offering a prominent space to around 30 excellent African publishers from all over the continent at a dedicated exhibition area within BCBF, in parallel with appointments that aim to bring together the expertise of the publishers exhibiting at BCBF with the emerging and multi-faceted publishing of this rich continent. Thanks to the collaboration between BCBF, **Aké Arts and Book Festival** and Mimaster Illustrazione, an online illustration course for African illustrators is also due to be launched, along with a **Contest for African illustrators** that will form the basis for an exhibition of African illustration at BCBF 2025.



Due attention is also being paid to the cultures of indigenous minorities and the representation in "mainstream" publishing of authors and themes linked to African-American and Afro-Latin-American stories, through the panels "**Origins: Indigenous Voices in Children's Books**" and "**Transatlantic Connections: Literature, Childhood and Diversity**".

As mentioned, a focus on **India** publishing market is featured in BBPlus programme, while a collaboration with the **Japan Foundation** is bringing to BCBF the richness and magic of Japanese publishing.

### FOCUS ON NEW TRENDS IN PUBLISHING

**Artificial Intelligence** is undoubtedly the most prominent of the forces driving the major changes in our times, and publishing for children and young people is in no way exempt from the challenges it poses. As the world's leading event for the sector of children's literature, Bologna Children's Book Fair – together with **BolognaBookPlus** – is rightly serving as a space for investigation and debate regarding the different points of view and new perspectives that these themes open up to publishing professionals and readers today. A series of panel discussions and round tables are taking place at the fair - in the framework of **Aldus Up**, the European book fairs network co-funded by the Creative Europe programme of the European Union, that supports initiatives related to digital innovation, such as the **BolognaRagazzi CrossMedia Award**.

BCBF's commitment to identifying and promoting the development of comics and graphic novels, among the most dynamic sectors in contemporary publishing, continues also with the **Comics Corner**, the exhibition area for comics' publishers produced with the support of ITA and MAECI. This year's new features include the focus on the most interesting industries, the success of Italian comics in the USA and comics for the very young.

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