

Under the Patronage of  
Her Majesty Queen Rania Al Abdullah

IPA Regional Seminar  
READ.EMPOWER.TRANSFORM  
THE ROLE OF READING FOR THE FUTURE OF THE ARAB WORLD

AMMAN  
30 Sept/1 Oct  
2019

SEMINAR  
PROGRAM



international  
publishers  
association

union of  
jordanian  
publishers



## About the International Publishers Association (IPA)

The International Publishers Association (IPA) is the world's largest federation of national, regional and specialist publishers' associations. Its membership comprises 81 organisations from 69 countries in Africa, Asia, Australasia, Europe and the Americas. Through its members, IPA represents thousands of individual publishers around the world who service markets containing more than 5.6 billion people.

Based in Geneva, Switzerland, IPA represents the interests of the publishing industry in international fora and wherever publishers' interests are at stake.

IPA was founded in 1896 in Paris by the leading publishers at the time. Its initial aim was to ensure that countries throughout the world showed respect for copyright, and properly implemented the 'Berne Convention for the Protection of Literary and Artistic Works'. The promotion and defence of copyright is still one of IPA's main objectives. IPA also promotes and defends freedom to publish, a fundamental aspect of the human right to freedom of expression.

IPA also stands for the promotion of literacy and reading and has always been a meeting place for publishers to network, exchange views and conduct business.

IPA is an accredited non-governmental organisation (NGO) enjoying consultative relations with the United Nations.

## Rewrite the Future of the Region at Amman's Most Important Publishers Seminar

The International Publishers Association (IPA) and the Union of Jordanian Publishers (UJP) are hosting the first of its kind Middle East publishers' seminar in Amman.

The seminar will take a fresh look at the publishing industry in the region and worldwide to answer the pivotal question — How can reading change the course of history?

A hub for key industry leaders, policy makers, and investors to come together to find solutions to the most pressing challenges we face in the region, the seminar will have an immersive range of activities including keynotes from industry leaders, workshops to improve your business and 12 inspiring panel discussions to join the debate and expand your knowledge. Discussions will include how reading can contribute to socio-economic development; pressing publishing industry issues and scalable solutions; analysis of education and literacy; the use of reading as a humanitarian response and therapy; and the rise of the digital era and the importance it plays for the future of the region.

## DAY 1 Monday, 30<sup>th</sup> of September 2019

### Panel Discussion 1: Digital Disruption: Solving the Arab World's Book Distribution and Retail Challenges with Technology

With the rapid rise of the digital economy and the region's embrace of e-commerce, distribution intermediaries are becoming less important as brick-and-mortar retail strategies are eclipsed by e-commerce. The dawn of the digital economy will mean that the publishing chain will need to rethink distribution; evolve direct-to-consumer content creation models; and serve the increasingly digitally-connected multi-channel buyers.

This session brings together publishing stakeholders to build consensus on where the industry is headed and how the publishing ecosystem can work together to create new value in the digital economy.

### Panel Discussion 2: The Role of the Publishing Industry in Humanitarian Response and Refugee Resettlement

According to United Nations' statistics, over 26 million refugees and vulnerable individuals come from Arab countries. Publishers are emerging as a key tool in helping refugees become self-sufficient and successful through integration in their new communities. In particular, bilingual titles that discuss contemporary events and conflict to refugee and migrant youth who find themselves trying to reconcile their personal identity and struggling with social inclusion.

This session will discuss the prominent role that the publishing industry can play in healing and helping refugees build new lives while remaining rooted in their culture.

### Lunch and networking break

### **Panel Discussion 3: Literacy and Book Accessibility in Conflict**

Countries in which conflict prevents school attendance have amongst the highest illiteracy levels in the world. In response, the publishing industry is increasingly playing a role in helping communities heal through programs such as bibliotherapy, rebuilding reading materials collections, and creating accessible books for the visually impaired. There is a clear and urgent need to prioritise literacy and book accessibility interventions in conflict countries and countries with high out-of-school rates to avoid a lost generation in several Arab countries.

This panel will analyse the impact of conflict on literacy and book accessibility to present solutions on how publishers, governments, aid agencies, and international institutions can work together to promote literacy in conflict situations and ensure reading materials continue to reach individuals affected.

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### **Panel Discussion 4: The Role of Technology in Overcoming Illiteracy and Promoting a Reading Culture**

The region now faces two immense challenges in the digital age: eradicating illiteracy and implementing reading strategies and policies that cultivate national cultures of reading. Technology-based literacy training programs hold significant potential in addressing illiteracy, yet many Arab countries are resistant to transitioning to the digital era; many more have not formulated policies for the integration of existing technology into adult literacy programs.

This session will discuss promising new approaches in leveraging technology to address illiteracy, and how to catalyse collective action by the publishing industry, policymakers, non-profits, and aid agencies to develop national cultures of reading.

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### **Coffee and networking break**

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### **Panel Discussion 5: Digital Publishing and the Arab Classroom of the Future**

Against this backdrop of rapid regional digitisation, the global textbook industry is being disrupted by digital publishing. Classrooms are being turned on their head by technologies that enable more personalised and immersive learning experiences. Digital publishing and technologies like artificial intelligence have significant potential to bring changes and reforms to classrooms and regional education systems to meet the needs of the 4th Industrial Revolution.

This session will focus on how governments, the publishing industry, and educators can work together to embrace digital publishing and classroom technologies that can enable education innovation which can leapfrog regional educational reform progress and outcomes.

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### **Closing remarks**

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### **Dinner**

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**Registration**

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**Welcome Address**

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**Opening Keynote**

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**Panel Discussion 6: Building a Creative Nation: Developing the Next Generation of Publishers, Writers, and Artists**

Developing a well-functioning, market-responsive publishing ecosystem is critical not only to the growth of the publishing industry, but that of a nation. Building vibrant publishing and creative industries can generate substantial employment, drive economic growth, and leads to a progressive and sustainable country. However, the relationships between the various stakeholders that make up these industries are complex. In understanding this complexity, two questions emerge: how can the publishing industry be improved? and how can the ecosystem evolve to develop the Arab world's next generation of publishers?

This session draws on the experience of publishers, writers, and artists to discuss the current state of the Arab World's publishing ecosystem as well as explore recommendations on cultivating the publishers, writers, and artists of the future.

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**Coffee and networking break**

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**Panel Discussion 7: Bringing the Voice of Arab Writers, Publishers, and Content Creators to the World**

As global readers actively seek original, distinctive writing and diverse narratives, national markets are booming worldwide. Evolving consumer demand for more diversity is a trend that Arab writers, publishers, and the broader creative industries cannot afford to miss out on. Yet, despite the launch of several initiatives, grants, and awards, the Arab World has been less successful in getting Arabic publishing and cultural products in the hands of global consumers than other countries facing similar challenges accessing global markets.

This session will explore how Arab writers, publishers, and cultural creators can benefit from surging global demand for more diverse cultural products.

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**Lunch and networking break**

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**Panel Discussion 8: The Future of Arab Libraries: Transforming Libraries from Print to Digital**

To stay relevant in the digital age, libraries will need to transition from lending books to becoming economic incubators, cultural hubs, and experiential learning centres. They will likely to evolve into a hyper-connected, creative space that serves as a gateway to digital citizenship; where users will go to co-create and experience the future. Several technologies and trends are already shaping the library of today including bookless libraries, augmented reality, and e-lending.

This session will discuss the ongoing importance of libraries in the digital age and how they can start a new chapter to retain relevancy.

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**Panel Discussion 9: Freedom to Publish and New Media**

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The Arab youth are increasingly using the internet, social media, and direct messaging to get news and information. At the dawn of the region's digital age, a key question that has emerged: who should be responsible for low quality, misleading, false, and other offensive types of content online? The future of the internet and the publishing industry will depend on how a broad spectrum of stakeholders will address this question.

This session will discuss how stakeholders can tackle online hate speech, fake news, and other types of abusive and inflammatory online content; it will also discuss online safety and the importance of preserving the freedom of expression and freedom to publish.

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**Coffee and networking break**

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## Day 2

### Tuesday, 1<sup>st</sup> of October 2019

#### Panel Discussion 10: Towards an Arab Digital Single Market: Does the Arab World Need its Own Copyright Directive?

It is imperative that publishers, authors, and content creators in the Arab world have their work protected. While several countries in the region have made significant gains in national frameworks for copyright to achieve this, the Arab world needs modern copyright laws for the digital age. One potential model that could be a reference point for the region is the recently passed European Union Copyright Directive which promotes cross-border access to content online; balances between copyright and public policy objectives; and uses a fairer marketplace for online content. A similar region-wide push for a modernised copyright framework protection should also be a top priority.

This session will discuss how Arab countries can modernise copyright to support the rapid digital transformation that is currently ongoing.

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#### Gala Dinner

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## Day 3

### Wednesday, 2<sup>nd</sup> of October 2019

#### Sightseeing Tour

There will be an option to spend a day discovering Amman's rich history and culture. Attendance is optional and prior registration is required. Rates will be provided at a later stage and we will notify you when booking will be open.

#### Half Day

Amman – Dead Sea – Amman

Amman – Jerash – Ajloun – Amman

#### Full Day

Amman – Petra – Amman

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**For enquiries please contact:  
info@iparegionalseminars.com**