

## **International Authors Forum**

### **Strategic Plan 2020-2023**

#### **Who we are**

The IAF was formed by a collaboration of author's organisations in 2013 to ensure that authors can work together across the world to support authors dealing with the challenges they face professionally. With over 70 writers and visual artists organisations as members, the IAF represents over 750,000 authors worldwide. The organisation is led by a steering committee made up of its members representing authors from all disciplines and from all continents. The IAF is shaped by its members, with members being central to the messages it promotes and clearly at the centre of its events.

The IAF speaks up on behalf of all authors, whether they are writers or visual artists, and it speaks up on the things that matter to them. This includes protecting authors' rights, promoting the importance of an effective copyright system and payment for use, as well as broader issues ensuring that cultural policy values the work of all authors worldwide. The work of the IAF takes many forms: it includes taking experiences from the existing public lending rights systems to help support other countries develop their own versions of these systems.

The IAF attends meetings of the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO) at the United Nations to ensure that the key issues to authors are on the cultural policy agenda of the UN. The IAF also holds permanent observer status as an international non-governmental organisation at WIPO. The IAF speaks at the Standing Committee on Copyright and related rights to influence the debate and put its perspective to the committee members, offering the expertise of the IAF both on the floor and to support any delegates interested in the rights of authors. The goal of the IAF at WIPO is to exchange information between the membership of WIPO and the IAF, contributing authors' input on the issues being discussed.

The IAF hosts meetings and events across the globe to further promote authors' rights and their contribution to culture, while creating a platform for authors so that they can present their personal experience to decision makers.

Recent campaigns have included the 10 Principles of Fair Contracts for Authors, in which the IAF made clear what authors should expect to see and what they should avoid when negotiating a contract. Another IAF campaign on copyright was aimed at dispelling damaging myths about copyright policy. Among many initiatives focused on promoting the value of copyright, the IAF has published *Copyright Works* featuring author testimonials on how important the protection of intellectual property has been to ensuring they can continue to work as creators.

The IAF is also strongly involved ensuring countries have proper systems in place to pay authors for the use of their work: this has included working with PLR International to support the growth of Public Lending Right systems around the world, as well as supporting visual arts organisations in campaigning for an international Artists Resale Right. IAF also supports additional remuneration rights that reflect the way in which authors works are used in the online environment. IAF strongly promotes the necessary role that these kinds of remuneration systems can provide in supporting and rewarding the development of local authors, while also ensuring they share in any success their work has at an international level.

### **Our aims and Concerns**

- Provide authors' organisations worldwide with an international platform to exchange information, develop positions and provide support in authors' rights matters
- Advocate the author's role in society, pointing out the importance of creation for cultural diversity and the economic value which authors create
- Promote and defend authors' interests and authors' rights, including both moral and economic rights at the international level
- Actively work in favour of balanced contractual legislation that guarantees fair practices for authors and ensures that authors retain their economic and moral rights against buyouts and other unfair practices
- Promote the benefits of authors' rights in general and of collective management in particular in order to ensure that authors always receive fair and equitable remuneration whenever their works are exploited by third parties.

### **Where we are and the challenges ahead of us**

The IAF has been an evolving organisation since its inception in 2013. With a small staff and a large reach, IAF has focussed its efforts on speaking up for writers and visual artists at the World Intellectual Property Organisation and working with other pro-copyright organisations to advocate payment for use of authors' work and for the voice of the author to be heard in the debates around exceptions and limitations that prevail there, often without due consideration towards authors' earnings.

The main challenges ahead are changing the narrative at WIPO to something more pro-author and pro-copyright. And for this we will need help from all our members. There is clearly strength in numbers but we are concerned that our voices are being drowned out by the anti-copyright lobby, who have tried to remove creators from debate on copyright, so our biggest challenge will be to ensure enough authors voices are heard in this arena.

We would like WIPO to consider the needs of authors in a more considered way looking for support on issues such as:

- Artists Resale Right
- Public Lending Right
- Online remuneration rights
- Unwaivable right to remuneration
- Restrictions on exceptions and limitations

### **Strengths and weaknesses**

IAF's strength lies in its membership, their commitment and support to the IAF's objectives, as well as a dedicated Steering Committee and Secretariat. The IAF consists of a small team of dedicated staff and a small team naturally restricts the number of campaigns or issues that can be dealt with. As a result, this limits our impact in some areas. We also keep our annual membership fees low to encourage more members to be able to afford to join, as we are aware of the funding challenges typical to authors organisations. This again results in a lack of funding to enable IAF to achieve as much as it wants to achieve on behalf of its members. The organisation has an excellent reputation at WIPO and a high level of visibility which has led to IAF being invited to participate in more activities that further stretch its resources.

### **Opportunities and threats**

The IAF has worked hard to get issues of importance to authors raised at WIPO and has been successful on a number of issues which have been supported by the WIPO Secretariat. In the Autumn of 2020, the Director General will change which may lead to an alteration in direction of the focus of the Standing Committee on Copyright and Related Rights (SCCR). The strengthening and volume of monies pumped into supporting the anti-copyright lobby is a clear problem that we will only be able to address through reasoned arguments and evidence. The negative campaign that surrounded Article 13 (now Article 17) of the EU Copyright Directive is likely to be seen repeated with many anti-copyright groups trying to paint a picture of copyright being a matter of industry versus user, with no consideration for authors.

## **IAF Strategic Plan for 2020-2022**

We see our focus over the next three years as being:

1. Representing the voice of the author at the World Intellectual Property Organization
2. Engagement with members
3. Supporting our members on copyright issues
4. Campaigns on authors issues
5. Authors remuneration rights
6. Assisting authors' organisations in developing countries

### **1. Representing the voice of the author at the World Intellectual Property Organization**

#### **Including authors in the discussion at WIPO**

Authors currently face a negative environment where the rights of the author are under threat and the anti-copyright lobbying fields a significant number of organisations to make their voices heard. The SCCR agenda has come to focus on Exceptions and Limitations that could adversely affect authors' incomes. Although it currently has the Artists Resale Right in sight, the time given to formal agenda items like Exceptions and Limitations eclipses opportunities for positive measures for authors right now. We look to work for WIPO to defend copyright and creativity, especially for developing countries with lesser known languages.

To achieve this, we will:

- Review how we position IAF at WIPO in light of the fact that new tech funded organisations e.g. Authors Alliance, are joining WIPO as observers (pro Exceptions and Limitations) and are causing confusion as to what authors want and don't want. This will include hiring a consultant to test and refine our messaging.
- Develop marketing materials for national delegates at WIPO to support the various income streams for the benefit of authors.
- Work with the WIPO Secretariat as much as possible to push forward our pro-author agenda concerning possible income streams to help improve authors' incomes.

#### **Side events at WIPO Standing Committee on Copyright & Relating Rights (SCCRs)**

Two SCCRs are held each year, each lasting a week. Sometimes other conferences are added to these sessions of a further few days. It is imperative that as many creators' voices as possible can be heard at these events as the anti-copyright lobby is well funded. The voice of the author is being drowned out and this needs to be reversed.

To achieve this we will:

- Put on a side event at least on an annual basis looking at raising the profile of various initiatives that can support creators, working with other organisations as and when appropriate.
- The first side event in July 2020 will showcase the situation of authors' incomes and author income streams for WIPO to consider. Further side events can support this.

### **Educate WIPO delegates**

When WIPO delegates are discussing future Treaties, not all of them are either concerned or understand about how they may adversely affect the plight of the author. This needs to be addressed:

To achieve this we will:

- Develop materials for delegates at WIPO to help them understand the life of an author and to support the need for a strong copyright regime that allows authors to continue to create.
- At SCCRs IAF will hold meetings with the various groupings of member states, where possible bringing along authors from around the world, to strengthen the call for WIPO to support areas of income streams for authors on their agenda. This will, where possible, be in collaboration with other organisations.

### **Collaborate with other creators' organisations**

The IAF is only one voice at the SCCRs at WIPO and, although the IAF currently represents around 750,000 authors worldwide, more noise needs to be made by the creative community to defend authors' rights.

To achieve this we will:

- Encourage IAF members to join the SCCR as observers.
  - Deliver clear guidelines to joining the SCCR to make this as easy as possible for members.
  - If members can attend, then the IAF's role will be to co-ordinate with them to make the best use of their time whilst at the SCCR.
  - Even if they are not in a position to attend, their voice will be heard through written submissions and the role of the IAF will be to co-ordinate responses and work with our members to get involved from afar, thus keeping costs down for everyone.
- Encourage all Creative Industries partners to join as SCCR observers

- Expand our strategy to coordinate with creative industry partners to support each other's campaigns and work at WIPO.

## **2. Engagement with members**

### **Working Groups to share information**

The IAF has a number of members who are very active and keen to be more involved in the work of IAF on specific projects of interest. To help harness the flow of information and share with our members, the IAF will convene Working Groups as appropriate:

To achieve this we will:

- Identify at AGM's the type of issues that are important to our members and convene working groups around them.
- The IAF Secretariat will act as Secretary to the groups and work with them to produce recommendations for the IAF membership and share information with them.

### **Holding AGMs where IAF's help is needed**

In an effort to liaise with and understand the needs of our members on a wider basis, we will seek to hold the AGM on a different continent each year and work with the host member to put on panel discussions and presentations to support authors in that area. Particular focus will be to hold AGMs where there might be issues or copyright reviews where IAF can give some support in a public way to make the most of the event.

To achieve this we will:

- Work with IAF members to identify where the most opportunity to support on issues of importance to authors might be and hold the AGM there.

## **3. Campaigns**

The IAF has added value to its members in the past by identifying key campaigns that are helpful to authors, such as the 10 Principles of Fair Contracts for Authors. Such campaigns have helped to support IAF members work on issues important to them. This is something we will continue to do.

To achieve this we will:

- Each year, IAF will, in collaboration with our members, identify a key campaign to develop
- With our members, promote the campaign as widely as possible using our contacts around the world as appropriate

## **4. Support Members under fire on copyright issues**

The IAF has seen a number of its members under fire on issues around copyright and the instigation of copyright reviews or implementation of exceptions that adversely affect authors. The IAF has consistently sought to support its members in any way it can and will continue to do so.

To achieve this we will:

- Work with our members to identify threats as they come up and agree what action could be taken. This could include:
  - Direct contact with policy makers showing objection/support, as appropriate
  - Submitting evidence to government consultations
  - Collaborating with other organisations to ensure consistent messages, as appropriate
  - Liaising with other IAF members to see how others might have tackled problems before
  - Share information with members so that they can see clear arguments for future use, if appropriate

## **5. Assist authors' organisations in developing countries**

Authors in developing countries are sometimes bereft of an authors' organisation to support them and where possible and realistic the IAF will support the development of these organisations,

To do this we will:

- Develop a best practice toolkit in setting up an authors' organisation
  - Develop a working group for members to identify key ingredients
  - Formulate a best practice guide
- Share experiences and expertise, involving our members where practicable
- Raise the importance of authors with local governments, working if possible, with WIPO
- Raise awareness of authors' organisations in developing countries via attendance at cultural events including bookfairs as and when funding can be found.

## **6. Promote remuneration rights**

Public Lending Right, Artist's Resale Right and Online Remuneration Rights are each necessary to reflect how authors works are enjoyed and will be necessary to ensure authors are able to continue to create.

- Artist's Resale Right is likely to be the next right to develop at the international level and IAF will be involved in its progress
- Working with Public Lending Right International, IAF can support the growth of PLR beyond Europe
- Online Remuneration Rights are not as well explored as those discussed above and likely to see resistance in the tech sector, but will be necessary to secure as society increasingly engages with culture in the digital sphere