



A CITY OF...
WRITERS
READERS
TEACHERS
LIBRARIANS
BOOKSELLERS
STUDENTS
EDITORS
STORYTELLERS
PRINTMAKERS
PUBLISHERS

Iowa City UNESCO City of Literature Membership Monitoring Report Nov. 30, 2016





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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Mission statement: *The City of Literature works to advance its mission of celebrating and supporting literature on a local, regional, national, and international level, connecting readers and writers through the power of story.*

Iowa City was named a UNESCO City of Literature in November 2008 – the first in the United States and the third in the world. It earned this designation in large part because Iowa City is the place people go when they want to learn to write. Once there, many of them stay because they fall in love with this community where literature is a connective thread. As was stated in the city's formal application for the designation:

How could a small city in the center of the American heartland have such a wide-ranging impact on creative writing? The answer is that Iowa City, for its size, may be the most literary city on earth. Often called the "Athens of the Midwest," it has a unique set of influential literary institutions, which explore new ways to teach and support writers. At the same time, it has long been, quite simply, a place for writers: a haven, a destination, a proving ground, and a nursery. Together, these synthesizing aspects – the writers and the institutions that have grown from them and for them – have created a history and an identity in which its citizens take enormous pride, prizing a role in celebrating and honoring writers and good writing.

With the designation in hand, the city – and the surrounding area that encompasses Coralville, North Liberty

and the rest of Johnson County – was charged with a daunting task: take one of the best literary cultures in the world and make it better.

An independent nonprofit organization was formed to manage the designation on behalf of the city. This organization, the Iowa City UNESCO City of Literature, sought to leverage the designation through a mixture of advocacy, networking, and programming to elevate the literary culture of the community. It does so with support, both financial and otherwise, from many entities: the City of Iowa City, the University of Iowa, Coralville, North Liberty, the Iowa City Public Library, Johnson County, the Iowa City/Coralville Area Convention & Visitors Bureau, and the Iowa City Area Chamber of Commerce. The area business community, local foundations and charitable organizations also provide support, while thousands in the community attend events, read, write and financially support the efforts of the City of Literature.

The City of Literature organization recently completed a three-year strategic plan that found it pursuing three overarching goals:

Programming Goal: Promote and offer the best in literary programming.

Audience Goal: Build constituencies and make connections that further the mission of the City of Literature.

Resource Goal: Strengthen the capacity of the City of Literature to do its work.

The result of three years of work is an organization that has expanded the size and scope of existing programs and added several more, reached out to various populations within its diverse community, and placed itself on secure financial footing. This included taking on and then greatly expanding programming for the Iowa City Book Festival, adding programs that promote and reward writing by area school children, and seeking collaborations that promote the use of literature to address challenges in the community. The organization rebranded, drawing increased attention to the designation and the achievements of the literary community. And, keeping pace with this growth, increased its budget and income by forty percent.

The community continued to support literary expansion beyond the scope of the City of Literature organization. Endeavors such as the expanded literary lineup of the Mission Creek Festival and the creation of the nonprofit advocacy and programming organization the Iowa Writers House showed that people in the

community were emboldened by the UNESCO designation and were eager to embrace it in the pursuit of greater accomplishment.

Looking forward, the City of Literature organization and the community plan to move from this plateau to the next. A new, four-year strategic plan (see Annex), designed to align with UNESCO's new quadrennial reporting requirements, will find the organization building on past success and taking advantage of the growing network of peers to push programming in new directions. At the same time, a new emphasis on the UN's 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development will find the organization working with the city to incorporate these goals into policies, procedures and programs.

The organization also will work over the next four years to analyze the breadth of the literary sector in the community and its impact in terms of cultural output, employment and contributions to the local economy, and in turn will use that data, as well as other indicators, as it charts its course.

2. GENERAL INFORMATION

2.1. Name of the city: Iowa City

2.2. Country: United States

2.3. Creative field of designation: Literature

2.4. Date of designation: 2008

2.5. Date of submission of the current report: Nov. 30, 2016

2.6. Entity responsible for the report: Iowa City UNESCO City of Literature organization

2.7. Previous reports submitted and dates: N/A

2.8 Focal points of contact

Focal point:

John Kenyon
Executive Director
Iowa City UNESCO City of Literature
123 S. Linn St.
Iowa City, IA 52240 USA
(319) 356-5245
john-kenyon@iowacityofliterature.org

City government liaison:

Wendy Ford
Economic Development Coordinator
City of Iowa City
411 E. Washington St.
Iowa City, IA 52240 USA
(319) 356-5248
wendy-ford@iowa-city.org

3. CONTRIBUTION TO THE NETWORK'S GLOBAL MANAGEMENT

3.1 Number of UCCN annual meetings attended in the last four years:

Four

3.2 Hosting of a UCCN annual meeting and dates:

N/A

3.3 Hosting of a working or coordination meeting addressed to one or more specific UCCN creative field representatives:

N/A

3.4 Hosting of an international conference or meeting on specific issues salient to the Creative Cities with a large participation of members of the Network:

N/A

3.5 Financial and/or in-kind support provided to UNESCO's Secretariat in order to ensure the management, communication and visibility of the UCCN (type of contribution, estimated value, main objectives, and dates):

The Iowa City UNESCO City of Literature organization provides significant in-kind support to UNESCO's secretariat in the form of review of applications for designation, promotion of the network, staff time to interact with UNESCO and the cost of attending annual meetings (the latter approximately \$8,000 USD over the past four years).

3.6 Membership of the Steering Group and period:

N/A

3.7 Participation in the evaluation of applications (number of applications evaluated per year):

The City of Literature organization, composed of its director and board of directors, evaluated and provided feedback on all submitted applications in 2014 (15) and 2015 (12), and the organization participated in the process at the subgroup level to provide feedback and scores related to all applications.

4. MAJOR INITIATIVES IMPLEMENTED AT THE LOCAL LEVEL TO ACHIEVE THE OBJECTIVES OF THE UCCN

4.1 Iowa City Book Festival

The Iowa City Book Festival, a project of the Iowa City UNESCO City of Literature organization and several community partners, has grown over the last four years to become a multi-day celebration of books, writing, reading, and the exchange and discussion of ideas in the greater Iowa City area. In 2016, the festival was six days, with more than 60 events featuring more than 100 authors and presenters who spoke to 4,500 people. Events included traditional readings, panel discussions, demonstrations, workshops, children's activities and more.

The major goals achieved by the festival include:

- Connecting readers with writers and their work
- Helping to build an audience for authors, both those from the area and those from around the world

--Sharing ideas and fostering discussion of those ideas

--Providing writers the tools they need to nurture their craft and get their work into the world

This festival helps to achieve the following Creative Cities Network objectives:

– Strengthening the creation, production, distribution and enjoyment of cultural goods and services and fostering the creative economy

–Improving access to and participation in cultural life as well as the enjoyment of cultural goods and services, notably for marginalized or vulnerable groups and individuals, including women and youth

–Developing hubs of creativity and innovation and broadening opportunities for creators and professionals in the cultural sector

4.2 One Book Two Book Children's Literature Festival

The One Book Two Book Children's Literature Festival, produced by the Iowa City UNESCO City of Literature organization and several community partners, seeks to celebrate writing *for* and *by* children. Specifically, while it offers many traditional programming components – visiting authors, workshops, a book fair, craft opportunities, and more – the key aspect of the festival is one focused on student writing. While our designation in large part recognizes our community's rich literary

heritage, it is important to nurture young writers and give them the tools they need to succeed to ensure a strong future. In particular, the festival provides opportunities for students at schools with lower socio-economic status that may lack such outlets when compared with schools in other parts of the community.

The festival solicits original writing from students in grades 1-8 (ages 7-14). These pieces are evaluated by ACT, a world leader in academic and workforce testing

and evaluation, and the best are singled out. An event held in partnership with area elementary schools starts the festival, where one student from each school reads his or her piece, sharing the stage with a nationally prominent keynote speaker (Loren Long, David LaRochelle, Candace Fleming and Eric Rohmann in past years). After a Saturday full over fun events, the festival ends with a Sunday event called “Write Out Loud.” Here, more than 100 students are recognized for their outstanding writing. Grade-level winners read their work, and others are recognized with honorable mention. Prominent members of the community are on hand to introduce and congratulate the winners.

In this way, the City of Literature demonstrates to these young writers that their work matters, that our community values the written word, and that being able to express their ideas in clear and compelling ways is something to be recognized.

The festival, which will celebrate its sixth year in 2017, has grown in scale and scope each year, now reaching about 2,500 people with its programming, mostly young families. More than 800 students participate in the writing competition.

4.3 International Writing Program at the University of Iowa

The International Writing Program (IWP) at the University of Iowa is a multi-faceted endeavor that works to connect writers from around the world. It includes projects that bring international literature into classrooms, introduce American writers to other cultures through reading tours, and serves as a clearinghouse for literary news and a wealth of archival and pedagogical materials. At its heart is an annual residency program in Iowa City that has hosted nearly 1,500 writers from



Families take part in activities during the One Book Two Book Children's Literature Festival

This festival helps to achieve the following Creative Cities Network objectives:

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more than 150 countries since 1967. The participants include authors in the early or middle stages of their careers, as well as some of the best-known writers in our world, such as Nobel Prize winners Mo Yan and Orhan Pamuk.

That residency gives the writers the chance to learn more about U.S. culture and those of the other visiting participants, to work on their writing and to connect with one another, creating a

world-wide network of writers. Because the University of Iowa is a national hub for creative writing, and is located in the only UNESCO-designated City of Literature in the United States, the writers also are able to participate in innumerable events while in Iowa City, including the Iowa City Book Festival.

The program is a tremendous asset to the community, introducing residents to cultures and ideas that otherwise would be difficult to encounter in such personalized, intimate settings. One of the most popular events tied to the residency is the open forum “What We Saw,” which allows participants to offer their view of life in Iowa City and the United States. These ideas then are fed back into the greater dialogue in the community about who we are and how we manage our city.

4.4 Paul Engle Prize

The Paul Engle Prize was established in 2011 by the Iowa City UNESCO City of Literature organization, and was re-launched in 2013 with a \$10,000 cash prize and expanded programming.

The prize is named for Paul Engle (October 12, 1908 – March 22, 1991), who while best remembered as the long-time director of the Writers’ Workshop and founder of the University of Iowa’s International Writing Program, also was a well-regarded poet, playwright, essayist, editor and critic. The award honors an individual who, like Engle, represents a pioneering spirit in the world of literature through writing, editing, publishing, or teaching, and whose active participation in the larger issues of the day has contributed to the betterment of the world through the literary arts.

At its heart, the prize seeks to recognize

This program helps to achieve the following Creative Cities Network objectives:

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–Developing hubs of creativity and innovation and broadening opportunities for creators and professionals in the cultural sector



Author Roxane Gay (right) receives the 2016 Paul Engle Prize from Coralville Public Library Director Alison Ames Galstad.

writers who go beyond the page, who work to improve the world around them through their work. The ideas and concepts promoted by these writers have tackled some of our society’s thorniest problems: issues of race, immigration, socio-economic hurdles, the status of

women, gender-identity issues and more.

By recognizing these writers, the prize does two things: It elevates these issues by providing a forum for the author, and it offers recognition for the author that is designed to encourage others to pursue similar impact in their work.

Past prize winners are James Alan McPherson, Kwame Dawes, Luis Alberto Urrea, Sara Paretsky, and Roxane Gay. Once the program was revamped in 2013, the authors have done work in our community during their visit to receive the prize, including work with young writers and outreach to under-served populations.

This program helps to achieve the following Creative Cities Network objectives:

4.5 Writers on the Fly

Writers on the Fly is a video interview series established in 2010 and expanded in 2012. It seeks to capture what had previously been fleeting – the visits made by writers who come to Iowa City to read, to lecture, and to teach. The series began with private funding, was continued with funding from the state humanities council, and then was expanded to include a dedicated website and brand (www.writersonthefly.org) thanks to a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities.

Featuring a mix of writers who live in Iowa City and those who are visiting, the website features dozens of interviews that range in length from about five minutes to more than twenty. Some static questions, such as asking where the author writes or what words are typically cut from manuscripts, allow a sort of longitudinal study of the craft of writing. Others based on the writer's individual background and

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work, offer unique perspectives.

Lesson plans that draw upon segments of the various videos are available for educators, with more under way. Videos are added to the website as they are filmed, with participants in City of Literature such as the Iowa City Book Festival offering a consistent pool from which to draw.

This resource, while created in Iowa City, is available to anyone with an Internet connection, making it an international tool for learning about writers and their work.

This program helps to achieve the following Creative Cities Network objectives:

–Strengthening the creation, production, distribution and enjoyment of cultural goods and services and fostering the creative economy

–Improving access to and participation in cultural life as well as the enjoyment of cultural goods and services, notably for marginalized or vulnerable groups and individuals, including women and youth;

–Developing hubs of creativity and innovation and broadening opportunities for creators and professionals in the cultural sector

4.6 Cultivation of Little Free Libraries

While the Little Free Library movement did not begin in Iowa City – it began in 2009 in Hudson, Wisconsin – our community was among the first to widely embrace the project and has seen it grow ten-fold over the past four years.

Little Free Libraries are small structures, usually erected on a pole in the front yard of a home or in a park, much like an oversized mailbox filled with books. Using the credo, “take one, leave one,” the LFLs, as they are known, allow people to find free reading material left behind by the friends and neighbors, and to share books in turn with others.

In 2012, when the City of Literature organization invited LFL founder Todd Bol to town for a lecture, there were seven known LFLs in the area. As of November 2016, more than 70 can be found in the community, and that number continues to grow each month. The City of Literature organization acts as a local clearing house for information about building, installing and maintaining LFLs, and has fostered their growing numbers.

The libraries are small but effective tool in urban development, providing access to books in parts of the community where access to traditional library services can be a challenge. They also provide a place for neighbors to gather to talk about books and share ideas, bringing communities together through literature and reading.

This program helps to achieve the following Creative Cities Network



A Little Free Library built to look like Iowa City’s Old Capitol building was erected on an eastside lawn and is filled with books for people to share.

objectives:

--Making creativity an essential component of urban development, notably through partnerships involving the public and private sectors and civil society

--Improving access to and participation in cultural life as well as the enjoyment of cultural goods and services, notably for marginalized or vulnerable groups and individuals, including women and youth;

--Developing hubs of creativity and innovation and broadening opportunities for creators and professionals in the cultural sector

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5. MAJOR INITIATIVES IMPLEMENTED THROUGH INTER-CITY COOPERATION TO ACHIEVE THE OBJECTIVES OF THE UCCN

5.1 *Town Stitched by River* and Dublin poet exchanges

In celebration of deep connections between Iowa City and Dublin, many centered on the University of Iowa's International Writing Program (IWP), the Cities of Literature of Dublin and Iowa City joined together to create an anthology of work by Irish writers who have participated in the IWP since 1979.

The book, *Town Stitched by River*, is a hand-printed limited edition work designed by Iowa City artist Shari DeGraw. The title is taken from a poem, "Iowa City Sestina," by Irish poet Nell Regan, found in the volume. It begins, "This town is stitched by river –/that finds and winds its way through trees/whose leaves curl yellow and every poem/is found to contain it." Authors featured in the book include John Banville, Sebastian Barry, and Eavan Boland.

The book was issued in 2014 with events in Dublin and in Iowa City. The Iowa City event was held during the Iowa City Book Festival, and featured visiting Irish writers Siobhan Campbell, Stephen James Smith, Drucilla Wall, Eamon Wall, Joseph Woods, and Paddy Woodworth. These six were brought to Iowa City in partnership with Poetry Ireland.

A subsequent poet exchange brought three more poets to the 2016 Iowa City Book Festival. Again in partnership with Poetry Ireland, the poets Afric McGlinchey, Jim Maguire, and the aforementioned Nell Regan, participated in a handful of events during the festival.

These endeavors have strengthened the relationship between Dublin and Iowa



Alan Hayes with the Dublin City of Literature, Iowa City Mayor Matt Hayek, John Kenyon with the Iowa City UNESCO City of Literature, and International Writing Program Director Christopher Merrill celebrate the launch of *Town Stitched by River* at the 2014 Iowa City Book Festival.

City, given the Irish poets a new audience, and exposed Iowa City-area readers to Irish literary culture.

This program helps to achieve the following Creative Cities Network objectives:

–Strengthen International Cooperation between cities that have recognized creativity as a strategic factor of their sustainable development

–Stimulate and enhance initiatives led by member cities to make creativity an essential component of urban development, notably through partnerships involving the public and private sectors and civil society

–Strengthening the creation, production, distribution and enjoyment of cultural goods and services and fostering the creative economy

5.2 Sub-Network Collaborations

The Iowa City UNESCO City of Literature has collaborated with a number of other cities in the sub-network on projects that have shared writing from one city with another, celebrated song-writing, offered virtual tours of literary landmarks and more. Highlights include:

–**Krakov poetry projection:** The work of several community poets has been shared as part of this project, which involves poems from around the world being projected on the walls of Krakow’s market square. Selected poems come from Iowa City’s “Poetry in Public” project, which in similar fashion features poems from local writers presented in public spaces.

–**Dunedin poetry dots:** This project features the work poets on large, removable “dots,” which in this case also featured an area photo of Iowa landscape. These dots were applied in public spaces around Dunedin, forging a tighter bond with other Cities of Literature, and in the case of the Iowa City poet, expanding the audience for and cultural impact of the work.

–**Melbourne’s “20 Minute Cities.”** For this project, two up-and-coming Iowa City authors led a guided virtual tour of Iowa City literary landmarks – the Dey House, which houses the Iowa Writer’s Workshop, for example – for viewers during the Digital Writers Festival hosted by Melbourne.

–**Reykjavik poetry project:** This project asked each city to provide one poem that

addresses the city, and a photo that ties with the poem, for a display at the Reykjavik city hall.



A portion of a poem by former Iowa Poet Laureate Marvin Bell is shown on the wall of a building in Krakow’s market square as part of a sub-network collaboration among Cities of Literature.

These collaborations help to achieve the following Creative Cities Network objectives:

–*Strengthen International Cooperation between cities that have recognized creativity as a strategic factor of their sustainable development*

–*Stimulate and enhance initiatives led by member cities to make creativity an essential component of urban development, notably through partnerships involving the public and private sectors and civil society*

–*Strengthening the creation, production, distribution and enjoyment of cultural goods and services and fostering the creative economy*

6. PROPOSED ACTION PLAN FOR THE FORTHCOMING MID-TERM PERIOD OF FOUR YEARS

The Iowa City UNESCO City of Literature organization in November approved a four-year strategic plan designed to take it to the next required UCCN Monitoring Report. It can be found in the Annex. The following points fall under the goals outlined in that plan, though they are not enumerated in the plan itself.

In addition to the specific goals outlined below, the City of Literature office will work with staff at the City of Iowa City to evaluate current policies as they relate to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, looking for ways that current policies already align with Agenda goals, and seeking ways the policies

could be enhanced or altered to address issues in the Agenda goals that are seen as priorities by staff and elected officials.

The organization also seeks to connect and collaborate with other cities in the Creative Cities Network. This includes the other Cities of Literature, as well as the other designated cities in the United States and in the Americas. Meetings at all three levels are in the planning stages.

Finally, most of the projects outlined in section 4 of this document will be maintained, and in some instances, will be expanded.

6.1 Presentation of a maximum of three initiatives, programs or projects aimed at achieving the objectives of the Network locally

6.1.a. Study of the Community's Literary Sector

Over the next four years, the Iowa City UNESCO City of Literature organization plans to conduct a survey of the literary sector in the community, with the goal of determining the scale and scope of the sector, its economic impact, and, by setting this as a benchmark, its growth.

The organization will partner with the City of Iowa City and other relevant governmental agencies, as well as the University of Iowa and the Iowa City-Coralville Area Convention & Visitors Bureau on the study. Others involved in

the project include writers, editors, publishers, booksellers, librarians, and those in the book arts.

With the information in hand, the city can use the results to direct policy as it relates to the promotion and support of those in this sector. The various entities within the sector can use the information when making decisions about next steps and potential growth. The City of Literature organization will use the information to evaluate its own projects and programs as it seeks to find the most efficient and effective way to direct resources.

6.1.b. Establish an arts center

At present, Iowa City lacks a community arts center. While numerous arts and

culture organizations operate within their own spaces, no one dedicated space

exists. Along with other entities in the community, including the city government, the City of Literature over the next four years plans to study the feasibility of such a project, looking at space needs, funding possibilities and long-term operational resources required for such a facility.

If the project proves necessary and is constructed, it will connect people and organizations in a number of different arts sectors, including literature, the visual arts, crafts and folk art, media arts, and more. This will lead to potential cross-sector collaboration.

6.1.c. Work with City officials to develop of City of Literature-related signage and amenities

The City of Iowa City is undergoing significant developments in the community that will greatly enhance the visibility of its UNESCO designation in the next four years. These include development of signage that will emphasize the designation and the city's status as part of an international network, as well as more public art-related projects that will highlight specific pieces of work

by area writers and artists.

In addition, as the city develops its new Riverfront Crossings District and the Riverfront Crossings Park that will anchor it, literary-themed amenities are being planned that not only will highlight the city's literary heritage, but will serve as a way to connect readers and writers through open, public spaces conducive to readings and other events.

6.2 Presentation of a maximum of three initiatives, programs or projects aimed at achieving the objectives of the Network on an international level, particularly those involving other member cities in the Network

6.2.a. MusicIC Festival

The Iowa City UNESCO City of Literature organization took over this festival, which celebrates the intersection between literature and classical music, in 2016. A major reason was the opportunity to leverage the city's membership in the Creative Cities Network to expand programming and to seek collaborations with other cities in the network.

The festival involves a series of four concerts, each centering on music that was inspired by literature, or featuring music that inspired literature. These events, which include a family concert with teaching elements that is held at the



Iowa City writer Daniel Khalastchi reads a story inspired by Mendelssohn while the Solera Quartet waits in the shadows to perform.

Iowa City Public Library, seek to increase

patrons' knowledge of these connections, and to enrich the listening and reading experience as a result.

Past festivals have centered on existing compositions. While this mainly has drawn from the canon – Beethoven, Mozart, and Mendelssohn, for example – works from younger composers also has been performed. With the festival's now-explicit connection with the City of Literature, plans call for direct collaborations with other UCCN cities sometime in the next four years. Ideally, a composer from a City of Music would be commissioned to create a new work inspired by writing from an Iowa author. In the future, such works could be inspired by writing from authors in other Cities of Literature. The music then could be

performed either remotely from Iowa City and shown elsewhere, or could be performed in the other cities by ensembles based there.

The result of such collaboration would be to foster connections between the participating cities, to create an audience for the works of the participating composers and authors, and to strengthen ties between the UCCN organizations.

The scope and timeline of this expansion of the MusicIC program is largely contingent on funding, and the organization will seek non-traditional funds in the form of grants to cover the cost of commissioning new work while maintaining the quality of the festival.

6.2.b. Online translation conference

The University of Iowa in Iowa City was home to the first translation workshop, created 50 years ago and directed by Daniel Weissbort, who also served as co-founder of *Modern Poetry in Translation*. Today, the UI remains one of few institutions in the country with a graduate program in translation. The current head of that program, Aron Aji, plans to work with the City of Literature to host an online translator's conference for those in other Cities of Literature and aspiring Cities of Literature.

Preliminary discussions have begun on this project, which would involve

translators from both higher education institutions and the publishing industry working in concert to create a program designed to further their work and create international collaborations.

A steering committee composed of translators from a handful of cities will convene to create the program. Melbourne has offered the technical expertise of its Digital Writer's Festival to handle the back-end for the event.

Plans call for holding the conference in 2018, with the possibility, depending on success, of making it a regular event.

6.2.c. Host a Cities of Literature annual meeting

The Iowa City UNESCO City of Literature organization will make a proposal to the Cities of Literature to host the annual sub-group meeting in 2018 to coincide with the 10th anniversary of its designation.

The meeting would involve hosting representatives from the 20-plus other cities in the sub-group and programming two to three days of meetings and related events to coincide with the visit.

6.3 Estimated annual budget for implementing the proposed action plan

Please present the estimated overall annual budget for implementing the proposed action plan, as well as the percentages that will be devoted to local and international initiatives. All of the resources that the city expects to contribute should be mentioned, not only including financial resources but also other resources (personnel, facilities, etc.). Please indicate any funding applications envisaged to national and international funding bodies, in order to complement the budget.

Iowa City UNESCO City of Literature organization Budget for July 16-June 17	
Income	
In-Kind Donation	13,830.00
Public Support	123,500.00
Private Support	25,000.00
Other Types of Income	3,160.00
Program Income	128,250.00
Total Income	293,740.00
Expense	
Personnel	149,645.00
Contract Services	3,850.00
Operations	11,650.00
Insurance & Equipment	3,700.00
Business Expenses	3,850.00
Organization Promotion	8,850.00
Program Administration	108,250.00
Total Expense	289,795.00
Net Income	3945

Note: The Public Support line includes funding from the City of Iowa City, the City of Coralville, the City of North Liberty, the University of Iowa, and Johnson County. In addition, each of these entities is represented on the organization's board of directors, including three each for Iowa City and the University of Iowa. Other staff time is expended in assistance given for promotion and communication, as well as event-based assistance.

Much of the in-kind total noted in the budget comes in the form of office space and equipment contributed by the Iowa

City Public Library for the City of Literature office.

Programmatic income is a mixture of contributions, sponsorships, grants, and earned income from the sale of merchandise or vendor space. The organization seeks grant funding on a regular basis, at the local, state, and national levels.

Also note that staff time, while spent predominantly on programming, is not assigned on a pro-rated basis to the programming line item.

6.4 Plan for communication and awareness

The City of Literature organization's communication plan is a multi-tiered, multi-platform approach that seeks to raise awareness locally, on a state level, nationally, and internationally.

The organization re-branded in 2015, with a new logo to draw attention to the designation, and a tagline that emphasizes the many facets of the City of Literature (see report cover page). This branding has been used locally and regionally to promote events, as well as nationally and internationally to promote the city's designation and its literary assets.



The organization also works with partners to promote the designation, including the Iowa City-Coralville Area Convention and Visitors Bureau, the Eastern Iowa Tourism Association, and Travel Iowa. In addition, the organization works with the U.S. National Commission for UNESCO through the U.S. State Department on brand-awareness and promotion of events and programs.

The message depends on the target audience. The localized communication is more event and asset based; specific opportunities are communicated in an attempt to share the richness of the community's literary culture with residents and frequent visitors. More regional and national communication is broader, communicating more general details about the community and its literary assets in an attempt to drive tourism or those interested in relocation. Iowa City is a top retirement destination, and as a recent article in *Money* magazine noted,

the city's literary culture is a big draw for that population.

Communications take many forms. The organization maintains a number of websites:

- www.iowacityofliterature.org
- www.onebooktwobook.org
- www.iowacitybookfestival.org
- www.musicIC.org
- www.writersonthefly.org

It also maintains Facebook and Twitter accounts for all but the last of these.

The organization also communicates regularly through an email newsletter that highlights both its programs and events and other notable news from the literary sector. This includes a calendar.

Advertising campaigns driven by the organization's larger events are undertaken each year, with largely event-based promotion that also highlights the city's UNESCO designation, with all promotions designed to create links between the event and the brand, the brand and the designation, and the designation and the event.

The impact of these promotions is an increased awareness of the city's literary sector and of its UNESCO designation. The plan will be augmented and expanded as additional audiences are identified and resources are secured.



FY17-20 Strategic Plan

Mission: To celebrate and support literature on a local, regional, national, and international level, connecting readers and writers through the power of story.

1. The profile of the city's designation as a City of Literature and the profile of this organization will be raised through a marketing and outreach plan.

- a. A survey will be conducted to set a benchmark related to the community's views and awareness of the designation and the organization
- b. A marketing plan will be implemented with the goal of increasing awareness of the designation and the organization, particularly targeting specific constituencies
- c. New staffing will focus on promotion and marketing

2. The needs of key stakeholders and constituencies will be evaluated and prioritized, and will be used to guide programming and operational efforts

- a. Programs will be evaluated annually regarding costs and revenue, audience and relevance to the organization's mission.
- b. Criteria for evaluating proposed new programs will be created and new program opportunities will be evaluated
- c. The value of the literary arts sector – and the organization's role within it – will be studied and a report created to highlight findings

3. The organization will serve as a leader in local literary community

- a. We will explore ways to participate in local literacy efforts as they mesh with our One Book Two Book Festival

- b. We will discuss with partners ways to preserve the creative process of authors when that curation is compromised by digital advances

 **4. The necessary resources to fund and staff current and future programming and operations will be secured**

- a. A diversity of funding sources – including partnering governmental entities, grants, fundraising and event-related income -- will be sought to move the organization toward a greater balance between public and private support
- b. Staff will be expanded – either through additional hours or the hiring of new people – to meet promotional and fundraising needs
- c. A long-term financial plan, including a reserve policy, will be created
- d. A gift-acceptance policy will be created
- e. A space-needs evaluation will be completed

 **5. The organization will fulfill the requirements set out by UNESCO for membership in the Creative Cities Network**

- a. A representative will attend annual network and sub-network meetings
- b. Partnerships, both within the subnetwork and beyond, will be pursued
- c. The quadrennial report will be prepared and filed with UNESCO