The IBBY-Asahi Reading Promotion Award

To commemorate the 20th IBBY Congress in Tokyo, the IBBY-Asahi Reading Promotion Award was established in 1986 by IBBY (International Board on Books for Young People) under the sponsorship of the Asahi Shimbun newspaper company. The award is given biennially to two non-profit making groups or institutions which by their outstanding activities are judged to be making a lasting contribution to book promotion programmes for children and young people. The generous support by the Asahi Shimbun allows IBBY to present a diploma and US$ 10,000 to each winner to encourage its activities in the future.

IBBY-Asahi Reading Promotion Award Jury 2014
President of the Jury: Kiyoko Matsouka (Japan); members: Marilar Aleixandre (Spain), Hasmig Chahinian (France), Nadia El Kholy (Egypt), Azucena Galindo (Mexico), Linda Pavonetti (USA) and Timotea Vrablova (Slovakia).

Each nomination is judged according to the following criteria:

- How well does the project support IBBY's Mission Statement?
- Is there existing or possible support for the project from other funding sources?
- Has the project been in existence for at least two years prior to its nomination? Is the project sustainable? Does it provide a framework for growth?
- What is the impact of the project? Does it reach its stated target audience?
- Is the project original and innovative?
- Can the project provide a model for others?
- Is it easily replicated? Are any printed materials available and are they of high literary quality?
- Can the results of the project be evaluated?

Candidates 2014

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Sponsored by the Asahi Shimbun
PRAESA – The Project for the Study of Alternative Education

South Africa

PRAESA is an independent unit for research and development attached to the faculty of humanities at the University of Cape Town. It was established as a result of the struggle against apartheid education and its initial function was to document alternatives that had been tried out and could guide the new education process.

PRAESA concentrates on various aspects of early education, such as:
- research and development programmes for bilingualism and biliteracy in early childhood education;
- raising the status of the (official) African languages for oral and written language functions in society;
- mentoring adults to deepen their understanding and appreciation of the value of becoming reading and writing role models for children of all ages and supporting their growing understanding and strategies for achieving this;
- initiating the development of materials for use with babies and children in multilingual situations through original writing and translation.

The project highlights language policy in education and its implementation at national and provincial government levels. It promotes a well-run mother tongue based bilingual system that provides the best of both worlds for all children by encouraging them to communicate in a language that they both understand. It also provides in-service teacher education, developmental research into multilingual classrooms, early literacy reading and showing how to promote a culture of reading in multilingual settings. This encourages lifelong communication and helps the children to become readers for life.

Nal’ibali – here’s the story the National Reading Promotion Movement.
Nal’ibali has developed from the Vulindlela Reading Club (VCR) in Langa, Cape Town and VCR is at the heart of Nal’ibali. The aim is to inspire parents, grandparents, teachers and other adults to share their reading experiences with children.

Nal’ibali is divided in two main parts.
1. Nal’ibali-Vulindlela Network, a network of reading Clubs, established in 2012. The Early Literacy Unit of PRAESA contributes with support, information and inspiration. All the clubs are lead by volunteers. They offer training through workshops and other activities.
2. A literacy campaign that disseminates bilingual materials, columns and supplements 35 times a year for the reading clubs through the most significant daily papers in South Africa.

The Children's Book Bank

Canada

The Children's Book Bank was founded in 2007 with a mission to support children's literacy by recycling good quality used children's books and distributing them free of charge to children living in high-needs neighbourhoods.

The first children's book bank store was opened in 2008 in the Regent Park area of Toronto – one of Toronto's high density/low income neighbourhoods and home to many new Canadians. There are 102 nationalities within a two-kilometre radius of the store!

The Book Bank operates much like a bookshop, although the books are free to the children. There is no membership, registration or fees of any kind. On each visit the children are permitted to select and take a book home to keep. The members of staff also provide the children and their families with advice on literacy and book selection.

The Book Bank offers a unique service, supporting book ownership rather than just access, connecting a supply of gently used children's books with the opportunity for having books in their homes. Children in families who may lack resources for purchasing books are able to begin building personal libraries, increasing their literacy and literary backgrounds, helping them to see books as “familiar objects” in their own homes. Parents and teachers have reported that access to book ownership through the Book Bank has improved literacy in the neighbourhood and enhanced the children's academic performance.

The Book Bank also offers a number of literacy-support programmes including a programme to teach parents how to read to babies (Books for Babies), a dictionary giveaway programme (Words for Wee Ones) and an after-school book buddies programme (Stories for Students).

The Book Bank has a staff of one full-time and two part-time members and a volunteer base of over 50 individuals, including a large number of retired teachers and librarians. The Book Bank also relies on the support of thousands of anonymous volunteers who run school and community book drives to supply the Book Bank with books.

Every day the Book Bank gives away approximately 250 books at its store and approximately another 3,000 books a month to its collaborative partners for their own book banks and other schools and agencies needing books for distribution to children.

In its first five years of operation the Book Bank distributed over 400,000 free books!