

20 April 2011

PUBLISHERS URGED TO SUPPORT NEW YOUTH-LED READING AND WRITING ROADSHOW

The Reading Agency is inviting publishers to support the MyVoice Roadshow - its groundbreaking new reading and writing project created by and for young people.

The MyVoice Roadshow will be a week-long programme (23-30 July 2011) of exciting and creative events, workshops, exhibitions and performances focused around reading and writing. Five different library venues have been selected to host the Roadshow for a day - Weymouth, Great Yarmouth, St Helens, Sunderland and Westminster - reaching an estimated 4,500 young people.

The MyVoice Roadshow, the first of its kind in England, is being programmed and promoted by young people living near the five venues who may not have previously engaged with the arts or literature. Delivered by library services with the support of publishers, writers and creative professionals, the Roadshow aims to entice and enthuse creative young people by giving them the opportunity to meet writers and artists, explore their own creative expression and potentially unearth new local talent in the process.

Publishers can get involved by partnering with one or more of the five library services hosting a Roadshow, helping local young people explore the world of publishing and collaborating with them on a unique, creative initiative. There are also opportunities for publishers to suggest readings, writer workshops and online content to showcase the full range and diversity of literature from fiction and non-fiction, to graphic novels, manga, poetry and plays.

Interested publishers are invited to put together a brief pitch that outlines their offer to the young people coordinating each MyVoice Roadshow; the young people will then select the publisher(s) that best fit their vision. Fees and expenses for artists selected by the young people will be covered.

The MyVoice Roadshow demonstrates the vital role of libraries in promoting reading and writing in local communities (See Notes to editors). It is being run nationally by The Reading Agency, and is supported by Arts Council England through Grants for the arts. The MyVoice Roadshow is part of the larger MyVoice platform which will be working with 20 library services over the next three years across England, funded by The Big Lottery.

Miranda McKearney, Director of The Reading Agency comments: "We want to explore with publishers what happens when young people take the lead in promoting reading and writing differently. MyVoice is a fabulous opportunity to connect writers to a whole new audience and way of working."

For more information about publisher involvement/pitching and the MyVoice Roadshow, please contact Laurie Jarmain: laurie.jarmain@readingagency.org.uk

For media information
about MyVoice and The Reading Agency:

Debbie Hyde, Oasis Media:
debbie.hyde@oasismedia.co.uk
07956 320 486

Notes to editors:

The MyVoice Roadshow will take place over one week (23 - 30 July 2011). The five day-long events will be at:

- Weymouth Library, Dorset
- St Helens Central Library, St Helens
- Church Street Library, Westminster
- Great Yarmouth Community Library, Norfolk
- Sunderland City Library and Arts Centre, Sunderland

The MyVoice Roadshow is part of a larger MyVoice platform, working with 20 library services over the next three years across England, led by young people and funded by The Big Lottery. MyVoice will open up creative reading and writing opportunities to 30,000 disadvantaged young people aged 11 to 19 in England who would not usually use their library. MyVoice will get them involved in their local branches and youth spaces by choosing books for their peers, managing a budget, interviewing staff and developing ideas online. Contact Laurie Jarmain: laurie.jarmain@readingagency.org.uk or visit www.readingagency.org.uk/young/myvoice

The Reading Agency is an independent charity working to inspire more people to read more. It is funded by the Arts Council and the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council. (www.readingagency.org.uk)