

**PRESS RELEASE**

# **IPG reveals winners of the 2021 Independent Publishing Awards**

The Independent Publishers Guild is delighted to announce the 13 winners of this year's Independent Publishing Awards. They are:

**IPG Independent Publisher of the Year**

Nosy Crow

**Paperback Shop Trade Publisher of the Year**

Bloomsbury Publishing

**Clays Children's Publisher of the Year**

Nosy Crow

**PLS Academic and Professional Publisher of the Year**

Class Publishing

**Westchester Education Services Education Publisher of the Year**

Brilliant Publications

**IPG Specialist Consumer Publisher of the Year**

David & Charles

**Nick Robinson Newcomer Award**

Magic Cat Publishing

**Deanta International Award**

Nosy Crow

**IPG Marketing Award**

Pluto Press

**Alison Morrison Diversity Award**

SAGE Publishing

**IPG Sustainability Award**

Cambridge University Press

**The Bookseller Young Independent Publisher of the Year**

Shanon Rademacher, Class Publishing

**GBS Services to Independent Publishers Award**

Bookswarm

Leading the 2021 winners is children’s publisher **Nosy Crow**. It becomes the 15<sup>th</sup> recipient of the flagship Independent Publisher of the Year Award, and is the first company to win it twice, following success in 2016.

Nosy Crow was one of five Publishers of the Year on the shortlist for the Award, having won the title of Clay’s Children’s Publisher of the Year. It was joined there by **Bloomsbury Publishing**, Paperback Shop Trade Publisher of the Year; **Class Publishing**, PLS Academic and Professional Publisher of the Year; **Brilliant Publications**, Westchester Education Services Education Publisher of the Year; and **David & Charles**, IPG Specialist Consumer Publisher of the Year.

Nosy Crow completed a hat-trick of prizes with the Deanta International Award. Another independent children’s publisher recognised at the Awards was **Magic Cat Publishing**, recipient of the Nick Robinson Newcomer Award less than two years after launching. **Pluto Press** received the IPG Marketing Award, **SAGE Publishing** the Alison Morrison Diversity Award and **Cambridge University Press** the IPG Sustainability Award. Completing the list of winners were **Shanon Rademacher of Class Publishing**, who was named The Bookseller Young Independent Publisher of the Year; and website developer **Bookswarm**, who received the GBS Services to Independent Publishers Award.

While some of the winners are familiar to the Awards, six of them—Brilliant Publications, David & Charles, Magic Cat Publishing, Pluto Press, Shanon Rademacher and Bookswarm—picked up prizes for the first time. Of the 32 different companies on the shortlists, 13 businesses were making their first appearances at the Awards.

All 13 winners were honoured at a special Awards lunch at the OXO Tower Brasserie in London on Tuesday 21 September 2021. IPG chief executive Bridget Shine says: “Huge congratulations to all our 2021 Independent Publishing Awards, and to everyone who made the shortlists. These are outstanding businesses and talented people who showed independent publishers at their resilient, creative and agile best in 2020, and they inspire us all. After more than a year and a half without live events, it has been a thrill to celebrate their success in person.”

The IPG would like to thank the sponsors of the 2021 Independent Publishing Awards: Clays, Deanta, GBS, Publishers’ Licensing Services, The Bookseller, Paperback Shop and Westchester Education Services.

The IPG is also grateful to all the judges of the Awards: Huw Alexander, textBOX; Graham Bell, EDItEUR; Tim Davies, Westchester Publishing Services; Elise Dillsworth, Elise Dillsworth Agency; Eela Devani, Copyright Licensing Agency; Vicky Ellis, Clays; Alison Flood, the Guardian; Jonathan Harris, IPG President; Ruth Jones, Ingram Content Group; Hazel Kenyon, Nielsen Book; Stephen Lustig, SJ Music Publications; Steve Potter, World of

Books; Miles Poynton, consultant; Darren Ryan, Deanta; Ken Rhodes; Kieron Smith, Blackwell's; Caroline Summers, The Paperback Shop; and George Walkley, consultant.

Judges' comments about each of the winners of the 2021 IPG Independent Publishing Awards follow.

### **IPG Independent Publisher of the Year and Clays Children's Publisher of the Year**

**Nosy Crow** receives the title of IPG Independent Publisher of the Year for the second time. The judges of this Award applauded its remarkable growth, stellar sales in the UK and overseas and superb response to all the challenges of the pandemic. "Even by its own high standards Nosy Crow had an exceptional year," they said. "They know exactly what they want to achieve and how to go about it... everything they do is professional and passionate."

*Also shortlisted for the IPG Independent Publisher of the Year Award were Bloomsbury Publishing, Brilliant Publications, Class Publishing and David & Charles.*

Nosy Crow also won the Children's Publisher of the Year category for the sixth time. Judges in this category particularly admired the way it had sustained international sales, set up its own field sales force in the UK and published a free digital book about coronavirus for children. "There's so much to like about Nosy Crow. It made some brave decisions in a difficult year, and the Covid book was an important piece of publishing."

*Also shortlisted for the Clays Children's Publisher of the Year Award were Sweet Cherry Publishing and Usborne Publishing.*

### **Paperback Shop Trade Publisher of the Year**

**Bloomsbury Publishing** wins this Award for the first time. It had a string of bestsellers last year and responded very nimbly to lockdowns, keeping publishing schedules on track, shifting sales, marketing and events online and actively supporting independent bookshops. Judges said the business managed to retain an entrepreneurial spirit despite its size. "Bloomsbury does things well right across the board... it serves its authors and reading communities brilliantly."

*Also shortlisted for the Paperback Shop Trade Publisher of the Year Award were Atlantic Books, Faber & Faber and Hardie Grant.*

### **PLS Academic & Professional Publisher of the Year**

**Class Publishing** wins this Award for the first time, after four previous shortlistings. It responded to the many challenges of the pandemic very well. Its apps for emergency workers came into their own, and lots of other activity moved online overnight. Judges also liked the care it had shown to staff, authors and customers. “Class quietly did some really important work in 2020,” they said. “They make clever use of their content and understand exactly what people want from them.”

*Also shortlisted for the PLS Academic & Professional Publisher of the Year Award were Bloomsbury Publishing, Bristol University Press and Edward Elgar Publishing.*

### **Westchester Education Services Education Publisher of the Year**

**Brilliant Publications** is a first-time Independent Publishing Awards winner. It adapted quickly and constructively to the closure of schools, providing teachers and parents with digital resources, and the goodwill paid off in a sharp increase in direct sales over the year. “Brilliant has a very good understanding of what teachers need... it really stepped up to the plate in 2020,” said the judges.

*Also shortlisted for the Westchester Education Services Education Publisher of the Year Award were Bloomsbury Publishing and Jolly Learning.*

### **IPG Specialist Consumer Publisher of the Year**

**David & Charles** is another first-time winner at the Independent Publishing Awards. The arts and crafts specialist has flourished since a management buyout in 2019, with strengths including beautiful design and production, smart data-led marketing, outstanding customer service and good brand partnerships. “They know their audience inside out and have very clear strategies for reaching them,” judges said.

*Also shortlisted for the IPG Specialist Consumer Publisher of the Year Award were How2Become, Unbound and Vertebrate Publishing.*

### **Nick Robinson Newcomer Award**

**Magic Cat Publishing** has made a huge impression in young children’s publishing since launching its first 11 books last year. Judges liked the way it has thought well beyond UK publishing, generating international interest and looking for spin-off products like games and jigsaws. “Magic Cat is already a very serious publishing house. For such a new business and small list and team, the sales numbers are extraordinary,” they said.

*Also shortlisted for the Nick Robinson Newcomer Award were Chelsea Green*

*Publishing UK and Swift Press.*

### **Deanta International Award**

**Nosy Crow** wins this Award for the fifth time in nine years. It achieved yet more international growth in 2020, and judges particularly liked the way it responded to the cancellation of book fairs and travel with animated catalogues and virtual meetings. “Nosy Crow have amazing people who go the extra mile. They listen to their customers, understand their markets and respond brilliantly... it’s a textbook international operation.”

*Also shortlisted for the Deanta International Award were Jolly Learning and Sweet Cherry Publishing.*

### **IPG Marketing Award**

**Pluto Press** wins this Award for the marketing of ‘Outspoken by Pluto’, a four-book series of books for young adults. Its campaign used proof copies, YouTube events, Instagram and podcasts to spread the word, and generated very good direct sales from the Pluto website. “The campaign defined its target market well, set clear objectives and went after them hard... it’s a classic intertwining of great editorial and great marketing,” said the judges.

*Also shortlisted for the IPG Marketing Award were Kogan Page and Nosy Crow.*

### **Alison Morrison Diversity Award**

**SAGE Publishing**’s journals and books have long championed under-represented groups and challenged inequalities, and it stepped up its own work with a new Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Taskforce in 2020. SAGE is also a leader on accessibility, striving to open up content to more people. Judges said: “SAGE has been working hard on this for a long time, and it runs right through the structure and philosophy of the business.”

*Highly commended for the Alison Morrison Diversity Award was Emerald Publishing.*

*Also shortlisted for the Award were Oneworld, Princeton University Press and Unbound.*

### **IPG Sustainability Award**

**Cambridge University Press** wins this Award for the second year in a row. It had another 12 months of influential publishing in the sustainability field in

2020, and set itself ambitious targets on reducing carbon emissions and plastic use, driven by its Environment Action Group. “CUP’s publishing does important work to highlight the climate emergency, and its people are following that lead with changes too,” judges said.

*Also shortlisted for the IPG Sustainability Award was Hawthorn Press.*

### **The Bookseller Young Independent Publisher of the Year**

**Shanon Rademacher at Class Professional Publishing** has turned her hand to countless jobs since joining as an editorial assistant in 2016. Now senior digital editor, she has steered Class’ apps for the ambulance service, which significantly helped Covid-19 responses in 2020. Judges said: “Shanon’s made an extraordinary difference, not just at Class but beyond—you can sense her passion for what she does.”

*Also shortlisted for The Bookseller Young Independent Publisher of the Year Award were Nia Beynon at Boldwood Books and Michael Watson at Watkins Publishing.*

### **GBS Services to Independent Publishers Award**

**Bookswarm** has been behind the success of many independent publishers’ websites, which became a crucial discovery and sales tool in 2020. Founder Simon Appleby and his team are widely admired for their knowledge of publishers’ needs and responsive, can-do approach. One said: “They build excellent, robust, commercial and easy to manage websites, completely on brief... fantastic ongoing support and brilliant value for money.”

*Also shortlisted for the GBS Services to Independent Publishers Award were The Book Publicist, Edelweiss, Glassboxx, Inpress and Suzanne Collier.*

**For any further information about the 2021 IPG Independent Publishing Awards, please contact Bridget Shine, IPG chief executive  
Tel 01437 563335 Email [bridget@independentpublishersguild.com](mailto:bridget@independentpublishersguild.com)**