

**3<sup>rd</sup> edition**

Champalimaud Foundation

Lisbon, Portugal



# WORLD BOOK 2025

# The Future of Reading 03/04 sep 25



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We're starting soon

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#Book20 #TheFutureofReading

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# Reinvention as a Mission for Humanity

Since its origins, the book has been irrefutable proof of our ability to reinvent ourselves. In this edition, we highlighted the Darwinian idea that adaptation is probably the greatest and most essential quality of the human species. It is not the strongest form that survives, but the one that best adapts.

This is how The Reinvention of Species was born — a mission that goes beyond the sector, seeking to contribute to a conscious and resilient society. This edition aimed to transform the immense digital challenge into a creative impulse and a platform for global action, with a focus on literacy, citizenship, and innovation.

We believe in the power of pages to awaken, challenge, and shape. Book 2.0 celebrates the book's ability to be both a cultural heritage

and a driver of technological innovation. Literacy and critical thinking are the most valuable assets of the future economy, and the book is the irreplaceable tool for developing them.

The future of the book is inseparable from the future of humanity. By tirelessly promoting reading, we strengthen the pillars of citizenship, critical reflection, and progress in Portugal. To reinvent the book is also to reinvent our ability to imagine, learn, and build a more informed and free society.

**Silvia Rodriguez**

*Executive Director Book 2.0*






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# Book 2.0 #The Future of Reading

3-4 September  Champalimaud Foundation — Lisbon, Portugal

## We have told stories since the beginning of time

From the earliest cave paintings to modern e-readers, storytelling remains the way we pass on experiences, preserve memories and imagine the future — only the medium through which we read has constantly changed. The 3rd edition of Book 2.0, which brought together

## +700 participants and +40 speakers

at the Champalimaud Foundation for two days of discussion on the challenges regarding books, reading, literacy and the publishing market in the 21st century, was born from this timeless impulse, reminding us that **reading is perhaps the most human of all inventions.**

This year's theme — “The Reinvention of Species” — was inspired by Darwin and his celebrated theory that survival **does not favour the strongest nor the most intelligent, but those**

**who best adapt.** Likewise, the book is today called to transform itself, to find new ways of engaging with technology and readers, without losing its essence as a vehicle of knowledge and power. On 3 and 4 September, the auditorium stage welcomed more than 40 national and international voices — writers, scientists, politicians, activists, educators and cultural leaders from across continents — who, before hundreds of participants, explored the challenges and opportunities of the **future of reading** in a world undergoing accelerated transformation.

This edition offered profound and urgent conversations centred on the reinvention of books — from artificial intelligence as a creative partner and the need to protect copyright, to digital strategies for promotion and distribution — within a perspective that also integrated themes such as the environmental sustainability of book production, digital literacy and education, freedom of expression and publishing,

the role of libraries and bookshops as spaces of cultural resistance, the global strength of the Portuguese language, parenting in the age of screens and, above all, the defence of reading as a fundamental human right and irreplaceable pillar of democracy.

The 3rd edition of Book 2.0 stands as a stage for reflection and reinvention.

## A space where the book is not merely a cultural object, but a symbol of adaptation, resilience and future.



Between pages and possibilities, **we reinvent** ourselves to create the future.

## # OPENING VIDEO

The opening video of Book 2.0 – The Future of Reading marked the beginning of the event with a celebration of words, books, and imagination.

A visual and auditory journey that pays tribute to authors, readers, publishers, and all those who believe that reading remains the most powerful driver of individual and collective transformation.

## The Reinvention of Species



Watch the opening video of the **3rd edition** of Book 2.0

## In the words of those who experienced the event.

# Between ideas and emotions, the **audience shared** their enthusiasm, inspiration, and the **desire to keep reading** - and thinking about - the future.

“

*The evolution of the human species undoubtedly depends on reading.*

“

Despite advances in AI, the reinvention of the ***publishing market*** will always largely depend on human ***creativity*** and ***connection***.

“

It is ***surprise*** that makes ***great literature***.

“

A very complete and truly ***out-of-the-box experience***.

“

To love books is to ***love life***.

“

*Those who read are happier, and so are those who write.*

“

***Essential*** for everyone who cares about ***the future***.

“

The future of ***the book*** is the future of ***humanity***.

“

Book 2.0 is an event that gives a ***voice to books***, which are often alone - like many of us - but which ***come together here. Congratulations!***

2  
DAYS

+700  
PARTICIPANTS

+27  
SESSIONS

BOOK  
2.0

# The Future of Reading

+240  
APEL MEMBERS

+19  
PARTNERS

+40  
SPEAKERS

# Master of Ceremonies

Alberta Marques Fernandes # Author and journalist

“

Book 2.0 aims to be more than a book event; it seeks to be a meeting point for all those who are passionate about words, knowledge, information, and creativity. Discussing the future of the book is also about discussing the future of thought.”

— Alberta Marques Fernandes



# About APEL

**Miguel Pauseiro** # President of APEL -  
Portuguese Association of Publishers and Booksellers (Portugal)

The [Portuguese Association of Publishers and Booksellers \(APEL\)](#) is a non-profit association, established on 14 August 1975 and recognised as a Public Interest Legal Entity since 4 May 1995, under the terms of Decree-Law No. 460/77 of 7 November. It is made up of individuals and entities that carry out activities in Portugal as publishers, booksellers, antiquarian booksellers, distributors, resellers, or book exporters, and it also acts as **a collective management organisation for the copyright of these operators.**

APEL's [mission](#) is to promote the sustainable development of the book sector in Portugal, the protection of copyright, editorial diversity, the continuous professional development of sector professionals, and the implementation of actions necessary to promote publishing, distribution, and bookselling activities, both nationally and internationally, for the collective benefit of the rights holders represented by the association.

**It seeks to encourage the production and promotion of literary works in the Portuguese language, published in Portugal, in their various formats,**

helping to ensure universal access to books and reading, as well as to promote higher levels of literacy within society. Through partnerships and diverse forms of collaboration with a wide range of public and private stakeholders, **APEL aims to ensure the presence of Portuguese books on the international stage** and to stimulate debate on challenges and opportunities, so that the sector can adapt and proactively prepare for the innovations and technological transformations anticipated in the future.

## ? DID YOU KNOW?

- In 2024, the 94th edition of the Lisbon Book Fair surpassed one million visitors, recording an average of 45,000 visits per day.
- The ISBN (International Standard Book Number) is a 13-digit number that uniquely identifies books published internationally.
- APEL has been the Portuguese ISBN Agency since 1988 and assigns ISBNs to publishers based in Portugal, Angola, Cape Verde, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique, São Tomé and Príncipe, and Timor-Leste.
- The National ISBN Agency assigns an average of 20 000 ISBNs per year and has approximately 23 000 registered publishers.



# The Reinvention of Species

*“According to Darwin’s *Origin of Species*, it is not the most intellectual of the species that survives; it is not the strongest that survives; but the species that survives is the one that is able best to adapt and adjust to the changing environment in which it finds itself.” – Megginson (1963)*

After two landmark editions, **Book 2.0** returns for its third edition, establishing itself as a space for **reflection** and **innovation** on the future of books and literacy. This year, the event takes place at the Champalimaud Foundation, a symbol of scientific and technological excellence, highlighting the intersection between knowledge and innovation.

We discussed how artificial intelligence, the democratisation of knowledge, sustainability, and the reinvention of literary spaces are transforming our relationship with books, inspiring innovative solutions and policies for the future of the sector and contributing to a **more informed** society, **better prepared** to face current challenges.

## CURIOSITIES

► Despite the economic growth of the publishing sector, reading is still not a daily habit for most Portuguese families.

► Progress over the past five decades in education and access to books has not fully translated into consistent reading habits.



**The role of schools, families and society in general is crucial for ensuring the book is seen as an essential tool for citizenship and the development of human potential, and for transforming reading into a sustainable habit throughout life.”**

— Miguel Pauseiro

# Reaffirming APEL's Mission



**Miguel Pauseiro** # President of APEL - Portuguese Association of Publishers and Booksellers (Portugal)

The **President of APEL** (the Portuguese Publishers and Booksellers Association), Miguel Pauseiro, presented a comprehensive diagnosis of the book market in Portugal, arguing for the urgency of a national strategy for reading and literacy as a **collective commitment** that spans across multiple areas of society.

**The data reveal a paradox: the publishing market reached 202 million euros in 2024, representing a strong growth of 8%.**

Yet Portugal maintains the lowest per capita book-purchasing indicator among comparable European countries, with just 1.3 books purchased per inhabitant.

The study “Book Buying and Reading Habits in Portugal” indicates a positive trajectory: 76% of Portuguese people read at least one book in

2024, an increase from 73% the previous year. The sector's economic growth is notable and demonstrates the resilience of publishing. However, the number of books read decreased: on average, Portuguese people read 5.3 books, and the average among readers fell from 7.9 to 7.2 in 2024. These results confirm that, although the sector is experiencing economic revitalisation, book purchasing and reading are not yet regular habits for most Portuguese families.

Miguel Pauseiro stressed that Portugal faces profound **structural challenges** in democratising reading. The solution, he argued, lies in an integrated approach that combines public policy, technological innovation and social mobilisation, reaffirming reading as an essential tool for citizenship and human development. The role of schools, families and society as a whole is crucial for ensuring that the book is recognised as a lifelong essential resource for every citizen.

# Words without Borders



**Gvantsa Jobava** # President of IPA – International Publishers Association (Georgia)

**Gvantsa Jobava's** message was clear: **the future of the book depends on adaptability, the uncompromising defence of copyright and freedom to publish, and the unity of everyone who is part of the publishing ecosystem.** Drawing on the theme of this Book 2.0 edition, “The Reinvention of Species,” Gvantsa traced a parallel with the evolution of the publishing sector itself, reminding the audience that books have undergone profound transformations over time. From serialised **feuilletons** to **paperbacks**, from the arrival of **audiobooks** to **subscription platforms**, **publishing** has **continually reinvented** itself in response to cultural and technological change.

Fighting piracy remains an ongoing battle, the attempts at censorship and political control of school textbooks threaten editorial independence, and

even academic freedom is under pressure. The talk reflected Gvantsa's personal experience as an activist in Georgia, denouncing the imprisonment of writers and political opponents in her country and warning of the signs of democratic backsliding emerging across the world. “A publisher cannot be a **passive observer**”, she said, adding that the only way to confront current challenges is through unity and international solidarity. Gvantsa emphasized the ethical responsibility that distinguishes publishers from large technology platforms.

**“Unlike big tech, we stand by what we publish: we correct mistakes, we face the courts, we show our faces.”**

This responsibility is the sector's “superpower” and ensures the credibility of the book as a space for dialogue, cultural diversity and critical thinking. To reinforce the idea, she recalled the Ljubljana Manifesto, which advocates promoting long-form reading as a fundamental way to counter the superficiality of social media and the spread of disinformation. She also evoked examples of resistance, such as the recently awarded Belarusian publishers who continued to publish in exile despite repression.

**The book** is an **irreplaceable instrument** to form free and courageous citizens, capable of defending democratic values. “Even in the age of machines, what makes the difference is the people,” she concluded, honouring publishers, authors, booksellers, librarians and readers who together ensure the vitality of books and publishing.



## # DID YOU KNOW?

- The International Publishers Association (IPA), led by Gvantsa Jobava since January 2025, is about to celebrate 130 years of existence.
- The IPA is built on two core pillars: the defence of copyright and the freedom to publish, both of which are now considered to be at risk.
- Artificial intelligence is seen as “a major raid on copyright”, representing one of the sector's main challenges.
- Throughout history, the book has continually reinvented itself: from serial publications to paperbacks, from audiobooks to subscription platforms and digital commerce.

“

**Even in the age of machines, what makes the difference is the people.”**

— Gvantsa Jobava

**A publisher cannot be a passive observer.”**

— Gvantsa Jobava

# The Reinvention of Books

In a constantly changing world, the book remains an essential pillar of **knowledge** and **culture**. In this edition, we reflect on how the evolution of the book accompanies the history of humanity, mirroring cultural, technological, and environmental changes. The way we create, access, and share reading is rapidly changing. With the growing impact of artificial intelligence and sustainability in the publishing sector, it becomes urgent to rethink the future of publishing and reading.

From technological advancement to environmental responsibility, including copyright, distribution chains, and reading spaces, we look at the challenges and opportunities shaping the future of publishing. How can we ensure the **value of the book** in a digital context? What impact will AI have on the creation and circulation of content? How can we rethink publishing practices considering sustainability? And what strategies can protect linguistic diversity in the face of market homogenization?

This edition invites us to reflect on the **role of the book in contemporary society**, as a vehicle of knowledge and transformation.

# AI as Collaborative Companion



**Nadim Sadek** # Author and Founder & CEO of Shimmr AI (Ireland)

Graduated in psychology, author and tech entrepreneur, **Nadim Sadek lives between two worlds** — literary and artistic creation, and leading an AI company focused on publishing. His opening idea was simple:

**if there are eight billion people in the world, then, there are eight billion creators**

Nadim emphasised the importance of democratising access to tools that allow ideas to become books, music, games, inventions or memories. In this process, he believes that artificial intelligence can be a **“creative companion.”**

Rather than using AI as a search engine, Nadim suggests to establish an ongoing dialogue capable of stimulating ideas and structuring arguments.

**He proposed a semantic shift that reflects a more collaborative relationship between humans and machines: calling it “ally intelligence” instead of “artificial intelligence.”**

Instead of fearing the anthropomorphisation of AI, he encouraged seeing it as a distillation of humanity’s collective wisdom, an accessible repository of all knowledge ever produced.

Nadim stressed that AI, unlike humans, does not feel — **it only thinks**. And that difference should reassure us:

**emotional and instinctive dimensions will remain uniquely human.**

“Trust your instincts, your humanity, your emotions, and let them interact with AI to build things together,” he urged. In the publishing sector, Nadim warned that publishers will lose relevance if they fail to embrace AI proactively, giving practical examples such as manuscript filtering, proofreading, large-scale translations, audiobooks with cloned voices and distribution optimisation. He concluded that, **when used ethically, AI can make publishing more efficient and enrich the reading experience**, paving the way for a more diverse and creative future.

## ? CURIOSITIES

- Nadim prefers the term “allied intelligence” rather than “artificial intelligence”, reflecting a vision of collaboration between humans and machines.
- He considers AI a “creative companion”, capable of stimulating ideas, structuring arguments, and revealing hidden meanings.
- He believes that the emotional and instinctive dimension will remain exclusive to humans, even in an increasingly technological world.
- He emphasised that the music industry has successfully integrated AI, while the publishing world remains cautious due to copyright concerns.



“

**Trust your instincts, your humanity, your emotions, and let them interact with AI to build things together”**

— Nadim Sadek

“

Portugal can be a European laboratory for responsible creative innovation.”

— Joana Pinto

## 2 CURIOSITIES

► The conversation between Joana Pinto and André Novais de Paula was moderated by Tiago Freire, bringing together legal, technological, and marketing perspectives.

► The concept of transmedia was highlighted as an opportunity: literary characters can come to life on social media, and technical books can evolve into knowledge hubs.

► Authors' personal branding is becoming a strategic factor, capable of creating loyal reader communities.

► All participants agreed that, despite digital evolution, the book remains at the core of the narrative experience.

# Digital Strategies and Copyright



**André Novais de Paula** # President of the Portuguese Direct and Digital Marketing Association (Portugal)

**Joana Pinto** # Lawyer and Partner at Antas da Cunha ECIJA (Portugal)

**Tiago Freire** # Deputy Editor-in-Chief at ECO (Portugal)

Joana Pinto, lawyer, specialised in technology and AI law, marketing and communication expert André Novais de Paula shared converging **perspectives on legal, technological and strategic concerns**, in a discussion moderated by Tiago Freire, highlighting the need to keep alive the essence of books as a cultural object. Joana opened the debate by noting that **the greatest threat to the sector is not the disappearance of the book but its devaluation as a protected intellectual work**, reduced to free “food” for AI systems. She recalled that hundreds of thousands of books have already been used to train generative models without authorisation or compensation, stressing the urgency of updating legal concepts to ensure that the economic and cultural status of authorial creation is not lost in the digital ecosystem.

From the marketing perspective, André summarised the main challenge pragmatically: **selling books**. In a saturated market where each reading competes with television, video games and social

media, the battle is for readers' attention. He highlighted that promotion is not a detail but an **essential extension** of editorial work. The conversation turned to the risks and opportunities posed by AI. Joana defended innovation that respects rights and incorporates transparency, traceability and fair compensation mechanisms from the outset. She acknowledged progress made through the EU Copyright Directive but criticised Portugal's unambitious transposition, which left authors and publishers in a weak position against large platforms. **She argued for a more active state role and the creation of effective supervisory authorities.**

Tiago introduced the idea of “life beyond the book,” asking about the potential of building communities around stories and characters. André referred to the concept of **transmedia**, arguing that nothing prevents literary characters from having a presence on social media or technical books from being accompanied by updatable knowledge hubs. He also

highlighted the importance of authors' personal branding, developed either by publishers or by the authors themselves, to build loyal communities that will follow each new release.

Joana reminded the audience that expanding a work into other platforms raises additional legal questions: who should commercially exploit these new dimensions, how is author compensation protected, and how is the personal data of members of these communities handled.

**Despite digital opportunities, all agreed that the book remains the irreplaceable foundation of the narrative experience.**

The challenge lies in reconciling **innovation with protection** of authors' and publishers' rights, ensuring the future of the sector is built sustainably without sacrificing authorship or the cultural value of books.

# Societal Benefits of Increasingly Powerful AI



**Axel Voss** # Member of the European Parliament (Germany)

Axel Voss, German member of the European Parliament, presented a reflection on the challenges of AI and its legal framework, highlighting the recently approved AI Act and the growing tensions between copyright and generative systems. He explained that AI is already integrated in sectors such as healthcare, energy, education and security, and will have decisive impacts on societies.

**The challenge, he argued, is to reconcile this reality with legal and democratic principles created in the previous century.**

Acknowledging the enormous potential of the technology, he warned of risks, such as the manipulation of public opinion. “Today it is already difficult to distinguish what is real from what is false, and that weakens our democracies”, Axel said.

**The AI Act seeks to respond to these dilemmas through a risk-based approach.** At the top are “prohibited uses” of AI, such as emotional recognition or

mass biometric surveillance. Next are “high-risk systems,” subject to strict rules, followed by lower-risk systems with fewer obligations. Axel noted that the boundaries between these categories are not always clear, making the legislation “complex and bureaucratic.” **Still, he insisted on an essential principle: “never let the machine decide over the human being.”** The act stresses the importance of transparency: citizens must know when content is AI-generated, whether in news, culture or other contexts. He also defended the creation of regulatory sandboxes: controlled environments where AI applications can be tested without excessive constraints.

Voss addressed the impact of generative AI on copyright, noting that current European legislation was not designed to cope with the large-scale use of protected works in training these systems. He reminded the audience that Article 4 of the 2019 Directive, which introduced a “text-and-data mining” exception, was meant for personal and academic use, not to support the business models of major tech companies. The current interpretation, which

allows mass exploitation without subsequent data deletion, contradicts that original spirit. Therefore, Axel advocated for **the creation of new rules ensuring fair licensing and remuneration, so as not to devalue the work of creators**, through a centralised and mandatory registry, simplifying licensing processes and strengthening the negotiating power of European creators.

Voss stressed that copyright protection should not hinder AI development, as that would drive companies and researchers away from Europe. The balance must be dual: **protecting creators** while regaining ground in a sector dominated by the US and Asia. Acknowledging the complexity, he admitted that there are no perfect solutions, but proposed directions such as simplified licensing, greater centralisation in collective rights management and new oversight models that reconcile copyright with the demands of the digital economy. He concluded with an appeal: “No one has the definitive answer yet, but we must move forward with pragmatism, balance and future vision.”

## ? CURIOSITIES

► Axel Voss highlighted that AI is already present in sectors such as healthcare, energy, education, and security, directly influencing everyday life.

► The AI Act introduces the concept of regulatory “sandboxes” — controlled environments that allow AI applications to be tested under supervision, promoting safe innovation.

► Voss acknowledged that the boundary between high-risk and low-risk applications is not always clear, making the legislation complex and bureaucratic.

► His main golden rule: “never allow the machine to decide over the human being.”



“

**No one has the definitive answer yet, but we must move forward with pragmatism, balance and future vision.”**

— Axel Voss

## # RECOMMENDATIONS

► Value printed books as cultural and educational objects, recognising their irreplaceable role in the development of critical thinking.

► Promote a balance between digital and traditional reading, especially in schools, to avoid excessive dependence on screens.

► Research and reduce the environmental impact of technological production, while acknowledging the sustainable value of reading on paper.

► Encourage curiosity and the pleasure of reading as essential skills for understanding the world and for human development.



# Science, Sustainability and Publishing



Carlos **Fiolhais** # Author, Scientist, Physicist and Professor (Portugal)

Carlos Fiolhais took the audience on a journey through the world of books, weaving together science, history, technology and personal reflections. The starting point was Charles Darwin's "*On the Origin of Species*", published in 1859, which sold out on its publication day and still sells around one hundred thousand copies a year. **This phenomenon confirms that books can transcend time, building bridges between generations and safeguarding the continuity of human knowledge.**

Carlos revisited the earliest records on clay, stone, leather and papyrus, objects accessible only to tiny elites, until the invention of paper and printing in China between the 2nd and 6th centuries. It took about a thousand years for these techniques to reach medieval Europe and trigger

Gutenberg's revolution around 1450. **The ability to reproduce ideas on a large scale was decisive for the emergence of modern science:** without paper and printing, Carlos argued, neither Copernicus nor Galileo would have been possible.

Books became engines of transformation, advancing alongside scientific discoveries and multiplying the fruits of a constantly growing tree of knowledge. This historical **thread inevitably** led to the digital revolution. The shift to digital, however, presents a paradox:

**global paper production has not decreased.**

On the contrary, consumption has continued to rise, although gradually, evidencing that printed books remain the **preferred medium** for reading, even in the age

of e-books. With humour, Carlos recounted his own experience with electronic devices — after a short-lived enthusiasm, quickly relegated to a drawer — reaffirming that, even in the 21st century, printed pages continue to offer irreplaceable advantages.

He closed with a fundamental question: **why do we read?** **Because reading,** he argued, echoing physicist Carlo Rovelli, **is as natural as breathing or walking.** "We are curious creatures, moved by the desire to understand the world.", said Carlos. Reading is our greatest evolutionary adaptation, a means of extending collective memory and projecting the future. Schools, he insisted, must pass on the best of humanity. To renounce reading is to give up essential human experiences.

# The Impact of the European Union Anti-Deforestation Regulation



**Sofia Castelhão** # Head of Management Systems at  
“The Navigator Company” (Portugal)

Sofia Castelhão, representative of The Navigator Company, addressed in Book 2.0 a crucial issue for the future of the sector: the EU’s new legislation to combat deforestation, introduced under the European Green Deal in response to a decades-long environmental crisis. She explained that the EU is one of the world’s largest consumers of products associated with deforestation and therefore plays a decisive role in regulating global supply chains. Books are directly affected because wood and paper lie at the heart of their production.

The new regulation applies not only to producers within the EU but also across the **global value chain**, including imports, exports and all intermediate stages. From now on, any book sold in the EU — whether produced domestically or imported — must provide documented proof and geolocation data showing that the paper used originates from wood with no link to deforested

areas after December 2020, and that all legal, human rights, environmental and labour standards have been respected. **The key concept is traceability.** Every step of the productive chain, from timber extraction to the book reaching the consumer must be recorded in a new European system. Therefore, printing companies, publishers, distributors, and bookstores will have to collect and transmit information, continuously feeding this database. Large companies must comply from 30 December 2025, with small and medium-sized enterprises granted an additional six months as an adaptation period.

Sofia acknowledged the complexity of the process: **the longer and more transformative the supply chain, the harder it is to identify the origin.**

Companies will need to invest in new technological systems, review internal processes

and, in some cases, rely on certifications that help prove legality and sustainability of the basic materials. The consequences for non-compliance of the new regulation have also been highlighted: fines of up to 4% of annual turnover and public exposure of violations, with direct reputational impact for the companies.

In an increasingly demanding global market, transparency and environmental commitment are sources of competitiveness and differentiation. **The regulation may strengthen consumer trust in European products and position EU-made goods as sustainability benchmarks.**

Sofia concluded with a call for long-term vision and collective responsibility, noting that decisions made in the production and trade of books intersect with broader global efforts to protect forests and combat climate change. In this regard, the new European regulation is a turning point and places Europe at the forefront.

“

The new European regulation marks a turning point and places Europe at the forefront.”

— Sofia Castelhão

## ? CURIOSITIES

- The key concept of the new legislative framework is traceability — every stage of the production chain will be recorded in a common European system.
- The regulation has a direct impact on the book sector, as wood and paper are fundamental to its production.
- The complexity of traceability increases as the production chain becomes longer and more transformative.
- Environmental and origin certifications may become a competitive advantage for companies that invest in transparency.





os de Leitura:  
ias e a Dimensão Cult  
paces: Libraries and Bookstores  
l Heritage

## # DID YOU KNOW?

- The The Poets & Dragons Society project, created by Dinis and Elisabete Machado, brings together a publishing house and two bookshops — one in Costa da Caparica and the other in Campo de Ourique.
- Livraria Aqui Há Gato, founded by Sofia Vieira in Santarém, gained national visibility during the pandemic: in 2020, Sofia told two stories a day live, first on Facebook and later on YouTube.
- The bookshop's channel is approaching 100,000 subscribers and exceeds one million monthly views, reaching children in Portugal and across the diaspora.
- According to Elisabete Machado, demand for physical books remains strong, contrary to studies that suggest a decline in sales.



“

Digital sharing does not replace the physical book; it creates the desire to own it.”

— Sofia Vieira

A bookshop is more than a place of sale; it is a place of affection.”

— Dinis Machado e Elisabete Machado

# Reading Spaces: Bookshops and the Cultural Dimension



Dinis Machado e Elisabete Machado # Founders of 'The Poets & Dragons Society' (Portugal)

Sofia Vieira # Founder of Livraria 'Aqui Há Gato' (Portugal)

Joana Moreira # Culture Journalist at 'Observador' (Portugal)

The conversation, moderated by Joana Moreira, began with the idea that bookshops are much more than points of sale: they are places of encounter, discovery, and initiation into reading. Dinis and Elisabete Machado presented The Poets & Dragons Society, a project that combines a publishing house and two bookshops, which regularly organize storytelling sessions that attract entire families, creating emotional memories around books and fostering children's literacy even before they learn to read.

Sofia Vieira recalled the difficulties she faced during the 12 years of running the children's bookshop Aqui Há Gato, in Santarém, trying to

survive solely from book sales. The pandemic was a turning point: for four months, Sofia told two stories a day. Today, the bookshop's YouTube channel is nearing 100,000 subscribers and exceeds one million monthly views. Sofia stressed that this **sharing awakened in children the desire to buy the book of the story they heard, to take it home, flip through it, and revisit it with their families.**

Regarding buying habits, Elisabete said she does not feel the decline reported in recent studies: on the contrary, there is strong demand for physical books. Dinis added that the format is secondary: what matters is maintaining the act of

reading and the passion for narrative,

**trusting that the emotional bond with paper ultimately prevails.**

He also highlighted the central importance of the bookseller. For him, the bookshop is more than a sales space; it is a welcoming environment where the relationship with the physical book is fundamental. He noted that many children walk in alone, eager to grab and smell a book, and that this emotional connection is essential for creating long-term readers.



# The Reinvention of Literacy and Reading

Literacy remains one of the most powerful tools for building a more conscious, inclusive, and resilient society. Through reading, we **develop critical thinking**, nurture curiosity, and create new ways of interpreting the world around us. In this edition, we reflect on the transformative impact of reading, from the ancestral role of stories in shaping human identity to the importance of cultivating **reading habits in a world marked by digital acceleration**.

We discuss how technology can expand access to knowledge, examine the emergence of new formats, and consider the role of online communities in promoting young adult literature.

How does the act of storytelling help us face today's challenges? How can we cultivate reading habits in a world of constant stimuli? In what ways can technology support the growth of new readers? What role do social networks and digital communities play in promoting reading? What strategies can value **Portuguese-language literature** and ensure its visibility in a globalized market? What collective mission do we want to leave to future generations?

# The European Mission for Reading and Literacy



**Pia Ahrenkilde Hansen** # Director-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture at the European Commission (Denmark)

The spokesperson for the European Commission delivered a talk focused on the future of reading and literacy in Europe, weaving together the challenges brought by the digital revolution with the political and social responsibilities of preserving and promoting culture. Quoting José Saramago, she recalled that reading is “another way of being in a place,” and warned of the decline in reading practices across Europe. The causes are varied, from technological acceleration to fragmented attention, and the consequences are profound: one in five adults struggles with reading and writing, and one in four 15-year-olds fails basic tests in reading, mathematics, and science.

Faced with this reality, in March, the European Commission launched an action plan to address the “ticking time bomb” of the basic skills crisis. The proposal is based on an ecosystem approach (schools, governments, publishers, libraries, and

companies) and on a European Literacy Coalition planned for 2026. The goal is to strengthen essential **skills such as reading, writing, mathematics, science, digital skills, and citizenship**, in a lifelong learning logic.

Pia Ahrenkilde Hansen stressed that literacy today goes beyond traditional reading: it requires the ability to critically evaluate the daily avalanche of information, distinguish facts from disinformation, and understand the digital mechanisms shaping public opinion. She noted that 43% of 14-year-olds still lack basic digital skills, a weakness that, in times of polarization and distrust in institutions, threatens democratic participation. **Even so, she sees technology as an ally, provided it is guided by clear rules.** She reminded the audience that the EU was a pioneer in approving the AI Act, which obliges AI platforms to respect copyright and disclose training data, and announced a specific strategy for AI in

the cultural sector, being developed by Commissioner Iliana Ivanova. To support this shift, Brussels promises increased funding. The future Agora EU program will have 8.6 billion euros, more than double current budgets, aimed at uniting culture, media, citizenship, and democratic values. Initiatives such as the European Library Associations Network, the EU Prize for Literature, and the European Authors’ Day will continue, as will annual support for translating 450 books into nearly 40 languages. Hansen concluded with a collective call:

**involve parents, teachers, publishers, libraries, and citizens – and listen to young people.**

Lead by example at home by trading screens for books.

## ? CURIOSITIES

- Pia Ahrenkilde Hansen quoted José Saramago, recalling that “reading is another way of being in a place”.
- The Commissioner emphasised that literacy goes beyond traditional reading, encompassing the ability to critically assess information and distinguish facts from disinformation.
- The EU was a pioneer in approving the AI Act, which requires AI platforms to respect copyright and disclose their training data.
- Brussels maintains leading cultural initiatives such as the European Library Associations Network, the European Union Prize for Literature, and the European Authors’ Day.
- Every year, the European Union supports the translation of 450 books into nearly 40 languages.



“

**Because reading is more than learning: it is imagining, building bonds, and strengthening democracy.”**

— Pia Ahrenkilde Hansen



The best kind of reading is the kind we actually do.”

— Meg Jay

#### # DID YOU KNOW?

- Psychologist and author Meg Jay highlighted that reading is one of the most powerful habits we can cultivate, especially in youth.
- Between the ages of 20 and 30, the human brain goes through its last major phase of growth and reorganisation, making this a critical period for establishing lasting habits.
- Reading reduces stress, improves concentration, strengthens vocabulary and creativity, slows cognitive decline, and increases empathy.
- Studies cited by the author show that reading for just six minutes a day can already significantly reduce stress levels.

# Creating the Reading Habit: the Impact of Technology, Time and the Brain on the Reading Habit, How to Create New Habits



Meg Jay # Author and Clinical Psychologist (USA)

Clinical psychologist and author Meg Jay argued that reading is one of the most powerful habits we can cultivate, especially during youth. She shared that her son, who as a child read every day out of pleasure and his own initiative, eventually came to associate reading with the feeling of “schoolwork.” Today, as an adult, he hardly reads books. “It’s a common picture of young adults around the world.” According to Jay, both reading and physical exercise were “easy and fun” activities in childhood but became chores when imposed.

She explained that the human brain seeks the easiest path, and nothing is more immediate than the infinite scroll on a smartphone. **The phone is almost an evolutionary trap:** it promises connection and pleasure, but mostly generates social comparison,

anxiety, and distraction. Between the ages 20 and 30, this dependency is particularly serious, as this is when the brain undergoes its last major surge of growth and reconfiguration. Every habit consolidated during this phase shapes the future adult.”

**“It’s the easiest time to install good habits – or bad ones”, she stressed.**

The good news, she added, is that reading can function as a “healthy substitute.” Reading reduces stress, improves concentration, strengthens vocabulary and creativity, delays cognitive decline, increases empathy, and, above all, provides immediate well-being.

The challenge is to turn reading into an automatic habit, so integrated into daily

life that it becomes part of one’s identity. To support that transformation, Jay **shared 13 small strategies:** 1) choose books that spark genuine interest; 2) see yourself as a reader; 3) always keep a book nearby; 4) replace the phone’s place with a book; 5) keep a reading list; 6) get a library card; 7) make reading social; 8) give books as gifts; 9) use audiobooks; 10) set goals; 11) schedule time for reading; 12) start with short sessions — even six minutes significantly reduce stress — and finally, 13) know when to abandon books that don’t appeal. **It is a matter of reclaiming the pleasure and ease associated with reading.** “The best kind of reading is the kind we actually do,” she concluded. Whether fiction or nonfiction, paper or audio, half an hour or a few minutes a day, the essential thing is to make room for the book now. Because it is in the present that tomorrow is built.

# The Man Who Bit the Books

*Nuno Markl* # Comedian, radio host and TV presenter (Portugal)

## Nuno Markl took the stage with his typical humor and turned his talk into a kind of comic lecture on literature

- or, more precisely, on some of the worst literary moments ever written. Admitting from the start his discomfort at being in such a prestigious event, he described himself as someone who showed up “in a surf suit at a wedding.” Drawing on his own books — which, as he confessed, are mostly bound extensions of his radio shows — the comedian explored the idea that perhaps the future of reading depends less on content and more on packaging: “**cover everything in skin,**” he joked, referring to the cover of his next book.

Markl spoke about the Bad Sex Awards — international awards that annually

highlight the worst descriptions of erotic scenes in contemporary literature. With background music and calculated pauses, he read excerpts from renowned authors, interrupting them to comment on the absurdity of the imagery used — **from unlikely zoological metaphors**, such as nipples compared to the snout of a nocturnal animal, to mechanical descriptions reminiscent of sewing machines.

**The presentation was a humorous reflection** on the difficulties of writing about sex in novels, a topic Markl admitted is one of the reasons he has not yet ventured into publishing adult fiction. He suggested that perhaps the panel’s title should have been **“passion in books”** instead of **“passion for books”**, offering the audience a unique performance that combined parody, literary analysis, and stand-up.

## # RECOMMENDATIONS

- Laughter is also a form of reading: humour can bring new audiences closer to literature by demystifying subjects traditionally seen as serious.
- Explore the unusual and the imperfect as entry points to the pleasure of reading.
- Promote literary humour as a tool for critique and for valuing creative writing.
- Recognise the importance of self-irony in the relationship between authors, readers, and books.



“

**My books are essentially bound extensions of my radio programmes.”**

— Nuno Markl



## ? CURIOSITIES

- ▶ The philosophy of the Rebel Book Club is based on three pillars:
  1. Ritual – creating unique and memorable experiences;
  2. Rhythm – maintaining regularity and consistency in activities;
  3. Respect – summarised in the motto “be curious, be kind”.
- ▶ Community sessions include debates, cocktails, artistic performances, and themed events, turning reading into a social and transformative act.
- ▶ Keene shared other international experiences, such as the London Writers’ Salon, where hundreds of people write simultaneously via Zoom, and Reading Rhythms in New York, which combine silent reading with DJ parties.
- ▶ She argues that, in the age of artificial intelligence, demand for human, in-person reading experiences will grow.

“

In the age of artificial intelligence, demand for in-person human experiences will grow.”

— Ben Keene

# The Language of Human Experience



**Ben Keene** # Award-Winning Social Entrepreneur and Founder of the Rebel Book Club (United Kingdom)

Ben Keene, founder of the **Rebel Book Club**, took the stage with a question that drew smiles from the audience: “Who suffers from tsundoku?” — a Japanese term for the pile of books that grows on your bedside table faster than you can read. Ben believes that “we are what we read” and shared how three books shaped his journey: *Remote*, which convinced him that it was possible to work from anywhere; *Let My People Go Surfing*, which inspired him to prioritize the environment and people over profit; and the novel *The Beach*, which led him to start an ecotourism project in Fiji in 2005. **“Seventy percent of my decisions came from those books.”**

From this conviction, the Rebel Book Club was born in London in 2015, a vibrant community that turns reading into a social practice. Ben emphasized the importance of creating rituals and experiences that go beyond reading, such as gatherings in unusual

locations, debates, and performances by artists, all integrated into a logic of learning, reflection, and action. The club’s book selection prioritizes diversity among authors, balancing major publishers with independent publications.

**The philosophy for building community can be summed up in three words: ritual, rhythm, and respect.**

Ben shared initiatives such as the London Writers’ Salon, where hundreds write simultaneously via Zoom, and New York’s Reading Rhythms, which mix silent reading with live music. He suggested a simple habit to foster reading: **dedicating just 30 minutes a day can result in dozens of books read in a year.** He concluded his talk with a challenge: **let us make community reading as normal as binge-watching series**, imagining a book club as a gym for the mind.

# Awakening to Reading: Have You Read Today?



**Pedro Pacífico** # Founder of Book.Ster (Brazil)

**Mariana Nunes** # Digital Content Creator (Portugal)

**Analita Alves dos Santos** # Writer and Literary Activist (Portugal)

The session brought together Pedro Pacífico, also known as Bookster, and Mariana Nunes, a young digital content creator, in a lively discussion on **the place of books in the digital age**, moderated by writer and literary activist Analita Alves dos Santos.

Pedro spoke of his personal experience, explaining that his presence on social media — where he now has over 820,000 followers — emerged from the need to find a community with whom to share the joy of reading. Over time, he realized that his passion could inspire others and become a platform to encourage reading, which in Brazil, as elsewhere, faces competition from countless digital distractions that fragment attention and reduce focus. Pedro also noted that reading fiction

and literature in Brazil is often seen as a “waste of time.” **He argued for repositioning reading as a form of entertainment and deceleration in an overstimulated world**, emphasizing that reading requires silence, patience, and the ability to handle boredom.

Mariana Nunes offered the perspective of the younger generation, identifying three barriers to reading: the strong competition of digital platforms, the perception that reading is an obligation — often reinforced by the National Reading Plan in schools — and the high cost of books. She also highlighted the need for greater representation in literature so that young people can see themselves in the stories.

It was noted that **digital tools have facilitated connections between geographically distant countries**, allowing for greater circulation of ideas, books, and cultural influences. While social media can challenge concentration, it paradoxically allows new reading communities to form, bridging the Portuguese-speaking world — from Lisbon to São Paulo, Luanda, and Maputo.

**The conversation underscored the need to reclaim books from the realm of obligation and restore them to the domain of pleasure.**



## ? CURIOSITIES

- Pedro Pacífico argues that reading should be seen as a form of entertainment and slowing down, in a world dominated by haste and distraction.
- For Mariana Nunes, the issue of representation is central: many young people do not identify with the classics or with mandatory reading lists.
- The conversation highlighted the strength of the Portuguese language in the digital sphere, which today connects literary communities in Lisbon, São Paulo, Luanda, and Maputo.
- It was emphasised that the digital environment, although challenging, can create bridges and new reader communities.



**The internet does not distance the variants of Portuguese; it brings them closer together.”**

— Analita Alves dos Santos

**Social media may undermine concentration, but they also create new reader communities.”**

— Mariana Nunes



**Reading requires silence, patience, and even the ability to deal with boredom - virtues that are becoming increasingly rare.”**

— Pedro Pacífico

## # DID YOU KNOW?

► Writer José Eduardo Agualusa and professor Marco Neves reflected on books as “time-travel technologies”, capable of preserving and transmitting Portuguese from different eras and geographies.

► “*História Geral das Guerras Angolanas*” (1680) was recalled as an example of early Angolan Portuguese, intertwined with Kimbundu.

► It was argued that Africa will be the future heart of the Portuguese language, due to its demographic growth and linguistic diversity.

► In Cape Verde, Creole and Portuguese coexist with distinct functions — music in Creole, literature in Portuguese — demonstrating a harmonious coexistence.



Anyone who truly loves the Portuguese language must love it in its entirety.”

— José Eduardo Agualusa

Books are time-travel technologies.”

— Marco Neves

# The Power of the Portuguese Language in the World



**José Eduardo Agualusa** # Journalist, Author, and Editor (Angola)

**Marco Neves** # Author and Professor at NOVA FCSH, Researcher in Languages, Literatures, and Cultures (Portugal)

Professor and researcher Marco Neves opened the conversation with writer José Eduardo Agualusa, inviting him to reflect on books as a technology for time travel — that is, artifacts that allow us to “hear” Portuguese from different eras and geographies. Agualusa responded with the guiding idea of the dialogue: **anyone who truly loves the Portuguese language must love it in its entirety, recognizing that its vitality lies precisely in this continuous process of recreation.**

Through examples such as Brazilian gerunds or lexicons preserved in remote regions, Agualusa and Neves emphasized that the language cannot be contained within national borders and is only understood in its historical and geographical totality. The discussion highlighted

the impact of digital tools and the circulation of people within the Lusophone space: never before has there been such movement of ideas, words, and accents. The phenomenon, **driven by music**, of young Portuguese adopting Angolan expressions was seen as

**a sign of encounter rather than fragmentation.**

They argued that Africa, due to its demographic growth, will become the future heart of Portuguese. Agualusa described his admiration for languages such as Kimbundu, dreaming of speaking it fluently one day. He said, **“Creole is the child of Portuguese”**, illustrating linguistic continuity and preserving words that have fallen out of common Portuguese use. There was consensus on the greatest challenge:

**access to books.** They advocated public libraries, publishing networks, and greater support for publishers, highlighting the essential role of books in preserving and reinventing the language. Alongside this, policies are needed to facilitate book circulation among Lusophone countries and support local publishers.

Agualusa cited the General History of the Angolan Wars from 1680 as evidence of an early “Angolan Portuguese,” woven from archaisms and Kimbundu. **It is in the creative bubbling of this diversity that literature and the language continually reinvent themselves.**

# A Legacy that Endures



**Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa** # President of the Portuguese Republic (Portugal)

**Cristina Ovídio** # Publisher and Founder of Livraria Menina e Moça (Portugal)

President Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa closed the first day of Book 2.0 in an interview conducted by Cristina Ovídio, founder of Livraria Menina e Moça. The conversation began with a quote from Eça de Queirós — “This is an impossible country...” — to question whether Portugal might be seen that way in terms of reading. In contrast to Queirós’s pessimism, the President rejected the idea that Portuguese people read less and less, highlighting the trajectory of the Book Festival in the Belém Gardens, organized since 2016 by the Presidency of the Republic in partnership with APEL and the Lisbon Libraries.

**Marcelo argued that books are an essential vehicle for democracy and pluralism,** particularly in a society where museum and theater attendance is still limited. The President also addressed the coexistence of digital and physical books, stating that digital has not “killed” traditional books; on the

contrary, it has “enhanced” the reading experience.

**“The book that smells, the book with color, the book with a cover”**, he poetically described, holds a special place in readers’ preferences. He recalled his experience as a publisher, describing it as **“the happiest way to lose money.”**

The President remembered the first book that marked him, *Heart* by Edmundo de Amicis, as well as influential primary and high school teachers. Among the writers who have accompanied him, he highlighted Malraux, James Joyce, and Tolstoy. He also confessed to a youthful existentialist phase, influenced by Camus, whose “revolutionary bad mood” charmed him. He defended poetry as a constant presence, an exercise in fragmented reflection, capable of illuminating small moments in everyday life. Marcelo also discussed public policies such as the National Reading Plan and the School

Library Network, pillars he considers untouchable for the future of literacy in Portugal. He made clear that, by the end of his term, he wants to ensure that the NRP and libraries are not harmed by bureaucratic decisions. When asked about his post-presidency plans, he revealed his intention to work with primary and secondary students, collaborating with schools on reading activities. The session concluded with the presentation of a handcrafted piece evoking the Portuguese sea, given by Cristina Ovídio to the President. On it, Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa wrote:

**“Not reading is renouncing the future.”**

The audience applauded, recognizing in the phrase the essence of a conversation that traversed memory, politics, democracy, and hope in the role of books for future generations.

“

**The most joyful way to lose money is to be a publisher.”**

— *Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa*

## # RECOMMENDATIONS

- Protect and strengthen the National Reading Plan and the School Libraries Network, ensuring their continuity and social impact.
- Value the physical book and the sensory experience of reading, recognising its cultural and emotional importance.
- Promote early access to reading by engaging children and young people from primary education onwards.
- Preserve reading as a tool for democracy and pluralism, capable of challenging ideas and fostering critical thinking.
- Encourage intergenerational dialogue through books, strengthening family and social bonds.







# The Reinvention of Human Potential, Society, and the Future

Books have always reflected the **human condition**, acting as mirrors of our challenges, achievements, and social evolution. In a world increasingly shaped by misinformation, it is essential to rethink the role of knowledge and reading in both personal and collective development. How do books continue to serve as catalysts for individual and societal growth? In this edition, we explore the impact of reading on human development and its connection to identity and culture. We examine how knowledge can become a key tool for building **a more informed and balanced future**, while highlighting the role of education and public policy in promoting reading and critical thinking. We look at the book sector in Portugal, the challenges it faces, and the policies that can strengthen reading habits. How can reading become a tool for **personal and social transformation**? What are the consequences of growing up in a disconnected world? What efforts are underway to promote reading in Portugal? And how can we reinforce our identity and history through literature?

## # RECOMMENDATIONS

► Protect and strengthen the National Reading Plan and the School Libraries Network, ensuring their continuity and social impact.

► Value the physical book and the sensory experience of reading, recognising its cultural and emotional importance.

► Promote early access to reading by engaging children and young people from primary education onwards.

► Preserve reading as a tool for democracy and pluralism, capable of challenging ideas and fostering critical thinking.

► Encourage intergenerational dialogue through books, strengthening family and social bonds.

“

**The most joyful way to lose money is to be a publisher.”**

— Maryanne Wolf

# The Potential of Books in the Evolution of Society



**Maryanne Wolf** # Director of the Center for Dyslexia, Diverse Learners and Social Justice at UCLA (USA)

Maryanne Wolf, a cognitive neuroscientist and psycholinguist at UCLA, delivered a dense and impassioned reflection on the role of reading in shaping the human being and on the risks that digital culture and artificial intelligence pose to this legacy.

**Her talk began with a clear premise: reading should be considered a basic human right, an activity that reorganizes the brain**

and molds the way we think, feel, and interact with the world. “We are not only what we read; we are also how we read,” she emphasized, reinforcing the idea that the process of reading is just as decisive as its content.

She explained that the human brain was not born to read. Each individual,

when learning, creates specific circuits through a process of neuroplasticity that varies according to the writing system, educational background, and the mediums used. Deep reading, the kind that requires attention, time, and effort, engages processes such as inference, analogical thinking, critical reflection, and empathy — the ability to “step into the lives of others.”

What Maryanne called “the digital dilemma” is radically altering these processes. Shallow reading has become the norm, marked by F-shaped or Z-shaped scanning patterns, constant distractions, and difficulty sustaining attention. Recent meta-analyses consistently show **that reading on paper surpasses digital reading in text comprehension**, and that excessive digital leisure time is associated with cognitive losses, particularly among children. The impact is not only individual: **if critical analysis and**

**empathy weaken, societies become more vulnerable to misinformation and demagogic manipulation, undermining the pillars of democracy.**

Maryanne proposes the concept of a “biliterate brain,” capable of preserving the benefits of deep reading on paper without forfeiting the advantages of digital tools. It is about **“preserving and expanding”**, cultivating readers who navigate the digital world with competence while maintaining the depth, memory, and empathy that only analog reading seems able to offer in full. She concluded with a quote from Neil Postman: “Children are the living messages we send to a time we will not see.” That sentence distilled her final appeal: that humanity must not abandon the wisdom reading can transmit, even in the midst of a technological revolution.

# The Danish Way of Educating in the Digital World: A New Approach to Raising Screen-Smart Children



**Jessica Joelle Alexander** # Author and Parenting Specialist (Denmark)

Jessica Joelle Alexander presented a reflection on how to educate children for the digital world, emphasizing that technology is inevitable and should be treated as a rite of passage. Inspired by the digital citizenship program in Danish schools, the author of *The Danish Way of Parenting* shared her personal experience of agreeing with her daughter that she would receive her first mobile phone only after several guided conversations based on a set of cards developed with psychologists and specialists. **Instead of forbidding or delaying access to technology, Jessica created a digital education program for her daughter.**

She introduced three pillars of Danish parenting that she considers essential for the digital context. The first is **“Play”**. Free play, now fluid between physical and digital

environments, is essential for child development. Jessica suggests that parents show curiosity about their children’s videogames, asking what draws them into those worlds and to their heroes. The second pillar is **“Reframing”**, a competence Danes excel at, allowing them to find a positive angle in situations that seem negative. Humans have a “negativity bias” that leads them to focus on digital dangers while overlooking the opportunities it can offer. She illustrated this with examples: her daughter learning to play the drums through her phone and her son playing chess online with friends around the world.

**What matters is the quality of screen time and the genuine learning it enables.**

The third pillar is **“Hygge”**, the Danish concept of comfort, a psychological space of presence and connection. She suggested a shift from individual mindfulness to collective **“wefulness”**, stressing the importance of screen-free moments and relaxed conversations about digital life.

**The digital future is not going away**, she reminded the audience, and adults must prepare children to be competent citizens in that territory. That requires curiosity, dialogue, trust, and the courage to learn alongside them. **“Build the bridge, not the wall”**, she summarized.



## # DID YOU KNOW?

► Author and researcher Jessica Joelle Alexander, known for the book *The Danish Way of Parenting*, argues that children’s entry into the digital world is inevitable — a true rite of passage.

► Inspired by the digital citizenship programme in Danish schools, she created a family digital education programme with her daughter, based on conversation cards developed by psychologists and experts.

► The author emphasises that parents should not delegate digital education to schools, but instead become actively involved through curiosity and dialogue.

► Her educational model is based on three Danish pillars applied to the digital context: Play, Reframing, and Hygge.



**It is not about blindly forbidding, but about building trust and dialogue.”**

— Jessica Joelle Alexander

## # DID YOU KNOW?

► Aletria is a mobile library created in 2022 by three friends with educational and artistic backgrounds and strong ties to the community.

► It is much more than a book van: it operates as a mobile cultural and arts centre, with musical instruments and materials for artistic expression available to the public.

► Aletria lends books with no bureaucracy, promotes artistic workshops, book clubs, readings, outdoor cinema sessions, and community debates.

► Book returns can be made by mail or at partner bakeries — a symbolic gesture of proximity and trust.



“

**Each borrowed book sows a little bit of the future.”**

— *Carta de um leitor à Aletria*

**Aletria is more than a van — it is a vehicle for active citizenship.”**

— *Luís Pulido*

# Aletria Live Performance: Along the Road



**João *Tempera*** # Actor, Musician, and Co-founder of Aletria (Portugal)  
**Luís *Pulido*** # Musician, Music Teacher, and Co-founder of Aletria (Portugal)

Launched in 2022, Aletria – Library was created by three friends with backgrounds in education and the arts, and with a strong involvement in the community and the city's artistic life. Aletria is more than a van transformed into a beautiful and welcoming mobile library, filled with high-quality books of various genres and for all ages.

**It is a vehicle for active citizenship and a mobile hub of culture and art.**

During Book 2.0, Aletria was parked at the entrance of the Champalimaud Center auditorium. After a reading accompanied by live music, Luís explained that Aletria travels through squares and festivals, lending books and offering artistic workshops, debates, and gatherings. Books are returned by post or at partner cafés. In return,

letters arrive from readers — such as the note from a boy who wrote that he would **never forget “Sepúlveda’s snail”** — reinforcing the belief that each borrowed book plants a little piece of the future.

The library also carries musical instruments and art materials available for free experimentation by everyone, revitalising urban spaces through participatory activities in cities and schools that **strengthen social cohesion, community development, and well-being.**

You will usually find Aletria parked in a school courtyard, a garden, or a city square, with its small improvised terrace and a programme of **readings and gatherings, art workshops, music sessions, and open-air cinema.**

# The Impact of Storytelling



**Fernanda Freitas** # Founder of Associação Nuvem Vitória (Portugal)

Fernanda Freitas, founder of the Nuvem Vitória association, offered an emotional testimony about how a simple gesture can transform the experience of hospitalized children and their families. It began with a question: **“What if hospitals could offer children calmer nights through bedtime stories told by volunteers?”** Founded in 2016 and recognized as a public-benefit institution, the association started with a pilot project at Hospital de Santa Maria with 24 volunteers. Today, Nuvem Vitória works with hospitals across the country, has more than 1300 volunteers, has told over 126,000 stories, and has impacted nearly 88 000 hospital stays, contributing more than 38 000 hours of volunteer time.

A study by Professor Cristina Vaz de Almeida of the Portuguese Society for Health Literacy confirmed that stories are an excellent resource for helping children cope with distressing situations, validating fantasy as a way of better accepting the hospital experience. Another study by physicist and neuroscience specialist Guilherme Brockington measured biomarkers before and after storytelling sessions. The results showed an increase in oxytocin (the empathy hormone), a reduction in cortisol (the stress hormone), decreased reported pain, and a more positive vocabulary used to describe the hospital stay — **the first biochemical proof of benefits that volunteers had long observed.**

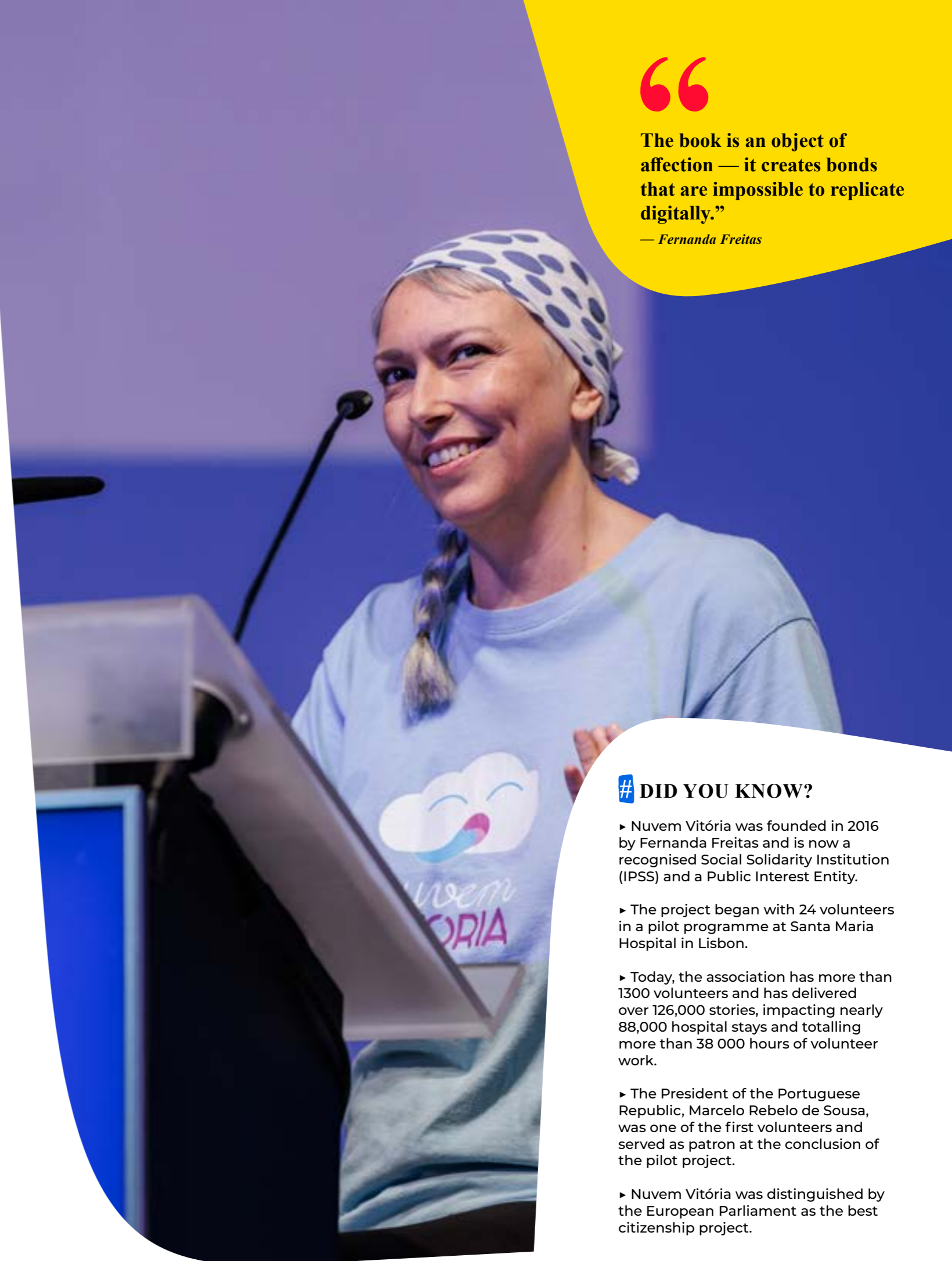
The diversity of volunteers is striking: teachers, judges, police officers, students, artists. Among them stood out a special volunteer: the President of the Republic, Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa, who supported the conclusion of the pilot project. Recognition culminated

**in the European Parliament Prize, which distinguished Nuvem Vitória as the best citizenship project.**

“

**The book is an object of affection — it creates bonds that are impossible to replicate digitally.”**

— *Fernanda Freitas*



## # DID YOU KNOW?

- Nuvem Vitória was founded in 2016 by Fernanda Freitas and is now a recognised Social Solidarity Institution (IPSS) and a Public Interest Entity.
- The project began with 24 volunteers in a pilot programme at Santa Maria Hospital in Lisbon.
- Today, the association has more than 1300 volunteers and has delivered over 126,000 stories, impacting nearly 88,000 hospital stays and totalling more than 38 000 hours of volunteer work.
- The President of the Portuguese Republic, Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa, was one of the first volunteers and served as patron at the conclusion of the pilot project.
- Nuvem Vitória was distinguished by the European Parliament as the best citizenship project.

“

I wanted to read a story that didn't exist, so I wrote the books I wanted to read.”

— Paula Pimenta

## ? CURIOSITIES

► Paula Pimenta describes herself as a “pink” author, writing stories with happy endings because “life is already black and white enough”.

► To connect with young readers, she integrated digital language into her narratives: characters communicate through text messages and social media, making readers feel “as if they were reading a friend's diary”.

► The author brings the mobile phone into the book, arguing that digital elements can open the door to sustained reading.

► When adapting her works for cinema, she learned how to translate thoughts into visual actions, while respecting the spirit of the books.

► Paula believes that cinema and television help attract new readers but, as she humorously states, “everyone knows the book is better”.

# Books, Children, and Cinema



**Paula Pimenta** # Author (Brazil)  
**Bárbara Wong** # Editor at Público (Portugal)

Brazilian writer Paula Pimenta, a key figure in Lusophone children's and young adult literature, spoke with journalist Bárbara Wong about her career and the importance of reading among young people. She acknowledged that while her books feature female protagonists, they also attract male readers, despite some initial resistance: **“Boys tend to hesitate because the story is told by a girl”**, she explained, contrasting this with how girls read books with male protagonists, like Harry Potter, without hesitation.

Pimenta said she draws **inspiration** from her teenage diaries, writing the books she wished she could have read. “I wanted to read a story that didn't exist, so I wrote the books I wanted to read,” she said, describing how she blends autobiography and

fiction. **“The feelings and discoveries of adolescence are the same across generations”**, which allows readers from eight to seventy to connect with her stories. She embraces the label of a “pink author,” defining her books as happy-ending stories intended to spark dreams. **“Life is already gray enough”**, she said, defending literature as an escape into a more hopeful world.

Paula weaves digital language into her narratives, noting that electronic formats and playful activities can serve as gateways to longer reading. “I brought the phone into the book,” she explained, describing how her characters communicate through current technologies. This strategy helps readers feel as if they are “reading a friend's or neighbor's diary.”

**She stressed the importance of practicing long-form reading to build vocabulary, focus, and creativity.**

Regarding film adaptations of her work, she admitted initial reluctance. But persistent requests from readers led her to sell the film's rights, and she insisted on participating as a screenwriter and consultant to preserve fidelity to the original stories. The experience taught her the specific demands of cinema, especially the need **to transform thoughts and inner monologues into visual action**. Paula argued that the visibility provided by film and television can attract new readers.

# Empowering Families to Prevent Screen Addiction



**Adriana Stacey** # Medical Consultant at ScreenStrong (USA)

Psychiatrist Adriana Stacey, mother of four and advisor at ScreenStrong, warned of what she considers an educational and public health emergency: the ubiquity of screens and their impact on the development of children and adolescents. Stacey explained that in the developing brain, screens trigger massive dopamine releases, comparable to drugs like cocaine. The problem is compounded by the fact that the **prefrontal cortex** — responsible for impulse control — **is the last area of the brain to mature.**

The psychiatrist listed **physical and behavioral consequences:** nearsightedness due to lack of distance focus, sleep deficits, vitamin D deficiency,

obesity, and even reduced cortical thickness, associated with anxiety, depression, reduced social skills, self-harm, and increased suicidal ideation. She further explained that

**90% of all adult addictions begin with adolescence.**

Adriana presented another striking statistic: **between 8th grade and the end of high school, the average teenager spends 16 000 hours looking at entertainment screens,** time that could have been spent on creative activities, sports, or reading. Regarding gender differences, boys are at a higher risk of social isolation and dependence on video games and pornography,

while girls are more vulnerable to the harmful effects of social media, such as depression, anxiety, and eating disorders.

Comparing the effect of printed books and screens on the learning process, Adriana was categorical: **books strengthen concentration, increase attention span, foster empathy, improve mental resilience and discipline,** and reduce impulsivity, **while screens have the opposite effect.**

The psychiatrist offered some recommendations, such as avoiding contact with tablets and smartphones until age 13, banning mobile phones in schools, and limiting social media and personal smartphones until age 18.

“

Screen addiction mimics substance addiction, triggering dopamine surges that keep children hooked.”

— Adriana Stacey



## # RECOMMENDATIONS

- Avoid the use of tablets and smartphones until the age of 13.
- Ban mobile phones in schools during school hours.
- Delay access to social media and personal mobile phones until the age of 18.
- Promote regular reading habits, which strengthen attention, empathy, and mental resilience.
- Replace screen time with creative, physical, and social activities.
- Educate parents and teachers to recognise signs of digital addiction and intervene early.

“

Reading fiction is one of the most effective drivers of literacy.”

— Lucia Dellagnelo



## # DID YOU KNOW?

- In Portugal, only 5% of 15-year-olds demonstrate full reading proficiency, meaning they are able to understand, reflect on and produce complex texts.
- 42% of Portuguese adults have a very low level of literacy, being able to interpret only simple texts and lists.
- According to the OECD, Portugal sells only 1.3 books per person per year, a figure well below the European average.
- The 45–65 age group, which has greater purchasing power and more available time, paradoxically shows the lowest levels of literacy.
- The OECD is preparing a new PISA 2029 framework, which will include competencies related to interaction with artificial intelligence.

# Literacy in Portugal



**Lucia Dellagnelo** # Deputy Director for Education and Skills, OECD (Brazil)

**Joana Petiz** # Editorial Director at SAPO and journalist (Portugal)

Lucia Dellagnelo, Deputy Director of the OECD's Education and Skills Division, presented revealing data on the state of literacy in Portugal. According to the expert, Portugal has an ambivalent trajectory in PISA results, the largest global literacy study assessing 15-year-old students in 81 countries. In 2003, Portugal began below the European average, experienced periods of significant improvement, but is now in decline again.

**Only 5% of Portuguese youth demonstrate full reading competence**

— the ability to understand, reflect on, and create complex texts. Among adults, the scenario is even more critical. Data

from PIAAC, which assesses literacy skills among 16-65-year-olds, show that Portugal is clearly below the OECD average, with the gap widening with age. **The data indicate that 42% of Portuguese adults have very low literacy**, unable to engage with complex texts or critically evaluate content. This represents a significant economic paradox: the 45-65 age group, traditionally with higher financial capacity to buy books and more reading time, exhibits the lowest literacy levels. **In Portugal, only 1.3 books per person are sold annually, far below the European average.** Nevertheless, two positive aspects were noted: Portugal performs relatively well in distinguishing facts from opinions, and young people demonstrate above-average creative thinking.

OECD research reveals key conclusions for educational policy. **First, there is a clear association between time spent reading printed books and literacy levels.** Second, and perhaps more surprisingly, **reading fiction correlates with literacy development**, possibly more effectively than technical texts or manuals. Facing AI challenges, Lucia argues that reading should be preserved as a space for digital resistance. In schools, she **proposes the introduction of a "reading hour"**, in which each student dedicates time to reading a book of their choice. For parents, having books at home should be considered part of the family's cultural and financial capital, and joining book clubs is recommended, turning reading into a social act.

# The Voice From Within



**Dino D'Santiago** # Musician, Composer, Co-founder and President of the NGO Mundu Nôbu in Lisbon (Portugal)

**Vítor Belanciano** # Journalist, Cultural Critic, Author, and Researcher (Portugal)

Musician Dino D'Santiago spoke with journalist Vítor Belanciano about the importance of books in his personal development and his social transformation project. Books were his "first passport": in a mud-floor house in the Bairro dos Pescadores, Quarteira, his father set up a small library that opened windows to the world. Through these books — on science, arts, and geography — Dino discovered Italy, France, and developed a passion for Salvador Dalí's surrealism. The conversation touched on contradictions in his childhood, between his father, who read the Bible daily, and young Dino, who sought refuge in Marvel heroes. **This tension between imposed sacredness and desired fantasy shaped his initial relationship with reading** and the need for escape.

Fatherhood redefined his concept of legacy: initially

focused on ensuring his children's financial future, Dino realized that the true inheritance would be books: **"If I wanted to leave my children a real legacy, it would be my books. If they want to know me, it's through books"**. This awareness led him to seek books on Afro-diasporic history, filling gaps he felt in the Portuguese educational system. "I never had representation in the books I read," he admitted, explaining how this absence affected his self-esteem until he discovered African emperors, kings, and queens. Literature became essential to see oneself "with pride" rather than "a descendant of an enslaved person."

Through the NGO Mundu Nôbu, inspired by the U.S. project The Brotherhood Sister Sol, Dino works with youth from underserved communities, investing in their dreams and developing

skills based on their personal aspirations. The conversation ended with a poetic homage to oral tradition, quoting a 92-year-old illiterate and visually impaired woman from Santiago Island, who taught him the most important maxim:

**"sell fear to buy courage"**.

According to Dino, this phrase sums up the urgency of current times and the need for courage to assume collective responsibilities in a self-destructing world. The musician announced the launch of his first book, *Cicatrizes*, dedicated to his children, describing it as a hug to the "kid Dino" who dreamed in the shack and walked two kilometers alone to school with a yellow backpack and a book as company. "Books have been my salvation to this day," he concluded.

## CURIOSITIES

► During his childhood, he lived between his father's religious environment, where the Bible was read daily, and the fantasy of Marvel heroes and anime, which fuelled his imagination.

► Fatherhood led him to rethink the concept of legacy: more than money, the true legacy is the books he will leave to his children.

► By discovering Afro-diasporic history, he finally found representation and pride in his origins, recognising African kings, queens, and empires omitted from school textbooks.

► He prefers physical books over digital formats — driven by the need to "feel the paper and its smell".

► His public and artistic work is inseparable from a political and social commitment, addressing themes such as Gaza, Sudan, and racial equality.



“

**Books have been my salvation to this day.” — Dino D'Santiago**



“

Reading is the  
cornerstone of  
democracy.”

— Johan Pehrson

## # DID YOU KNOW?

- In 2024, Sweden sold 69 million books, while Portugal sold only 14 million, despite having similar populations (around 10 million inhabitants).
- According to Eurostat (2022), 70% of Swedes read at least one book in the previous year, compared to 58% of Portuguese people.
- Sweden has 180 years of consistent reading promotion policies, from compulsory schooling to the creation of accessible public libraries.
- All Swedish school libraries are legally required to have a dedicated librarian.
- During school hours, mobile phones are banned — a measure supported by 95% of the population, which has improved concentration and encouraged physical activity.

# Political Action: What is Being Done?



**Johan Pehrson** # Former Minister of Education in Sweden (Sweden)  
**Carlo Carrenho** # Editorial Consultant (Sweden)

**Sweden stands out as a successful example of promoting reading in Europe.** In 2024, it sold 69 million books, compared to 14 million in Portugal, with a similar population of 10 million. According to Eurostat 2022 data, **70% of Swedes** read at least one book the previous year, versus **58% of Portuguese.** Former Swedish Minister of Education Johan Pehrson and editorial consultant Carlo Carrenho analyzed the reasons for this success and lessons Portugal could learn.

Johan attributed this success to a 180-year strategy, starting when the state made schooling compulsory, invested in reading campaigns, accessible libraries, and policies to democratize access to books. He also highlighted the role of the Swedish Academy, responsible for the Nobel Prize in Literature, in promoting national language and literature. Johan acknowledged that Sweden faces the same

challenges as the rest of Europe: young people are losing the concentration required for reading. He addressed Sweden's decision to reduce digitalization in schools, returning to printed books, which he considers essential for healthy cognitive development and training future digital leaders.

Another pillar of the Swedish model is strengthening school libraries. **New Swedish legislation requires all school libraries to have a librarian, recognizing that schools are “the last resort to create a level playing field for all children.”** Carlo Carrenho, resident in Sweden, cited an example of a library exclusively for 10-13-year-olds, where parents cannot enter, creating an autonomous space for children. Integration of immigrants is also a priority: Johan argued that children should learn Swedish while maintaining their mother tongue, and Carlo cited international libraries and Portuguese

classes in Stockholm public schools as examples of valuing linguistic and cultural diversity.

Johan also emphasized the positive impact of banning mobile phones during school hours, supported by 95% of the population. The former minister concluded with a clear message:

**“Reading is the cornerstone of democracy”,**

asserting that all human progress depends on people's ability to read and assess information independently. “We are the people of the book,” he declared, warning that without this capacity, democracy itself is at risk.

# Manifesto of European Publishers (FEP - Federation of European Publishers)



**Sonia Draga** # President of the Federation of European Publishers, FEP (Poland)

The President of the Federation of European Publishers (FEP), composed of 31 national associations of books, scientific journals, and educational content publishers, presented the organization's manifesto for the future of European publishing, based on **three pillars: create, innovate, and sustain**.

## CREATE

FEP advocates robust copyright laws that ensure fair remuneration for authors and investment by publishers in quality works. Sonia Draga denounced the indiscriminate replacement of textbooks with photocopies, **emphasizing that this impoverishes the market and penalizes creativity**. She was equally incisive regarding artificial intelligence, demanding transparency from companies about the sources used and advocating payment or removal of unauthorized works. The

manifesto also supports funding for translations of foreign-language books, calling for increased and simplified European programs for this purpose.

## INNOVATE

In terms of innovation, greater access to European funding is requested. Programs such as **Creative Europe and Horizon Europe**, totaling nearly €100 billion over seven years,

## serve as levers for small and medium-sized publishers

to continue investing in research and development of standards like ISBN and accessible technologies such as the ePub format. Draga also called for effective tools against online piracy, which erode revenue and threaten sector sustainability.

**Transparency in artificial intelligence and respect for intellectual property are considered essential,**

with the fight against piracy using proper legal tools deemed “more necessary than ever.”

## SUSTAIN

Sustainability was addressed both **environmentally** and **economically**. Publishers have sought to reduce overproduction and ecological footprints, and FEP continues to advocate for excluding books from deforestation regulations, arguing that the obligations would place “a disproportionate burden on the sector.” Over the years, FEP has expanded the definition of books, so **audiobooks** and **ebooks** benefit from **reduced VAT**, and more recently to allow books to benefit from a **zero rate**. This is happening in Denmark, which announced that physical books will go from the highest VAT in Europe (25%) to zero, joining the Czech Republic and Ireland.

“

Books should not be penalised by environmental regulations — they are part of the solution, not the problem.”

— Sonia Draga



## # RECOMMENDATIONS

- Strengthen and harmonise the protection of copyright across the European Union.
- Require transparency and fair compensation for the use of literary works in AI models.
- Increase European support for book translation by simplifying processes and promoting linguistic diversity.
- Facilitate access for publishing SMEs to innovation funding through the Creative Europe and Horizon Europe programmes.
- Combat digital piracy through effective legislation and enforcement tools.
- Promote the application of reduced or zero VAT rates for all book formats, both physical and digital.



## # DID YOU KNOW?

► The Rubik's Cube, created in 1974 by Ernő Rubik, allows for 43 quintillion possible combinations — a number so vast that, if each were materialised, they would cover the Earth with 273 layers of cubes.

► Illusionist Mário Daniel was inspired in childhood by the books of Enid Blyton, author of the famous The Famous Five series, which sparked his fascination with mysteries and puzzles.

► The session combined illusionism and literature, turning the stage into a space of discovery and wonder.

“

Reading is the greatest magic trick there is: it transforms us without us even realising it.”

— Mário Daniel

# The Magic of Words



Mário **Daniel** # Illusionist - Minutos Mágicos (Portugal)

The session “The Magic of Books” proved to be an experience **where illusionism and literature intersected in surprising ways**. Mário Daniel, magician and illusionist, began by inviting the audience to perform a collective hand exercise — a warm-up that set the stage for what followed.

Daniel shared memories from his childhood, influenced by Enid Blyton's books, explaining how this fascination with mysteries and puzzles shaped his path. This attraction to challenges led him to the Rubik's Cube, the central object in this demonstration. The illusionist recounted that in the 1990s, as a child, he attempted to solve the cube with his brother in an unorthodox way: removing the pieces and putting them back in the right place. The momentary satisfaction gave way to frustration for not solving the cube correctly. From then on, the Rubik's Cube became a constant companion. The illusionist involved

the audience in an activity with cards containing four words related to the event. Participants were instructed to shuffle them, tear them in half, recombine the halves in different ways, and perform a series of coordinated movements, until everyone discovered that, despite random and individual choices, they ended up with the same word. Mário Daniel emphasized that new readers are

**not created by imposition but by providing the right books at the right time.**

He argued that books awaken curiosity, enrich language, and transform the way people see the world, values illustrated by the metaphors of the Rubik's Cube and the fragmented and reconstructed words.

# Masterclass: Empowering the Publishing Market for Digital Adaptation



**Daniel Benchimol** # CEO of Academia Proyecto451 (Argentina)

The masterclass “Empowering the Publishing Market for Digital Adaptation,” focused on the impact of artificial intelligence in the book industry, was presented by Argentine specialist Daniel Benchimol, CEO of Academia Proyecto451. To illustrate the scale of the ongoing revolution, Daniel contextualized current AI investments, highlighting that Google, Meta, and Microsoft each invested in one year amounts comparable to historical mega-projects: **\$34 billion in the Manhattan Project** and **\$280 billion over 12 years in the Apollo Program**.

Daniel went on to show the rapid evolution of AI-generated image quality since 2015, especially in synthetic images and videos. **“We cannot trust anything: no image, no video, no audio, no text,”** he warned. We are entering the “phase three” of AI evolution: the development of agents capable of autonomously executing complex tasks. He demonstrated how such

an agent could analyze the Portuguese publishing market, consulting 150 sources in 10 minutes and producing a 40-page report including market data, trends, and sector analyses. These agents can also **automate complex publishing processes**, from analyzing bestseller covers to creating personalized newsletters.

The CEO of Academia Proyecto451 highlighted five structural changes AI is causing in the publishing sector. First, the decline in the economic value of text processing: the cost of generating a text volume equivalent to a work like Harry Potter dropped from \$24 in 2023 to 5 cents today. Second, the practice of including instructions in publications specifically for AI models. Third, the continuously evolving skills of AI, capable of increasingly complex tasks, doubling capabilities every seven months. Fourth, absolute personalization: “Consumers can adapt any content to their taste, format, and

specific needs.” Fifth, the creation and real-time interaction with content through new technologies such as Google’s Genie 3. Benchimol proposed three strategies for generating prompts to work effectively with AI: provide concrete examples of what is desired instead of long explanations; ask the technology itself to evaluate and improve its responses; and use it for feedback, requesting it to critique and question editorial decisions.

**The masterclass concluded with a reflection on the growing importance of analog and in-person experiences in an increasingly digital world,**

with Daniel questioning why anyone would still buy a printed book in this scenario — a question publishing professionals must be able to answer.

## # DID YOU KNOW?

- During the masterclass, Benchimol showed videos featuring synthetic people speaking Portuguese, illustrating advances in deep learning and the growing difficulty of distinguishing what is real from what is artificial.
- We are entering “phase three” of AI evolution: the era of intelligent agents capable of making decisions and acting autonomously.
- Among emerging technologies, Genie 3 (Google) was highlighted, which will allow the creation of and interaction with content in real time.
- Some publishers already include specific instructions for AI models within their publications — a new form of communication between creators and machines.
- Benchimol emphasised the irony of the digital future: the more the virtual world grows, the greater the symbolic and emotional value of the physical book becomes.



“

**We can trust nothing: no image, no video, no audio, no text.”**

— Daniel Benchimol



# The Role of the Book in the Future

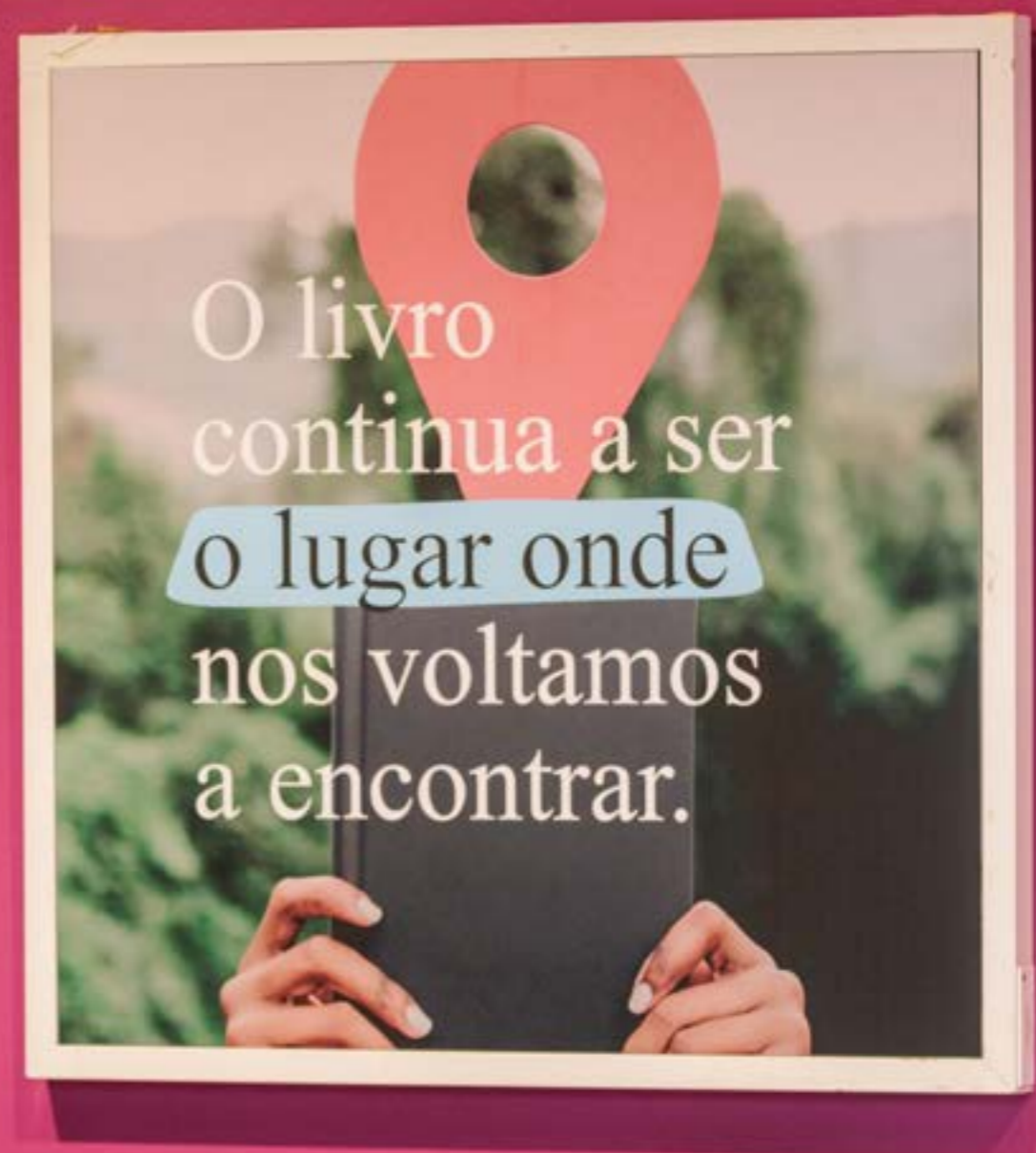
# A collective commitment to strengthening reading, protecting books, and preparing the cultural and digital future.

## The Impact of Artificial Intelligence and the Digital World

- Reading was at the centre of all discussions — as a human right, a tool for citizenship, and a space for imagination. Book 2.0 showed that the future of the book depends on balance: between technology and humanity, between digital innovation and the irreplaceable value of paper.
- Artificial intelligence dominated the debate, oscillating between enthusiasm and caution. Experts called for transparency, the protection of copyright, and a new technological ethic that values the human perspective in creation.
- Maryanne Wolf reminded us that “we are not only what we read, but also how we read”, stressing that deep reading is vital for critical thinking and empathy. Jessica Joelle Alexander and Adriana Stacy reinforced the need to prepare new generations for a balanced and conscious use of digital technologies.
- In the century of artificial intelligence, the book remains the most human of technologies — and reading continues to be the quietest, deepest, and most revolutionary of all acts.

## Reading as a Social and Educational Action

- Strong public policies, vibrant libraries, and a robust National Reading Plan were identified as essential pillars to ensure access, develop readers, and strengthen democracy. Reading was also defended as an act of freedom and an instrument of social cohesion.
- From Sweden to the OECD, both warnings and best practices were shared: returning to paper in schools, creating active libraries, and dedicating time to reading fiction are proven paths to improving literacy and critical thinking.
- Among inspiring stories — from Nuvem Vitória to Aletria, from Dino D’Santiago to Paula Pimenta — the book emerged as a symbol of affection, sharing, and transformation. Community initiatives, reading clubs, and solidarity projects showed that reading is also about building bonds.



# Summary of the **Key** Recommendations Presented at Book 2.0

## PROMOTING READING HABITS

- ▶ Inspire young people to develop a love of reading.
- ▶ Encourage the consumption of digital books alongside physical formats.
- ▶ Develop community and educational programmes to promote reading habits.
- ▶ Organise reading events and book clubs within communities to engage different age groups.
- ▶ Establish partnerships with local businesses to create incentives for purchasing and reading books.
- ▶ Implement reading challenges in schools to motivate students through rewards and recognition.
- ▶ Promote book presentation sessions for younger audiences in creative ways, tailored to different age groups.

## ACCESSIBLE AND RESPONSIBLE EDUCATION

- ▶ Improve access to literature for economically disadvantaged populations.
- ▶ Create support programmes for young and elderly readers facing challenges.
- ▶ Advocate for political intervention to ensure equitable access to literature and education.
- ▶ Support initiatives to reduce book prices and improve the quality of printed materials.
- ▶ Provide free or low-cost digital resources to underserved communities.
- ▶ Develop mobile libraries or pop-up bookshops to reach remote areas.

## LITERACY

- ▶ Encourage innovative literacy tools and technologies.
- ▶ Promote reading as a means of empowering individuals and communities.
- ▶ Implement literacy programmes on diverse topics for adults (e.g. digital literacy, financial literacy).
- ▶ Develop family literacy programmes to involve parents in their children's reading development.
- ▶ Use storytelling workshops to improve literacy and communication skills.



## **SUSTAINABILITY IN THE PUBLISHING SECTOR**

- ▶ Conduct a more in-depth study of the publishing sector's impact on the planet and on resource use.

- ▶ Identify the sector's vulnerabilities in terms of sustainability and find innovative measures aligned with the 2030 and 2050 commitments.

- ▶ Promote dialogue among stakeholders on sustainability within the publishing sector.

- ▶ Encourage sustainable practices among publishers, such as environmentally friendly printing methods and supply chains.

- ▶ Engage authors and readers in discussions about the environmental impact of their book choices.

## **DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION**

- ▶ Encourage diverse representation in narratives, especially for young adult audiences.

- ▶ Promote gender equality in literary recognition.

- ▶ Implement quotas for Lusophone literature and contemporary women authors in curricula.

- ▶ Showcase literature from underrepresented voices at book festivals and public readings.

- ▶ Develop mentoring programmes that connect emerging authors from diverse backgrounds with established writers.

- ▶ Promote literature that addresses social justice issues to educate readers about inclusion.

## **MENTAL WELL-BEING**

- ▶ Recognise the role of storytelling in emotional development and mental health, as a form of healing and balance.

- ▶ Facilitate community debates and reading programmes focused on happiness and mental health awareness.

- ▶ Support programmes that help parents explore constructive communication through family stories.

- ▶ Promote book therapy as a tool for emotional healing and self-knowledge.

- ▶ Collaborate with organisations to create resources that integrate literature into therapeutic practices.

## **DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION**

- ▶ Use digital platforms and social media to reach wider audiences, especially younger ones.

- ▶ Understand the benefits and ethical considerations of artificial intelligence in publishing.

- ▶ Promote partnerships between traditional bookshops and digital platforms to facilitate discussion and analysis of books.

- ▶ Provide training for authors and publishers on how to leverage digital marketing strategies.

- ▶ Encourage the use of podcasts and video content to promote books and authors.

## **STRATEGIES FOR EDUCATION**

- ▶ Integrate novels into school curricula to support diverse learning approaches.

- ▶ Use historical fiction to foster empathy and interest in history, culture, and shared values.

- ▶ Promote the responsible and ethical use of technology and artificial intelligence in education.

- ▶ Implement teacher training programmes focused on innovative integration of literature.

- ▶ Develop interdisciplinary projects that combine literature with subjects such as science, art, and social studies.



# Book 2.0 Podcast



In 2025, Book 2.0 launched a new podcast series, creating an ongoing space for reflection on the future of books, reading, and knowledge. This series brings together notable guests from past editions of the event and proposes debates on the ideas and trends that are reshaping the publishing and literary sector.

**How can we use digital tools in favour of books? Which books shape our lives? How is the book adapting to artificial intelligence? What are the challenges of being a writer in Portugal?**

In each episode, authors, creators, and researchers explore these questions, reflecting on how reading continues to have the power to inspire and transform in an increasingly digital world.

In the episodes already available, Hugo van der Ding speaks with humour and candour about the power of books to transport us to other universes; Maria João Faria reveals the impact of the BookTok phenomenon and how young people are rediscovering reading through digital platforms; Helena Magalhães shares the

importance of promoting literature written by women and the creation of her book club, Book Gang; Sara Rodi explores the behind-the-scenes process of writing, from books to screenplays, and the impact of narratives that shape generations; Nuno Caravela addresses children's and young adult literature and the development of future readers; Filipa Fonseca, founder of the Clube de Mulheres Escritoras, discusses the challenges of being a woman writer in Portugal; and Pedro Freitas reflects on the power of poetry and his experience of bringing it to different audiences across the country.

This series offers inspiring and thought-provoking conversations that challenge us to rethink books and reading in the 21st century.

**Each episode is an invitation to discover stories, ideas, and experiences**

that continue to transform the way we read and think about the world.

Listen to the full episodes of the **Book 2.0** podcast anytime, anywhere.



**Book 2.0**  
Spotify





Listen to the full broadcast on **RTP Play** and revisit every moment of the conversation.



# Prova Oral Podcast



The **Prova Oral** programme, hosted by **Fernando Alvim**, was featured at Book 2.0 with a special broadcast dedicated to the theme **“The Future of Books”**. Recorded live during the event, this conversation brought together authors, readers, and communicators passionate about the written word, in a dialogue about the role of reading today. Among the guests were **Pedro Pacífico**, creator of the Bookster project, **Mariana Nunes**, and **Analita Alves dos Santos**, who shared reflections on the pleasure of reading and the opportunities to promote reading in an increasingly digital world. The conversation also included **José Eduardo Agualusa**, **Nuno Markl**, and **Marco Neves**, who recalled the books that had most influenced them and discussed how stories continue to shape the way we think and feel.

**Stories continue to shape the way we think and feel.**



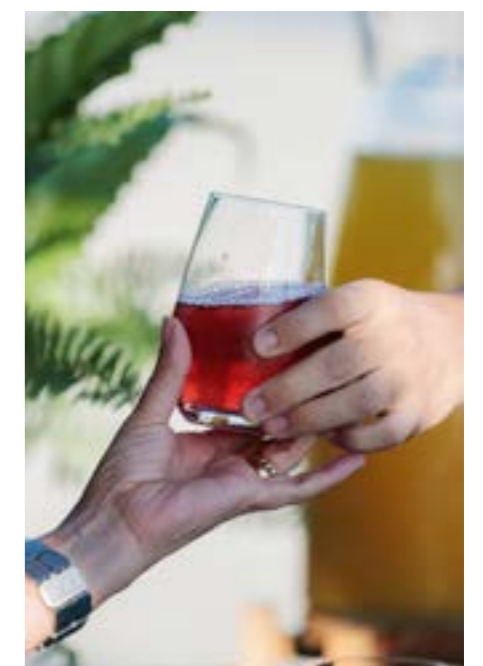
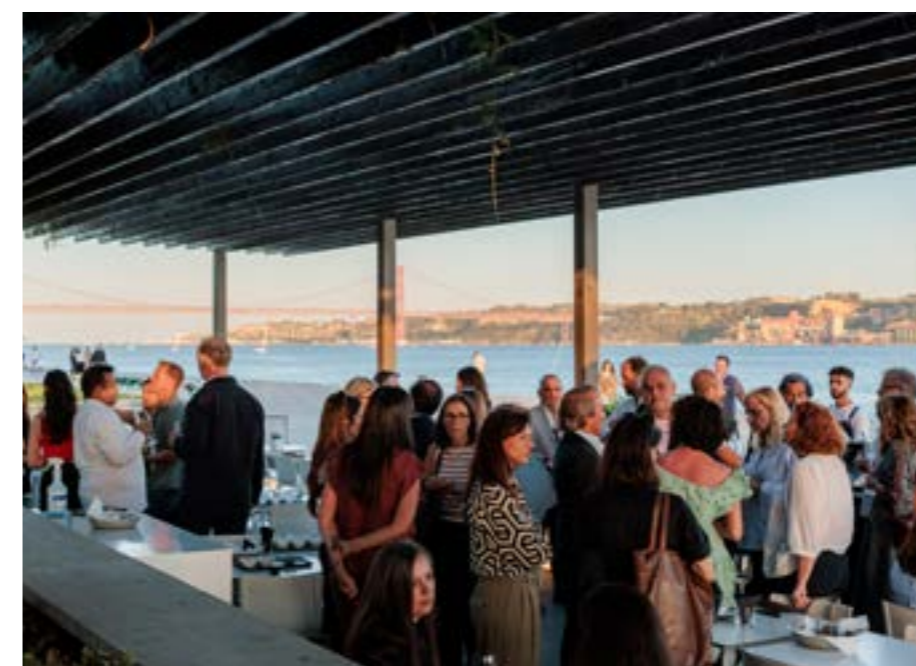
**Prova Oral**  
Antena 3



# Cocktail



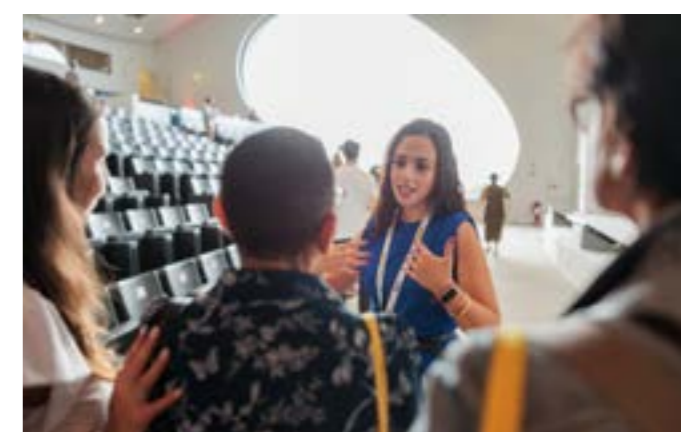
"A meeting  
*place* where  
*ideas* find  
their voice."





"Together,  
we reinvent  
the *future*."





# Partners

A special thank you to the partners of the third edition of Book 2.0

An initiative by



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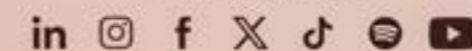


Quem somos nós, quem é cada um de nós senão uma **combinatória** de experiências, de informações, de leituras, de imaginações?

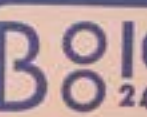
*Italo Calvino*

#The Future of Reading

[www.book.apel.pt](http://www.book.apel.pt)



#The Future of Reading



# Champalimaud Foundation: The Stage for Reinvention



The **Champalimaud Foundation**, internationally recognised for its excellence in scientific research and innovation, was chosen to host the 3rd edition of Book 2.0. The selection of this venue established an immediate connection with the event's central theme, "The Reinvention of Species", creating a symbolic bridge between scientific thinking and the literary world. By bringing the debate on the future of books to a place dedicated to discovery and the cutting edge of knowledge, APEL highlighted the idea that books and the publishing sector must also evolve and adapt to new times. Just as science transforms itself to respond to humanity's challenges, reading and knowledge must accompany this change, reinventing themselves to remain relevant in the digital age.

The Champalimaud Centre provided the perfect setting for this reflection. Its contemporary architecture, inspiring atmosphere, and defining spirit of curiosity created the ideal context to bring together more than forty speakers, including researchers, writers, and leaders from the publishing sector. The convergence of science, art, and literature reinforced the event's central message: the book is — and must continue to be — a driver of transformation, a tool for critical thinking, and a means of collective progress. Over the course of two days, the auditorium of the Champalimaud Foundation became a space for dialogue between science and literature, where literacy and the capacity to adapt asserted themselves as essential foundations for our ongoing reinvention as a society.





## Governance

### BOOK 2.0 TEAM



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APEL Secretary-General



**Ana Tristão**  
International Projects  
APEL



**Sílvia Rodriguez**  
Executive Director  
Book 2.0



**Catarina Santos**  
Book 2.0  
Communication



**Thaís Yumiko**  
Book 2.0 Project  
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# Inclusion and Accessibility Measures at Book 2.0

Recognizing the importance of ensuring that Book 2.0 is both for everyone and shaped by everyone, we implemented a series of measures to promote inclusion and accessibility for all participants.

## **PRE-EVENT COMMUNICATION**

Before the event, detailed information on accessibility options was shared on the official Book 2.0 website, allowing participants to plan accordingly. A feedback mechanism was set up via the registration form so that participants could request specific adaptations.

## **SIGN LANGUAGE**

A team of qualified sign language interpreters was present on stage throughout the event.

## **SIMULTANEOUS INTERPRETATION**

To accommodate all participants, simultaneous translation was available for all sessions. Participants were able to access the translations in real time via headphones, which allowed them to participate fully in the debates and presentations.

## **ACCESSIBILITY**

The venue chosen for the second edition of Book 2.0 was fully accessible, with ramps, elevators and toilets accessible to people with reduced mobility. Seats were reserved for people with reduced mobility at the top of the auditorium.

## **DIGITAL AGENDA**

In an effort to minimize paper waste, an online agenda was made available via a QR code displayed regularly on the Auditorium's screens. Participants could easily scan the codes to access the program and session details on their devices, ensuring that everyone had up-to-date information.

## **ACCESSIBILITY TO POST-EVENT CONTENT**

Recordings of all the sessions were made available on Book 2.0's YouTube channel, in order to guarantee accessibility to the information.



Book.apel.pt

