# Scots Language Publication Grant 2024 recipients – blurbs and quotes

## Horsepowerby Aaron Gale, published by Doric Books CIC

Horsepower, set in late 90s North-East Scotland, tells the story of a group of working-class, teenage boys who come across a kelpie which presents as a souped-up sports car. This story, written in North-East Scots, will explore the tendency of young men to be disproportionately involved in road traffic accidents and the extent to which this can be attributed to a culture of toxic masculinity.

**Jackie Ross at Doric Books CIC says:** ‘We're fair trickit tae get iss grant. We ken ere's a real need fur iss kine o material, espeecially fur skweels studyin e Scots Language Awards.’

**Author Aaron Gale says:** ‘I canna wait tae bring iss weel kent mythical beast intae e modern age. I've been passionate aboot iss project fur a lang time an it's a dream fur't tae becum a reality.’

## Sidlaw Breezes and No Sae Lang Syne by Mary Brooksbank, published by Mary Brooksbank Publication Collective

Mary Brooksbank Publication Collective are a Dundee-based collective who formed in 2023 to help continue the legacy of Dundee writer and activist Mary Brooksbank, who is the only woman to feature on the Scottish Parliament’s Canongate Wall with an extract from her ‘Jute Mill Song’. By republishing Brooksbank’s poetry and song collection, *Sidlaw Breezes*, and an autobiography, *No Sae Lang Syne: A Tale of This City*, it will make Brooksbank’s important works available for the first time in decades.

Mary Brooksbank (nee Soutar, 1897-1978) was a writer, political activist, singer and tradition bearer. She began work in Dundee’s jute mills in her early teens, where she soon recognised a world ill-divided, and throughout her life remained committed to activism to improve the lives of those in her community.

**The Mary Brooksbank Publishing Collective says:** ‘We're really happy to have the support of the Scots Language Publication Fund to republish Sidlaw Breezes and No Sae Lang Syne. Mary Brooksbank’s work is very relevant at the moment, and we are excited for people to be able to get to know her writing more deeply or discover it for the first time and be inspired by her.’

## Uncannie Investigashuns by Neil Slorance and Colin Maxwell, published by Maximized Comics

Uncannie Investigashuns is comic buik fir bairns and the young at hert follaein Youtubers Damien Daurke and Jenny Doolie as they traivel Scotland investigatin tales o strange happenins. Thair adventures tak them oan the trail o ghaists, fleein saucers, strange beasties and faeries. It's a lichtherted comedy-adventure that aims tae entertain alang wi educatin readers aboot the geography and histry o Scotland.

**Neil Slorance and Colin Maxwell say:** ‘We are delighted to receive the grant that will allow them to collaborate on this comedy-adventure set in Scotland and take their characters to a wider audience all while using the Scots language.’

## Fower Pessoas by Fernando Pessoa and translated by Colin Bramwell, published by Carcanet.

Fower Pessoas is Colin Bramwell’s free translation of the Portuguese poet Fernando Pessoa into Scots. Pessoa is one of the more significant European poets of the last century. Famously he wrote in heteronym characters of his own invention, and Bramwell reimagines his subject’s four main personas as present-day Scots speakers.

**Author Colin Bramwell says:** ‘I am both delighted and hugely grateful to receive support from the Scots Language Publication Grant for *Fower Pessoas*. This grant will be of great assistance to myself and my publisher, helping promote and distribute the book in Scotland and beyond.’

## Who's Aldo? Audiobook by Colin Burnett, published by Tippermuir Books.

Who's Aldo? is the sequel to the Scots Language Publication Grant-funded *A Working Class State of Mind*. Aldo and his author, Colin Burnett, have returned with a story written entirely in East Coast Scots, and the audiobook version, narrated by Patrick Wallace, will further boost literature from the east of Scotland.

**Author Colin Burnett says:** ‘I am so chuffed for Who’s Aldo? to have received this support. It gives myself and my publisher Tippermuir Books a wonderful opportunity to produce an audiobook version of the novel. Something that would have been very difficult to accomplish without the support we've receive through the award.’

## Hirda da Oorick by Ann Marie Anderson, published by Peerie Oorick

Ann Marie Anderson is the Shetland author of the beloved Peerie Oorick series of children’s books, which promote Shetland dialect as a valuable part of tradition and culture, preserving it for future generations.

Hirda da Oorick goes around his day gathering what he thinks of as treasure, as he works with two friends to collect rubbish from around the coast of where they live. This enchanting little book shows teamwork, as well as the impact of littering on the landscape and wildlife.

**Author Ann Marie Anderson says:** ‘Am owre da moon dat al be able ta publish my lang awaited peerie book aboot Hirda da Oorick in Shetland dialect. Wi da Scots Language Publication Grant my dream o gettin da story o Hirda published is becomin reality. I im forever grateful ta you aa.’

**Publisher Peerie Oorick says:** ‘We are extremely thankful ta da Scottish Book Trust fir dis generous Scots Language Publication grant. Delighted dat annider Peerie Oorick book will be joinin da idders on peerie bairns bookshelves.’

## Classic Scots Poems and Sangs for Bairns, edited by Matthew Fitt & James Robertson, published by Black and White publishing

The book will showcase world-famous works such as *To a Mouse* and *Auld Lang Syne* by Robert Burns, time-honoured classics including *The Boy in the Train* by Mary Campbell Smith, *The Sair Finger* by Walter Wingate, *Ye Cannae Shove Yer Granny aff a Bus*), and more contemporary poems and songs by the likes of Gregor Steele and Janet Paisley. These poems and songs will introduce children to material that is humorous, thought-provoking and rich in Scots expression, and which are ideal for learning by heart for recitation: many of them have long been favourites for reciting on Burns Night or St Andrew’s Day.

**Editors Matthew Fitt and James Roberts say:** ‘This is a great opportunity to present poetry and song in Scots from across the centuries to today’s young readers. There’ll be plenty of old favourites for reciting on Burns Night or St Andrew’s Day, as well as some modern ‘classics’. And we’re really looking forward to working with one of our favourite illustrators, Bob Dewar, to make the book as bright and bonnie as possible.’

**Black & White Publishing and Itchy Coo says:** ‘We and Itchy Coo are delighted to be receiving a grant towards the publication of this new collection of classic poems and songs for children in Scots. The award of this grant is critical to the success of the project and, without it, it is unlikely that we’d be able to publish the book and bring these brilliant works in Scots to a new audience.’

## *The Tale o how Evan Evans Scrapped wi Evan Nichols* by Jo Higgs and *Tendencies* by Richard Munro, published by Leamington Books.

Richard Munro and Jo Higgs are publishing two Scots pamphlets – the first by Jo is an essay that won the Sloan Prize for Prose of Verse Composition in Lowland Scots; while Richard’s is a collection of new poetry in Scots.

**Jo Higgs says:** ‘It’s exciting to receive this grant from the Scottish Book Trust as being part of the work they're doing in promoting Scots as a language (and all the different divisions of Scots within it) means a lot, especially as someone who is, as of recently, living outwith Scotland for the first time in my life. As a writer, having my work published is the most rewarding experience, and having the backing of the Scottish Book Trust only adds to that feeling.’

**Richard Munro says:** ‘For far too long I’ve been wary about writing LGBT themed poetry, gearing everything to please mostly heterosexual audiences. It’s now time to expose my work to both LGBT and straight audiences alike. Being awarded the grant allows me to publish and sell a unique set of LGBT themed poems; gives me permission to come out of the poetry closet at last and illuminate my lived experiences growing up as a gay man.’ **Peter Burnett of Leamington Books says:** ‘We are delighted to be able to continue to publish in Scots by means of this grant. Thank you to the Scottish Book Trust for this valuable support.’

## The Alligrog by Mandy Sinclair & Kirsty Johnson, published by Wee Stoorie Press.

The Alligrog, based on an existing trilogy by author Kirsty Johnson, and illustrated by Mandy Sinclair, was originally submitted to BBC Sounds in Scots. The producer asked Wee Stoorie Press for a story and illustration for pupils aged 5 to 7 years, with the theme on the importance of making and having good pals, and this will now be published in a book.

**Kirsty Johnson and Mandy Sinclair of Wee Stoorie Press said:** ‘We are absolutely ower the moon at being one of the awardees of the Scots Language Publication grant, 2024. We wish to sincerely thank the Scottish Book Trust whose help and support now and over the past few years has been invaluable in so many ways. Huge thanks also to the panel of judges for their time and consideration and of course, for selecting our project.’

‘As author and illustrator, to say we are delighted with our award is such an understatement. It is only by virtue of this grant we are now able to look forward to creating and publishing our book, The Alligrog, in Spring 2025. We cannae wait tae be sharin this new yarn an braw picturs wi as mony bairns as we can.’

## This Is What You Get by Ian McLachlan, published by Rymour.

*This Is What You Get* is a novel in Aberdeenshire Scots, which tells the coming-of-age story of a young working-class man from the North East who joins the Army.

Author Ian McLachlan says: ‘The broad Doric spoken by my grandparents seems to fade further with every passing year, so I am delighted that fresh life is breathed into oor mither tongue by Scottish Book Trust, allowing Scots writers to be heard from the page, and to entertain and bring pleasure to readers in Scotland and beyond. I feel truly honoured that funding has been awarded for publication of my novel, *This is What You Get*, and that I am able to play a part in keeping Scots dialects relevant.’