

Bait AlGhasham DarArab Translation Prize
International Translation Prize for Arabic Literature

Introduction

Bait AlGhasham for Press, Publishing, and Advertising (**Oman**) and DarArab for Publishing and Translation (**United Kingdom**) are pleased to announce the **Bait AlGhasham DarArab Translation Prize**. Each year, this prize acknowledges and honours outstanding Arabic literature by making it internationally accessible through translation into English. This prize honours the significant role that translation plays in promoting understanding and communication among cultures, languages, and individuals worldwide. The prize is funded by Bait AlGhasham and managed by DarArab.

1970

In honour of the memory of Sultan Qaboos Ben Said (1940 – 2020), the late sultan of Oman, the Bait AlGhasham DarArab Translation Prize has set the year 1970 as a watershed year for the **Translators category**. For submissions in this category, the first edition of the original work must have been published after or during the year 1970. In addition to broadening the eligibility for submissions while still focusing on the modern Arabic literature, 1970 is a milestone year in the history of Oman and its contributions to Arabic literature. In 1970, Sultan Qaboos ascended to the throne and, since then, he has not only been known as the father of modern Oman but also for his numerous contributions to international literature and scholarship. Sultan Qaboos has established 16 academic chairs across many countries, including the United Kingdom, the United States of America, Australia, Netherlands, China, and Japan. Most of these chairs are dedicated to Arabic language, Arabic literature, and Middle Eastern studies.

Vision

To create a more interconnected global literary community, where English-language readers can access and appreciate literature originally written in Arabic, and where translators' efforts are valued and supported for their vital role in making this possible.

Mission

This prize aims to acknowledge and honour exceptional translations of literature from Arabic to English. Its mission is to foster cultural exchange and understanding between diverse linguistic and cultural communities, while emphasising the critical role of translation in making literature more widely accessible. In addition, by providing financial and professional support to translators, the prize also aims to encourage their ongoing efforts in expanding the availability of diverse Arabic literary works into English.

Objectives

1. To address the lack of diverse literary works translated from Arabic and published in English.
2. To introduce modern Arabic literary works to English-speaking readers worldwide.
3. To increase the exposure of Arab writers and their works to a worldwide audience.
4. To acknowledge, appreciate, and support the ongoing endeavours of Arabic-language authors and Arabic-English translators.

Prize Value

The total value of the prize is £55,000 and is allocated for two purposes: First, as a financial reward for the winners of the prize. Second, to cover the expenses of translating, editing, publishing, and marketing the winning works.

Prize Categories: The prize consists of **two** categories:

Translators Category

“Prize for an Unpublished Translation of a Published Literary Work”.

This category is reserved for literary works that have originally been published in Arabic but are yet to be translated into English. The first edition of the work must have been published after, or during, the year 1970 and not have been previously published in English. The literary work may be a novel, an autobiography, a short-story collection, or a poetry collection.

To apply for this prize, the translator of the literary work must submit a sample translation which should represent **at least 10%** of the total number of words from the original text. Additionally, the applicant must provide evidence of approval from the rights-holder to the original work in order to adhere to the terms of this application.

The total prize fund for this category is approximately £20,000.

The winning work will receive:

- £2,000 for the copyright owner of the original work (either the author or the publishing house).
- £2,000 for the translator **plus** the cost of the translation itself, based on the pricing approved by the Society of Authors in the United Kingdom, currently £100 per thousand words for prose and for poetry a £1.10 per line with a minimum of £35 per poem.

The remaining budget will be used to cover the expenses of editing, publishing, and marketing the winning translation. The winning work will be exclusively published by DarArab for Publishing and Translation.

Authors Category

“Prize for Unpublished Arabic Literary Work”.

This category is dedicated to *unpublished* literary works in the Arabic language that fall within the specific areas of literary creativity (novel, autobiography, short stories, or a poetry collection). The application should come from the author of the work.

The total prize fund for this category is approximately £22,000.

- The winning author will receive a cash prize of £2,000.

In addition to publishing the work in Arabic, the work will also be translated and published into English.

The remaining budget will be used to cover the expenses of translating, editing, publishing, and marketing the winning work. The winning work will be exclusively published in both languages by DarArab for Publishing and Translation.

Board of Trustees

Tasks of the Board:

- Adoption of the prize’s statutes
- Approving the members of the arbitration committees for each edition of the prize
- Approving the results of the prize's arbitration committees.

Roger Allen, (Chairman - USA)

Roger Allen is a prominent English scholar of Arabic literature who was the first student at Oxford University to earn a DPhil in modern Arabic literature. He later became a professor at the University of Pennsylvania, where he taught generations of students and Arabic scholars. Allen is renowned for his critical works on the Arabic literary tradition, translations of contemporary Arabic literature, and editing volumes for "The Cambridge History of Arabic Literature." He has received various academic honours and was recently awarded the Lifetime Achievement Award of the Shaikh Hamad Award for Translation and International Understanding in 2020. Allen continues to translate works by modern Arab writers, with several recent publications.

Mohamed Alyahyai, (Member - Oman)

Mohamed Alyahyai is an accomplished author, journalist, researcher, and documentary filmmaker. In the past thirty years, he has held leading media roles in Oman, the US, and Qatar. In addition to his literary and media achievements, he has initiated and taken part in several cultural initiatives in Oman, such as the Omani Short Stories Society (1986) and the Muscat Poetry Festival (1996), of which he has been the head of its organising committee.

Alyahyai has published several books, including novels and short-story collections, and works on media, politics, and history, in addition to several articles. Some of his works have been translated into English, Spanish, German, and Swedish. He has produced four long-form documentary films.

Alyahyai holds a Ph.D. in modern history and has a distinguished fellowship from the International Forum for Democratic Studies in Washington DC.

Sawad Hussain, (Member - UK)

Sawad Hussain is a translator from Arabic whose work has been recognised by English PEN, the Anglo-Omani Society and the Saif Ghobash Banipal Prize for Arabic Literary Translation, among others. She is a judge for the Palestine Book Awards and the 2023 National Translation Award. She has run translation workshops under the auspices of Shadow Heroes, Africa Writes, Shubbak Festival, the Yiddish Book Center, the British Library and the National Centre for Writing. Her most recent translations include *Black Foam* by Haji Jaber (AmazonCrossing) and *What Have You Left Behind* by Bushra al-Maqtari (Fitzcarraldo Editions). Her website is: <https://sawadhussain.com>

Judges

The Bait AlGhasham DarArab Translation Prize will feature a panel of expert judges in the fields of literature and translation. They will select the top five works and choose a final winner based on the prize's evaluation criteria. The judges will then submit their evaluation report explaining their process and considerations in shortlisting the five works and identifying the prize winners.

Timeline for the prize:

- Submissions open: 20th March 2024
- Submissions close: 31st July 2024
- Shortlisted works: (5 books) for each category, to be announced in January 2025
- Winners announcement: February during Muscat Book Fair 2025

Please note that publication dates may shift.

How to Submit:

Complete the entry form for the related category **and** upload soft copies of the required documents (PDF format is preferred).

Once submitted, the applicant will receive confirmation of receipt via email. Please do not send soft copies of the work to our email unless we request you to do so.

Applications for the 2024/2025 cycle: Open from 20th March 2024 – 31st July 2024.

Please direct any questions to: prize@dararab.co.uk.

The full terms and conditions for **The Bait AlGhasham DarArab Translation Prize** are available on the DarArab website at: www.dararab.co.uk.