

News Release

London 14 February 2020

JOLABOKAFLOD ANNOUNCES 'READING FOR PLEASURE' COMPETITION WINNER AND PLANS FOR CHRISTMAS 2020

Jolabokaflod CIC announces plans for celebrating the 75-year-old Icelandic 'Christmas book flood' tradition for Christmas 2020 (and beyond) by seeking to reconnect readers to the life-changing potential of books to enhance their emotional sense of identity (to themselves and to other people), reduce their psychic loneliness, build life-long relationships with texts that evolve over time, and give purpose and context to their lives.

As we age, research shows that our ability to recollect events that occur during adolescence and early adulthood increases. This reminiscence bump is the tendency for adults to have enhanced memories of events that occur between the ages of 10 to 30 – especially during adolescence, when our sense of personal identity develops. This explains why the books we read in our youth have such an impact on our lives and our sense of who we are.

Jolabokaflod CIC translates this process into a celebration of the alchemy that turns texts into treasure in readers' minds in the following ways during 2020:

- Setting up and running a public, interactive campaign – Bokpersona – to spotlight readers' emotional engagement with books by collecting, celebrating and sharing memories and the feelings they evoke
- Realising the winning entry for the 'Reading for Pleasure Prize' Competition – BookDate, submitted by publisher, book coach and podcaster, Alison Jones – taking her idea from concept to a real-world resource for people to experience books via a crowdfunding campaign at CrowdPatch, which goes live from World Book Day in the UK (5 March 2020), starts officially World Book and Copyright Day/World Book Night (23 April 2020), marks World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development (21 May 2020), and culminates on Micro-, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises Day (27 June 2020): four global touch points in the literary calendar

There is profitable synergy and symbiosis between BookDate and Bokpersona. Jolabokaflod CIC is seeking partners to collaborate in actualising these elements of our 2020 programme. Christopher Norris is attending the London Book Fair in March 2020 and is available for meetings.

Bokpersona

Existing book trade campaigns deal with processes, products and behaviours: promoting bookshops: e.g. Books Are My Bag; promoting books: e.g. World Book Day; and promoting reading: e.g. Get London Reading). The Bokpersona campaign promotes and celebrates readers by exploring the emotional engagement of our 'souls' with books, celebrating how books help us to lay down memories and change our lives by examines our relationships to books and exploring the concept of giving books as the gifting of emotional journeys (to self and to others).

Bokpersona celebrates the gifting of memories through books via a programme that collects readers' memories, selects curated lists via a judging process, and promotes featured books that have made profound impact on our lives. Every reading experience is unique to each reader: books and stories engage with our individual souls, at subconscious and emotional levels, according to the environmental contexts and location in which find ourselves reading. We have all read books about which we enthuse: 'This book did this for me'; and 'This book made me feel _____'.

Starting from now, Jolabokafloð CIC will ensure that Bokpersona is accessible to everyone, irrespective of age, gender, culture, race, class, education level, reading proficiency and/or geographical location.

Bokpersona encourages the borrowing of books through libraries and the purchase of published books via booksellers. Jolabokafloð CIC is seeking partnerships with libraries, publishers and booksellers. Our charity partner is Worldreader, 'the non-profit champion of digital reading in underserved communities, to create a world where everyone can be a reader.'

In keeping with the Nordic origins of 'the Christmas book flood', *Jólabókaflóðið*, we have chosen a name for the campaign that works well in Icelandic and English. Bókpersóna in Icelandic translates to 'book character' in English: the concept that books shape both our character and our persona is right at the heart of what the campaign celebrates.

This programme builds on the *Jólabókaflóðið* custom that encourages people in Iceland to buy books as presents for loved ones to start reading as soon as they receive them on Christmas Eve. Jolabokafloð CIC adapts this literary concept for the digital age, to engage the book trade and the reading public in the UK and around the world.

BookDate

BookDate is the winning entry - submitted by publisher, book coach and podcaster, [Alison Jones](#) - for the '[Reading for Pleasure Prize](#)' competition run by Jolabokafloð CIC at I2R Prizes to find the best ideas for encouraging people to read for pleasure more often. The winner received a £500 cash prize.

BookDate encourages people to plan quality time to experience reading as a high-value leisure activity either at home (e.g. nights in) or at appropriate enjoyable locations (e.g. nights out, holidays)

Jolabokafloð CIC is running a crowdfunding campaign for [BookDate](#) at CrowdPatch to raise funds, followers and marketing buzz to build an online version of the idea for people to use as a real-world resource. We are donating 10% of the contributions we raise to [Worldreader](#).

Quotes

'Jolabokafloð goes beyond books as objects and reading as a leisure activity; it celebrates the meaning books give to our lives and our sense of identity. Our programme explores our emotional engagement with books through reading, as a source of our most precious memories and of our most treasured dates in time.' *Christopher Norris, Founder, Jolabokafloð CIC*

'I'm thrilled to have won this prize. Today reading for pleasure is more important than ever: while hype, notifications and endless ads try to capture and monetise our attention online, losing ourselves in a good book (literally hiding ourselves from the algorithms) is a subversive act of reclaiming our selves. Everyone deserves a regular date with a good book.' *Alison Jones, winner, Jolabokafloð's 'Reading for Pleasure' prize*

...ENDS...

Notes to Editors

1. For further details about Jolabokaflod CIC, please visit: <https://jolabokaflod.org/>
2. For further details of Jolabokaflod CIC's plans for Bokpersona in 2020, please visit: <https://jolabokaflod.org/bokpersona/>
3. For further information about BookDate, please visit: 'Reading for Pleasure Prize, winning entry <https://www.12rprizes.com/prizes/reading-for-pleasure-prize/#winner>; and the crowdfunding campaign at CrowdPatch <https://www.crowdpatch.com/bookdate/>
4. Twelve Ronnies (<https://www.twelveronnies.com/>) match business founders with commercial entrepreneurs and inventors to help build commercial teams. It has been described as a matchmaking service between inventors and those with the business acumen to make their ideas a reality. 12R Prizes (<https://www.12rprizes.com/>) is run by Twelve Ronnies to crowdsource solutions to complex issues. The 'Reading for Pleasure Prize' Competition, sponsored by Jolabokaflod CIC, addressed one such challenge: to champion reading as an attractive entertainment choice for everyone's leisure time. The competition asked entrepreneurs, innovators and the general public to crowdsource compelling ideas that capture people's imagination and fire their enthusiasm to read for pleasure.
5. CrowdPatch (<https://www.crowdpatch.com>) is a crowdfunding platform for social enterprises, charities and NGOs to seek funding and volunteers for free. The BookDate crowdfunding project (<https://www.crowdpatch.com/bookdate/>) seeks to raise £20,000: the campaign goes live on 5 March 2020 (World Book Day UK, <https://www.worldbookday.com>), launches officially on 23 April 2020 (World Book and Copyright Day, <https://www.un.org/en/events/bookday/>; and World Book Night, <https://worldbooknight.org>), marks culminates on 21 May 2020 (World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development, <https://www.un.org/en/events/culturaldiversityday/>), and culminates on 27 June 2020 (Micro-, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises Day, <https://www.un.org/en/events/smallbusinessday/>).
6. Worldreader (<https://www.worldreader.org>) is Jolabokaflod CIC's charity partner. Worldreader 'champions digital reading in underserved communities to create a world where everyone can be a reader'. Jolabokaflod CIC is donating 10% of contributions raised via crowdfunding for BookDate to Worldreader.
7. The people mentioned in this release are:
 - **Christopher Norris (Founder, Jolabokaflod)**
Christopher is a serial entrepreneur of businesses in the book publishing, digital and innovation space, including being a pioneer of World Book Day in the UK in the mid 1990s (LinkedIn profile: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/chris24norris/>)
 - **Alison Jones (publisher, book coach and podcaster)**
Alison is a veteran of the UK publishing sector: she is founder of Practical Inspiration Publishing, a pioneering publishing partner for businesses, and host of The Extraordinary Business Book Club, a podcast and community for writers and readers of extraordinary business books (LinkedIn profile: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/alison-jones-9b09893/>)

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