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For immediate release

IBBY Announces Winner of the 2026 IBBY-Asahi Reading Promotion Award

Elisabetta Lippolis and Jane O'Hanlon, Co-Chairs of the IBBY Reading Promotion Jury announced the winner of the 2026 IBBY-Asahi Reading Promotion Award on 13 April 2026 at 14:00 at the IBBY Annual Press Conference held at the Bologna Children's Book Fair. The International Board on Books for Young People is grateful for the continuous support of the Asahi-Shimbun Media Group from Japan.

The 2026 winner is:

LINKS Philippines Hooked on Books Program, nominated by IBBY Philippines.

Deeply aligned with IBBY's mission, LINKS Philippines Hooked on Books Program offers a unique model integrates literacy with creativity, civic engagement, and financial literacy. By combining Filipino-authored storybooks with storytelling, theatre, and values-based workshops, the programme provides disadvantaged children with culturally relevant literature, transforming reading into a joyful, empowering experience that fosters empathy, imagination, and civic responsibility. Since its 2017 launch, LINKS has established 25 libraries, reaching over 21,600 children and training more than 1,000 educators and volunteers. Its inclusive approach serves entire communities—children, parents, teachers, and volunteers—exemplifying IBBY's values of human development through books. Supported by a diverse coalition of local governments, schools, donors, and nonprofits, the programme employs a shared-responsibility model that ensures cost-effectiveness, community ownership, and long-term sustainability. Already replicated in various communities and embedded into public policy, LINKS offers a low-cost, high-impact framework adaptable to diverse settings, particularly where book access is limited. The jury believes this award will consolidate the project's expansion, reinforcing a collaborative approach essential for its future growth and lasting impact.

IBBY congratulates LINKS Philippines Hooked on Books Program. The prize of US\$ 10,000, which is generously given by the Asahi Shimbun, and a diploma will be presented to the winning project on 9 August 2026 at a ceremony taking place in the framework of the 40th IBBY World Congress in Ottawa, Canada.

The 2026 IBBY Reading Promotion Award Jury comprised: Elisabetta Lippolis (Co-Chair, Italy), Jane O'Hanlon (Co-Chair, Ireland), Tobechukwu Anyachebelu (Nigeria), Charalambos Demetriou (Cyprus), Hazel Hernández (Costa Rica), and Luis Zendrera (Spain).

Eight other projects were nominated for the award. These include: Poesía en la Escuela (Poetry at School), nominated by IBBY Argentina; Forest of Reading, nominated by IBBY Canada; Latin American Network of Mediators, nominated by IBBY Colombia; Agence quand les livres relient, nominated by IBBY France; Children's Cultural Development Center, nominated by IBBY Iran; Nuvem Vitoria, nominated by IBBY Portugal; Slovene Reading Badge Society, nominated by IBBY Slovenia; "Time of Heroes" children's eco-movement, nominated by IBBY Uzbekistan.

About the IBBY-Asahi reading Promotion Award

The IBBY-Asahi Reading Promotion Award has been given biennially since 1986 to a group or institution, which by their outstanding activities are judged by the Jury to be making a lasting contribution to book promotion programmes for children and young people. The prize is awarded for a specific project rather than to the overall on-going activities of, for example, a National Section. The submitted projects were judged for how well they support the IBBY Mission, as well as evidence of experience, sustainability, and opportunities for growth. Criteria included clearly stated originality and innovation, and evaluation that showed impact on target audience.

About IBBY

The International Board on Books for Young People (IBBY), established in 1953, is a non-profit organization that represents an international network of people from all over the world who are committed to bringing books and children together.

Contact:

For more information, about IBBY and the IBBY-Asahi Reading Promotion Award, please visit www.ibby.org or write to Executive Director Carolina Ballester at carolina.ballester@ibby.org.