

THE WOMEN'S PRIZE

Bold  
Original  
Fresh  
Enriching  
Empowering  
Informative  
Uplifting  
Iconic

30 YEARS OF INNOVATIVE,  
GROUNDBREAKING WORK  
CELEBRATING WOMEN AUTHORS  
AND THEIR INCREDIBLE BOOKS

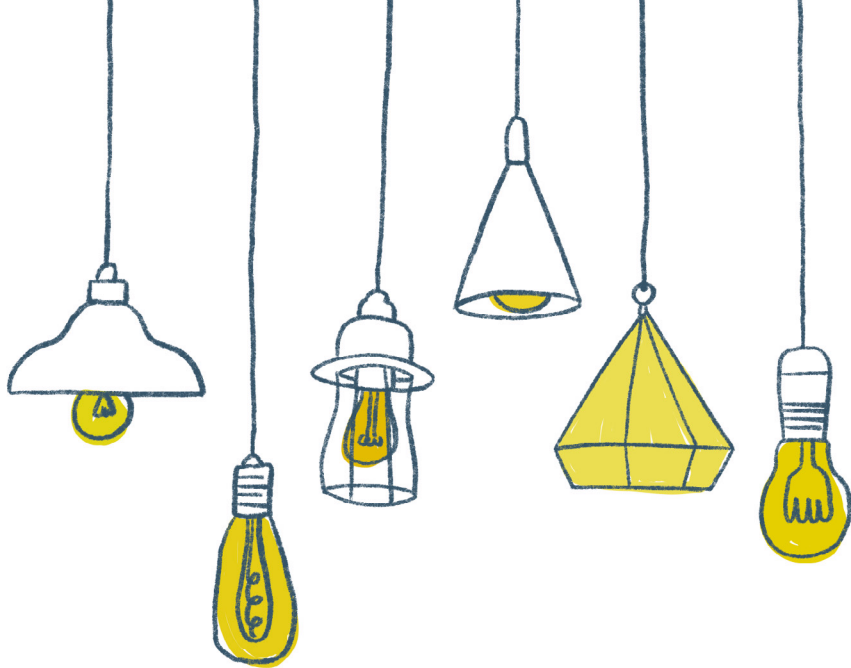
W' : 30

In addition to £30,000 prize money, the winners of the Women's Prize for Fiction and the Women's Prize for Non-Fiction each receive a stunning piece of art: an individual figurine of the Bessie (right) and the Charlotte (left) respectively.

*This is*  
Charlotte

*This is*  
Bessie





**The Women's Prize for Fiction is celebrating its 30th anniversary in 2025, and there's no doubt that it has changed the landscape for women writers and readers all over the world.**

From creating bestsellers to launching debut careers... the thing we're most proud of is the global community of readers the prize has cultivated, and the platforms fostered – online and in the real world – for readers and writers to connect.

We've only been able to reach readers by working in collaboration with booksellers, libraries, bookclubs and influencers. I would like to personally **thank you** for all your support of the Women's Prize so far, and for everything you do for the world of books.

This booklet is designed to help you engage even more with the Women's Prize; we hope it will encourage and inspire you, and make your life a bit easier over the coming months. It's jam-packed with information, ideas and advice, and signposts lots of other useful resources online (my favourite is the quiz!).

Have fun with it all and happy reading,...

*Claire x*

Claire Shanahan  
Executive Director  
Women's Prize Trust



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Disclaimer: Every effort has been made to ensure that the information contained in the report is correct at time of publication: (March 2025). The Women's Prize Trust cannot be held responsible for any errors.

Bryan Adams' *Everything I Do* was blaring out from radios; John Major was Prime Minister; audiences were flocking to cinemas to see *The Commitments*...

# LONDON, OCTOBER 1991

In the book world, women were busy writing and buying books, but their work was being overlooked. Research showed that despite women writing around 60% of novels in the UK, fewer than 9% of shortlisted books for major literary prizes were by female authors – to the detriment of readers everywhere. A group of publishers, booksellers, agents and journalists decided that things had to change.

## A PRIZE IS BORN


In January 1996, Founder Director Kate Mosse announced a bold new literary prize celebrating writing by women worldwide. With sponsorship from telecoms giant Orange, an anonymous endowment for prize money, and a striking bronze figurine known as The Bessie for the winner, the Women's Prize for Fiction – then called the Orange Prize – was officially launched. The Prize championed excellent, original and accessible storytelling, and most importantly invited every reader to join the celebration.

## THIRTY YEARS OF CHANGE

Three decades and 29 winners later, the Women's Prize has transformed the literary landscape – propelling debut authors into the spotlight, creating bestsellers, and building a global community.

**For booksellers and librarians, the Women's Prize is much more than just an award; it's an opportunity to introduce readers to groundbreaking fiction, to champion diverse voices, and to shape a more inclusive literary world.**

**And that's something worth celebrating, every year.**



“You have two choices in life if you think something’s not quite right: you can moan, or you can do something about it – it’s that wonderful suffragette motto ‘Deeds Not Words’. We decided to do something and launch a prize that would honour, amplify and celebrate women’s voices.”

## Kate Mosse

Founder Director of the Women’s Prize for Fiction  
and the Women’s Prize for Non-Fiction



# A BRIEF HISTORY

## 1996

The Orange Prize for Fiction is awarded for the first time.

## 2001

The Orange/Libraries project with The Reading Partnership and 75 library authorities launches.

A shadow male judging panel is asked to draw up a prize shortlist, as part of a study of gendered reading habits.

## 2010

Her Majesty The Queen Camilla (then, Camilla, Duchess of Cornwall) attends the award ceremony as her first public engagement in the book world and presents the 15th winner with her Bessie.

## 2012

Orange announces the end of its 17-year sponsorship of the Women's Prize for Fiction.

## 2014

The first Baileys Women's Prize for Fiction is awarded.

## 2016

The Prize opens its first-ever pop-up 'book bar' in Waterstones, Tottenham Court Road.

## 2017

The Women's Prize for Fiction moves to a 'family of sponsors' model. Over the coming years, sponsors include NatWest, Fremantle, Deloitte, Audible and Baileys.

## 2019

The Women's Prize *Bookshelfie* podcast launches.

## 2020

*Half of a Yellow Sun* is named 'Winner of Winners' out of 24 previous winners in a public vote with 10,000 readers.

'Discoveries', our development programme for unpublished and unagented women writers, launches with Curtis Brown and Curtis Brown Creative.

## 2021

The first Women's Prize LIVE festival takes place in Bedford Square Gardens, in the heart of Bloomsbury, London.

## 2023

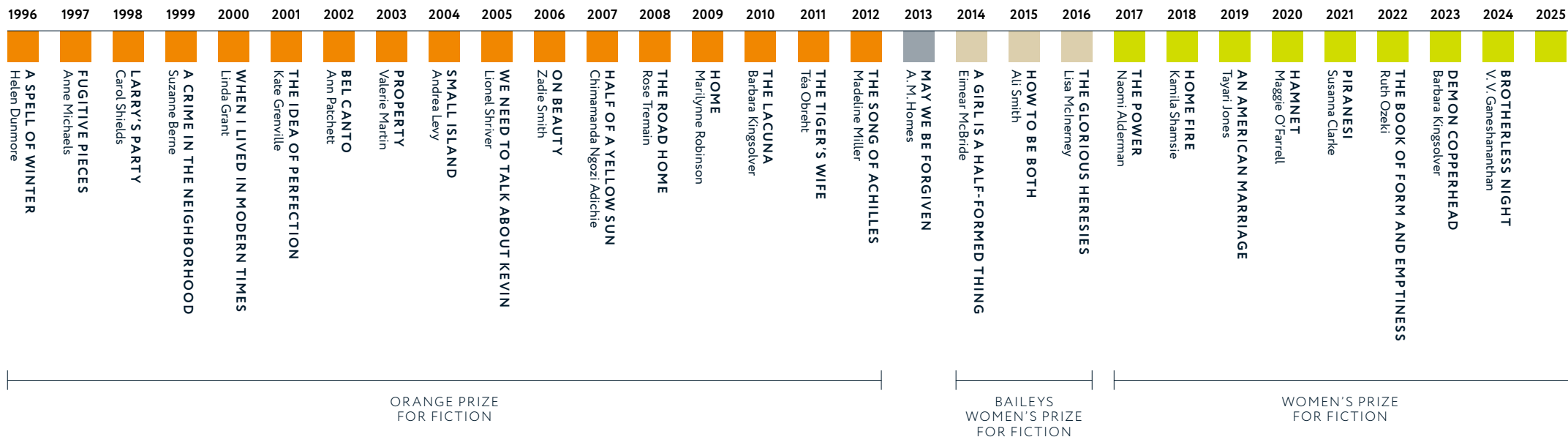
Barbara Kingsolver is the first double winner of the Women's Prize for Fiction.

## 2024

The first Women's Prize for Non-Fiction, supported by Findmypast, is awarded to Naomi Klein for *Doppelganger*.

## 2025

The 30th winner of the Women's Prize for Fiction will be announced on 13 June 2025...



You can download this page for display here: [womensprize.com/prizes/womens-prize-for-fiction/previous-prizes/](https://womensprize.com/prizes/womens-prize-for-fiction/previous-prizes/)

# the Knowledge

## 10 FACTS ABOUT THE WOMEN'S PRIZE FOR FICTION

1

The Women's Prize for Fiction was founded by Kate Mosse with Clare Alexander, Jane Gregory, Susan Sandon and Carole Welch.

2

The winner receives a bronze statue, known as The Bessie, created by artist Grizel Niven.

3

An independent panel of five judges, all women, all passionate readers and at the top of their respective professions, choose the winner of the Women's Prize for Fiction.

4

The prize celebrates all genres of fiction, with the idea being that any reader can find something to enjoy on a longlist of 16 books.

5

Authors from over 30 different countries have been shortlisted.

6

The Women's Prize runs a #MenReadingWomen campaign, designed to showcase brilliant books that male celebrities love. Men who have taken part in the campaign include Salman Rushdie, Stanley Tucci, Ian McEwan, Sanjeev Bhaskar, Richard Curtis and Lee Child.

7

The only author to have won the Women's Prize for Fiction twice is Barbara Kingsolver: in 2010 with *The Lacuna* and in 2023 with *Demon Copperhead*.



Barbara Kingsolver poses with her 'Bessie' statue after winning the Women's Prize for Fiction in 2010.



8

The first debut novel to win the Women's Prize was *Fugitive Pieces* by Anne Michaels in 1997.

9

At 25 years old, Téa Obreht became the youngest winner for her debut novel, *The Tiger's Wife*.

10

The 29 books that have won the Women's Prize for Fiction (up to and including 2024's winner, V. V. Ganeshanathan's *Brotherless Night*) have sold over 7 million copies as of November 2024, to a value of £51 million in the UK alone.\*

\* Nielsen BookScan Total Consumer Market (1998 to 2024) for the Women's Prize Trust. UK print book sales. Please note that sales data was not available during Covid-19 pandemic lockdown periods in the UK.



# Events & workshops

## HOW TO RUN AN AUTHORLESS EVENT

There's nothing better than an audience listening to an author that they love read from their work or having the opportunity to ask them questions, but it's not always possible to have an author at every event. We encourage you to celebrate the Women's Prize and engage your community with these fun and interactive ideas:

## HOST A WOMEN'S PRIZE BOOK CLUB

Choose a book, or a selection of books, from the shortlist and invite readers to discuss, championing one each. Use the Women's Prize website to download reading guides to stimulate your conversation.

## CELEBRATE WOMEN WRITERS

Organise a panel or discussion on the impact of women in literature, with booksellers, librarians or local authors from your area.

## RUN A READING CHALLENGE

Invite readers to read a selection of Women's Prize books over a set period and bring them together to vote for their favourite.

## QUIZ YOUR READERS

Download a ready-made quiz about the Women's Prize from the QR code for a fun, interactive event.

## CREATIVE WRITING WORKSHOP

Host a writing workshop inspired by a book from the Women's Prize's backlist – you could even invite a local author to host.



Scan the QR code to find even more inspiration for running an engaging authorless event.

# Join us live on 11 June...



## STREAM THE 2025 SHORTLIST READINGS (LIVE)

Host a watch party for the Women's Prize Shortlist Readings event on 11 June 2025. Invite your guests to join, discuss, and predict the winner together.

Each of the 12 shortlisted authors – six for the fiction prize and six for non-fiction – will be reading from their work and in conversation with the chairs of judges Kit de Waal and Kavita Puri.

The event begins at 6pm BST and will be broadcast LIVE from Bedford Square Gardens in London. Join us from your local bookshop, library, pub or friend's house.

More details about tickets for the online stream will be available shortly on the Women's Prize website. Join up to the newsletter to be first in-the-know.

## WOMEN'S PRIZE FOR FICTION

GOOD GIRL  
Aria Aber

ALL FOURS  
Miranda July

THE PERSIANS  
Sanam Mahloudji

TELL ME EVERYTHING  
Elizabeth Strout

THE SAFEKEEP  
Yael van der Wouden

FUNDAMENTALLY  
Nussaibah Younis

## WOMEN'S PRIZE FOR NON-FICTION

A THOUSAND THREADS  
Neneh Cherry

THE STORY OF A HEART  
Rachel Clarke

RAISING HARE  
Chloe Dalton

AGENT ZO  
Clare Mulley

WHAT THE WILD SEA CAN BE  
Helen Scales

PRIVATE REVOLUTIONS  
Yuan Yang



11  
JUNE  
2025



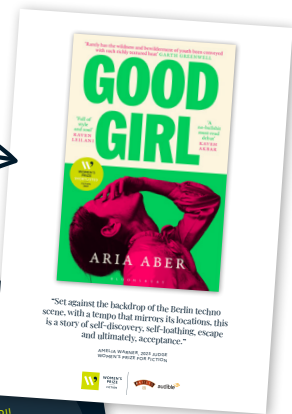
# SHOWCASING THE WOMEN'S PRIZE:

# INSPIRATION! INSPIRATION!

Creating a creative, eye-catching Women's Prize display is a fantastic way to introduce readers to brilliant writing by women. Whether highlighting the current shortlists or past winners, here are some simple ways to highlight the Women's Prize in your venue:

## WE HAVE LOTS OF EXTRA RESOURCES YOU CAN DOWNLOAD FOR FREE!

POSTERS



## FEATURE PRIZE-WINNING AUTHORS

Showcase books from the Women's Prize library, whether it's past winners like Zadie Smith, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, or Barbara Kingsolver, or debuts such as Parini Shroff, Yael van der Wouden or Aube Rey Lescuré. Choose your favourites or bestsellers!

## USE POSTERS AND STANDEES

Place this year's Women's Prize posters in available space, and the A4 strut-card on a table or window display featuring any of the 562 titles from the Women's Prize backlist.

LOGOS AND STICKERS



READING GUIDES



## ADD REVIEW CARDS

Readers love to hear from their local booksellers and librarians. Add a personal touch by placing handwritten or printed review cards in front of your favourite Women's Prize books – you can even use the postcards provided.

## CREATE A 'READ THE SHORTLIST' SECTION

Dedicate a shelf or table to this year's shortlisted books, encouraging readers to discover and discuss. Putting the selections together across the fiction and non-fiction prizes shows readers the breadth of the lists, with a book for everyone.

## DISPLAY PROPS AND COLOUR BLOCKING

Focus on colours from the Women's Prize branding, create our 'W' logo out of books or paper, group books together by colour, or use props to tie into relevant themes.

HELP READERS CHOOSE  
THEIR NEXT BOOK BY  
USING REVIEW CARDS...



### OUR COLOUR PALETTE



LIME

WOMEN'S  
PRIZE FOR  
FICTION

LIME

R208 G220 B0  
#d0dc00



INDIGO

WOMEN'S  
PRIZE FOR  
NON-FICTION

INDIGO

R102 G107 B176  
#666bb0



### DOWNLOADS

You can find all our free resources, including downloadable posters and reading lists on our website: [womensprize.com](https://www.womensprize.com)

You'll find them all in the Resources sections of the Prizes menus.

P.S.

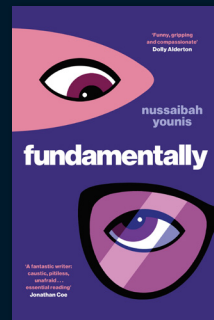
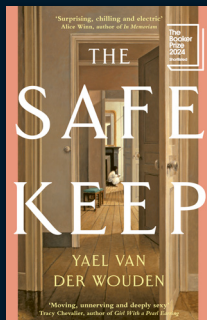
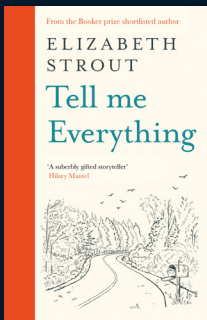
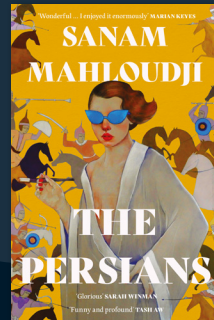
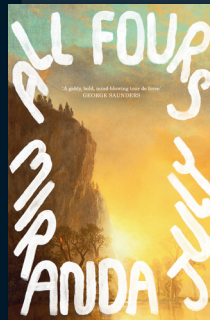
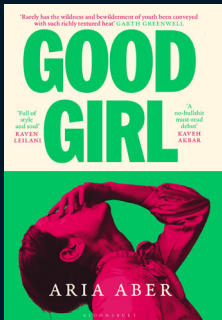
We would love to see your displays! Please post your images on social media and tag us @womensprize, and we promise to share them. We look forward to seeing them.



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# The 2025 Shortlist



## NOTES ON THE SHORTLIST...

### GOOD GIRL

by Aria Aber

A story exploring immigration, identity and a daughter's reckoning with her family's secrets. For fans of Elif Shafak and Bernardine Evaristo.

### ALL FOURS

by Miranda July

A novel about desire, transformation and what it means to truly start over. For fans of Deborah Levy and Eimear McBride.

### THE PERSIANS

by Sanam Mahloujji

An intergenerational saga of love, revolution and resilience in modern Iran. For fans of Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie and Min Jin Lee's *Pachinko*.

### TELL ME EVERYTHING

by Elizabeth Strout

A novel about love, regret and the stories we tell ourselves. From the Pulitzer Prize-winning author of *Olive Kitteridge* and *My Name is Lucy Barton*.

### THE SAFEKEEP

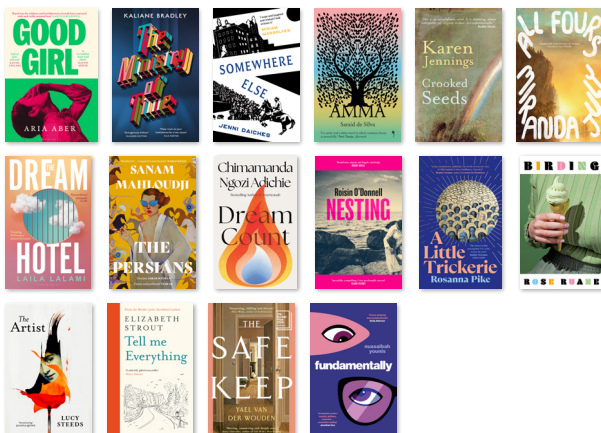
by Yael van der Wouden

A tale of secrecy, forbidden love, and survival in a world that demands silence. For fans of Patricia Highsmith and Sarah Waters.

### FUNDAMENTALLY

by Nussaibah Younis

A novel about faith, rebellion and finding your own path in an ever-changing world. For fans of Leila Aboulela and Kamila Shamsie.



### Explore the Longlist

You can find out more about all 16 longlisted titles at:

[womensprize.com/prizes/womens-prize-for-fiction](https://womensprize.com/prizes/womens-prize-for-fiction)

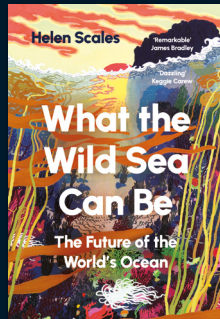
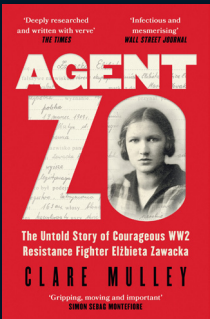
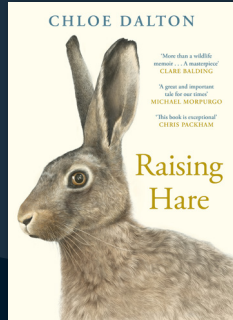
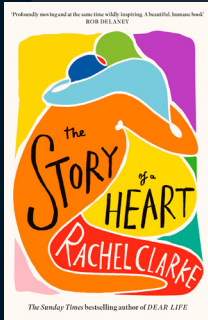
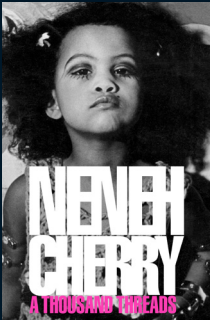




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Find  
my past

# The 2025 Shortlist



# NOTES ON THE SHORTLIST...

## A THOUSAND THREADS

by Neneh Cherry

A trailblazing musician weaves together art, activism and personal history in this intimate memoir. For fans of Patti Smith's *Just Kids* and Billie Holiday's *Lady Sings the Blues*.

## THE STORY OF A HEART

by Rachel Clarke

An account of medicine, mortality and the human spirit. For fans of Christie Watson's *The Language of Kindness* and Kathryn Mannix's *With the End in Mind*.

## RAISING HARE

by Chloe Dalton

A nature-infused meditation on friendship, following a woman's journey raising a baby hare during lockdown. For fans of Helen Macdonald's *H Is for Hawk*.

## AGENT ZO

by Clare Mulley

The true story of a woman who defied Nazi-occupied Europe and became a key figure in the Polish resistance. For fans of *The Nine* by Gwen Strauss.

## WHAT THE WILD SEA CAN BE

by Helen Scales

A call to action on protecting our oceans, from an acclaimed marine biologist and broadcaster. For fans of *The Sea Around Us* by Rachel Carson.

## PRIVATE REVOLUTIONS

by Yuan Yang

A personal exploration of a generation of young Chinese women navigating ambition, freedom and state control. For fans of the Pulitzer Prize winner *Behind the Beautiful Forevers* by Katherine Boo Ba.



## Explore the Longlist

You can find out more about all 16 longlisted titles at:

[womensprize.com/prizes/womens-prize-for-non-fiction](https://womensprize.com/prizes/womens-prize-for-non-fiction)





## EXPLORE THE WOMEN'S PRIZE LIBRARY



Looking for original, inspiring reads? Head over to the Women's Prize website where you'll find a goldmine of resources, including extracts, audio samples, features, author information and interviews.



**DISCOVER MORE:**  
[womensprize.com/library/](https://www.womensprize.com/library/)

## 562 books 562 more reasons to read...

Check out the full reading list with 562 incredible books from past winners, shortlists and longlists of the Women's Prize for Fiction.

We also have book recommendations from all the amazing guests featured on our *Bookshelfie* podcast plus recently published debuts from our 'Discoveries' programme. The library is searchable and growing all the time! It can be organised by prize year, mood and genre – all to make picking your next read even easier.

### READING GUIDES GALORE

Looking for a little extra detail or want to lead a book club discussion? You'll find handy reading guides for previous shortlisted and winning books, which even include writing exercises using the text as a springboard to inspire creative next steps.

# Celebrating Stories

## Connecting communities



To celebrate the 30th anniversary of the Women's Prize for Fiction, we're offering five libraries around the UK the opportunity to host a special party on the evening of 12 June 2025, when the winners of the 2025 prizes will be announced.

Libraries are invited to pitch their most creative ideas of how they would like to celebrate with the Women's Prize, and how their particular community would most benefit. The five selected libraries will be gifted exclusive party kits to support them hosting the event.

More details will be revealed shortly.

**Sign up to the Women's Prize newsletter for entry information:**

[womensprize.com/newsletter/](https://womensprize.com/newsletter/)



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SYL SALLER CBE

WE LOVE TALKING  
ABOUT BOOKS

JOIN THE CONVERSATION

@womensprize

W':30

CELEBRATING  
30 YEARS OF THE  
WOMEN'S PRIZE  
FOR FICTION

# Discover a world of books...

WRITTEN BY WOMEN.  
READ BY EVERYONE.



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