

# Next Page Foundation

## A brief summary of projects completed in the period 2002-2006

### I. OVERVIEW OF ACHIEVEMENTS TO DATE

The Next Page Foundation was found in early 2001 as the first spin-off organization of the OSI Information Program. Over the first 3 years the Foundation was directing its efforts in establishing itself as an independent entity and implementing a strategy largely based on the twofold strategic approach taken by the former OSI publishing programs, that is, to support content provision (e.g. translations) and to create the conditions under which quality content can be published and distributed (e.g. infrastructural projects). During this period, the Foundation was to a big extent acting as an OSI network program and an umbrella for the – then vigorous – Soros Foundations publishing network.

Since late 2004, Next Page started positioning itself more effectively via developing its own programs and projects, creating new partnerships and alliances, and starting more successful fundraising. This coincided with the enlargement of its geographical area of activities which in 2005 incorporated a new and challenging area – the MENA region.

Examples of the different types of impact include but are not limited to:

**1. Content provision** by direct co-funding for translations or indirect support that result in a bigger quantity and quality of book production.

- ⇒ contributed towards the publication of **232 book publications** of which:
  - 80 translations in 16 languages on media, Islam, cultural policy, Balkan history, gender, gay&lesbian and other current political issues;*
  - 62 East-East translations, primarily across the new "EU-divide";*
  - 49 publications in Romani language (10 available also in digital formats) distributed in 12 countries;*
  - 15 translations into Arabic of works from Iran, Turkey and India;*
  - 12 translations into Arabic of works by Eastern European authors;*
  - 4 original Arabic books for young adults;*
  - 10 co-productions between publishers of Serbia, Croatia and Bosnia*
- ⇒ provided **free e-access to 11 translations** of key books on media issues in 5 CEE languages thus also piloting a new form of cooperation between copyright holders;
- ⇒ launched the **Small Digital Romani Library**: online digital access to the content of 8 supported books and related information;
- ⇒ co-funded and promoted **RomLex**, the richest freely accessible electronic resource of Romani language and its varieties;
- ⇒ stimulated **alliances between CEE cultural journals** for boosting the flow of translations between them that for the last 3 months resulted in the publication of 2270 pages by 120 authors in 13 periodicals;
- ⇒ stimulated revitalization of the library and publishing exchange in former Yugoslavia by launching a **library exchange scheme comprising of 2,538 titles**;
- ⇒ launched the first **fully functioning Books-in-Print catalogues in Bosnia & Herzegovina, Croatia and Serbia that currently cover more than 80% of the annual book production.**

## 2. Convener, network builder and debate facilitator

- ⇒ started informal syndicates on several key issues such as the network b/w authors, publishers and researchers for **exploring the process of "internationalization" of written Romani language**;
- ⇒ **initiated consortia** and sustainable partnership alliances: on reading development for young adults – for Roma (through *Our Stories* project) and in the Arab world (through *Read Right Now* project) as well as between CEE cultural journals;
- ⇒ launched a **mobility scheme for cultural journalists** in Eastern Europe for 8 study visits in 7 countries’
- ⇒ bridged 3 key international organizations and numerous **grass-roots Roma organizations** in CEE for sustainable partnership beyond the Foundations’ projects;
- ⇒ enhanced **linkages between CEE cultural operators** through providing 8 mobility grants for journalists study resulting in more than 20 printed and electronic materials in 5 languages;
- ⇒ co-organized **young adult literature festivals** in Palestine and Egypt for over 100 participants;
- ⇒ catalyzed the creation of a young adults section (500+ visitors a day) in a **peer-to-peer writing web-site** [www.culturalworkshop.slangonline.com](http://www.culturalworkshop.slangonline.com)

## 3. Research

- ⇒ completed and distributed 5 pioneering and nationally representative qualitative **studies on readership in the Arab world** (presented in Cairo and Frankfurt, featured in 8 press and internet publications and one Al-Jazeera program for the period Jan-Feb 2007);
- ⇒ carried out a **study on Arabic translation policies**, players and issues that was presented at three major Arabic and one international event; freely accessible electronically, 100 printed copies published on demand and widely quoted in media, by NGOs and used in university courses;
- ⇒ 1 qualitative research study on the **usage of IT tools by Arab publishers**;
- ⇒ 2 groundbreaking studies on current situation of **Kurdish-language publishing** in a) Turkey and b) Syria. Their printed versions got 9 reviews in Turkish and Kurdish media for less than a month. One more on Iraq is under way;
- ⇒ 1 qualitative research study on the current and potential **applications of PoD technology** in Serbia;
- ⇒ 1 pioneering methodology and 3 studies on the **impact of Translation Project** scheme in Ukraine, Bulgaria and Lithuania;
- ⇒ commissioned and disseminated a **Manual for Romani Publishers** with practical guidelines for this specific field;
- ⇒ commissioned and disseminated a **Recommendation Paper on Publishing in Romani** with an overview of the area and scenarios for future development;
- ⇒ commissioned and disseminated **Promoting Reading among Roma** - guidelines for Roma educators, authors and publishers on effective approaches for development of reading habits and audiences;
- ⇒ **Creating Multicultural Books for Children** - guidelines for authors of books for Romani children

## 4. Promotion / raising awareness on neglected issues

- ⇒ introduced new political concepts in the local languages of translation and thus indirectly influenced decision- and opinion-makers such as politicians, experts, media and NGOs
- ⇒ introduced the very notion of cross-border distribution of Romani publications (by clusters of language varieties) and facilitated international distribution for all of its 40+ supported publications;
- ⇒ facilitated inclusion of Romani publications into the mainstream distribution networks of the country of publication (app. 70% of supported Romani publications can be found in mainstream bookshops);
- ⇒ raised the profile of books in Romani through offering higher quality and a wider range of materials for this group;
- ⇒ piloted innovative promotion techniques for East-East book translations by co-funding 4 large promotion projects by local publishers (incl. 10 countries, 19 authors, 20 events)

## 5. Policy

Albeit NP is not investing substantial resources in the policy area, most of its programs have a policy component. Some examples of successes in the field include:

- ⇒ "Roma reading" issue **included in the agenda of key international organizations** working on reading development (IRA, IBBY, CTI);
- ⇒ campaigned for best practices and encouraged local efforts for **improving state policies in promotion of translations** by providing a forum for exchange of ideas between key officials from 1) CEE via the conference "*Promoting Translations – Ideas, Practices, Innovations*" conference, Vienna 2006, 33 participants from 24 organizations and 2) in the Arab world via a panel discussion on "*Prospects for Promotion of Arabic Literature Abroad*", Amman 2006.

## 6. Capacity building

- ⇒ created a pool of **experienced Roma publishers** in CEE and the Balkans by providing 2 international trainings for 20+ participants, a series of face-to-face consultations and internships with mainstream publishers;
- ⇒ increased competencies of **children authors from Romani origin** via 2 international and 3 national workshops as well as numerous face-to-face consultations on creating multicultural books for children; individual mentoring of 10 Roma authors;
- ⇒ developed **network of expertise on young adult literature** comprising of 10 Arab authors, 2 libraries, 4 NGOs and cultural institutions;
- ⇒ increased level of professional knowledge and skills of **Serbian and Croatian publishers** by providing 9 trainings seminars for a total of 216 participants, and 48 individual consultations;
- ⇒ informally **advises** 2 cultural ministries (Bulgaria and Ukraine) on public strategies for promotion of literature abroad;
- ⇒ indirectly: through on-going consultations for grantees (particularly in the *Vorba* program)

## 7. Inventor of new ideas and solutions

- ⇒ enlarged the **regional book market in former Yugoslavia** by forging regional cooperation (1 fully functioning distribution center with a regional outreach; 40 mobility grants)
- ⇒ initiated a project for **digitalization of the Romani literature** heritage and copyrighted materials by the 24 libraries participating in The European Library - TEL project;
- ⇒ increased awareness of the value of the **e-access and PoD amongst Roma publishers** and authors with whom the project collaborated via workshops and consultations;
- ⇒ Launched South-South translations grant program. Developed and customized the program to the Arab publishing context;
- ⇒ Initiated a pilot for transfer of know-how on promotion of "marginal" literatures b/w CEE and key Arab players in the field;
- ⇒ Developed creative approach and secured 3<sup>rd</sup> party co-funding for tackling issues in young adult literature in 4 Arab countries

## 8. Multiplication of results

The "snowball effect" of Next Page's projects is normally difficult to track as the foundation's scarce resources do not allow for a comprehensive and on-going monitoring beyond a certain project's lifetime. Still, few examples can be mentioned. The *Books across Borders* scheme for former Yugoslavia ultimately contributed to the "normalization" of the issue of cross-border cooperation and consequently – in the establishment of permanent channels for book distribution and co-productions.

Similarly, one of the international networks started by the *Vorba* program on "Reading for Roma children" carried out 3 large reading promotion projects in Macedonia and Romania with independent funding.