

## Getting into Print – Guidelines for presenting a translation project to publishers

1. First, check that the English language rights for the book are available. Contact the foreign rights manager of the publishing house, and, if the rights are free, ask for permission to seek a publisher for your proposed translation. Some countries work through agents, but most foreign publishers are delighted that a translator wants to do their job for them!
2. Identify potential publishers. Publishing directories such as *The Writers' and Artists' Yearbook* or *The Writer's Handbook* list all publishers with descriptions of their spheres of interest and the names of the editors. It is important to write to a named person.
3. Professional presentation is very important. Put together a 'pack' which should include:
  - a letter describing the book and, most importantly, explaining why you are so enthusiastic about it and why you think it is appropriate for that particular publisher (reference to other titles in their list);
  - a synopsis and sample translation (a chapter, around 2-3,000 words, enough to give a flavour of the book);
  - facts and figures: length, number of words/pages. Sales figures/bestseller placings in the country of publication and in translation in other countries (which you can obtain from the original publisher);
  - translated excerpts from press cuttings;
  - information about the author (previous books, sales history, prizes, films based on their novels etc.);
  - your own résumé.
4. Factors affecting the publisher's decision:
  - Length
  - Cost of translation
  - Skill of translator
  - Is the author alive, 'promotable', available for launch?
  - Is the book part of a series?
  - Is the country of origin fashionable?
  - Can the editor read the language or will s/he need to rely on an outside reader?
  - Can the editor fight for and win this book in an editorial meeting?

It is advisable to approach several publishers at once. If you don't receive a response within a month, follow up with a telephone call. The publisher may not be interested in the book you are proposing, but might ask you what else you've been reading in that language, so have another couple of titles up your sleeve! There are numerous grants for translations, which most publishers seem unaware of. Check English PEN's website <http://www.englishpen.org/translation/writers-in-translation> which gives details of PEN grants and has a complete list of translation funders, or the Cultural Attaché of the embassy concerned for details of subsidies and remind the publisher that funding is available. There is also the European Culture Programme which funds translations.

## **Non fiction Book Proposal Guidelines**

The proposal should give the following information:

### **Synopsis**

- What is the book about?
- What material does it cover?
- What is its main argument?
- Why is this book necessary?
- How is the book original?

### **Outline**

- Title
- Table of contents
- Short descriptions of the contents of chapters
- Word length
- Figures, tables and illustrations

### **Market**

- For whom is the book intended?
- What level is it aimed at (undergraduates/postgraduates/academics & researchers/activists & policy-makers, general readers)?
- Will the book be a main text, supplementary reading, a research monograph or aimed at the general book trade?
- Where will the main market be?
- What existing books compete with this one?
- How will this book differ from the competition?

### **Author Information**

- Name
- Address
- Current position
- CV
- Possible referees
- Supporting material (sample chapters, lecture notes, journal articles)