

IBBY UK conference 2024 speaker biographies

Louise Ang

Louise is a Production Director at HarperCollins UK, overseeing teams who are producing books for HarperCollins Children's Books and Farshore.

Sita Brahmachari

Sita writes stories across genres that explore themes of culture, history, environmental protection, refugee rights, identity and belonging. They include the eco-novel *Where the River Runs Gold* (Orion) and *Tender Earth* (Macmillan) which was an IBBY UK Honour List nomination.

<https://www.sitabrahmachari.com/my-books>

Nicola Davies

Nicola is a trained zoologist, environmental campaigner and the author of more than 80 books for children of all ages that engage them with nature. They include information picturebooks, such as *Green: The Story of Plant Life on Our Planet* (Walker) and poetry, including *Blue Heart* (Graffeg) and fiction. Her YA novel *Skrimсли* (Firefly) was shortlisted for the 2024 Wainwright Prize.

<https://www.instagram.com/nicolakidsbooks/>

Neal Layton

Neal has created many picturebooks of his own including *The Tree* (Walker) as well as illustrating a range of titles by other writers including Cressida Cowell, Nicola Davies and Michael Rosen. His information picturebooks include the Eco Explorers series *A Planet Full of Plastic*, *A Climate in Chaos* and *A World Full of Wildlife* (Wren & Rook).

<http://www.neallayton.co.uk/>

Huw Lewis-Jones

Huw is an author of books for adults and children, a professor at Falmouth University, and seafarer. He travels across the Arctic and Antarctica each year working as an expedition leader. His children's books include the non-fiction Go Wild series which began with *Do Bears Poop in the Woods?* (Thames & Hudson), a Children's Choice SLA Information Book Award winner, and picture book stories such as the *Blue Badger* series (Happy Yak) and *Clive Penguin* (Little Tiger).

<https://www.instagram.com/huwlewisjones/>

Emma Reynolds

Emma is an illustrator who put together *Drawn to Change the World* (HarperAlley), a graphic novel collection featuring 16 youth climate activists and 16 artists. She also has a solo picturebook *Amara and the Bats* (HarperAlley). Emma initiated #KidLit4Climate the first global illustrated climate campaign, bringing together thousands of children's illustrators and authors from more than fifty countries in solidarity with the youth climate strikes.

<https://emmareynoldsillustration.com/about>

Lisa Sainsbury

Lisa Sainsbury is Associate Professor in Children's Literature at the School of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences, University of Roehampton. She is Series Editor of Bloomsbury's *Perspectives on Children's Literature* and Chair of the National Community of Researchers in Children's Literature (NCRCL). Ongoing research focusses on the philosophical remit of children's books, as explored in her monographs—*Ethics and British Children's Literature: Unexamined Life* (Bloomsbury: 2013) and *Metaphysics of Children's Literature: Climbing Fuzzy Mountains* (Bloomsbury: 2021). Lisa has a particular interest in environmental ethics and eco-ontologies, as reflected in her current work on Richard Adams' *Watership Down* (1972) and the module she teaches on 'Ecology, Environment, and Youth Culture' for the MA Children's Literature at Roehampton.

Anthea Simmons

Anthea is an author and activist Her novels published by Andersen Press are: *Lightning Mary* (about Mary Anning), *Burning Sunlight* (about young climate activists) and the recently published *The Secret Garden Rewilded*. Her areas of interest include the environment and diversity and inclusion. She is editor-in-chief for West Country Voices.

<https://www.andersenpress.co.uk/contributors/anthea-simmons/>

Ken Wilson-Max

Ken is a creator and publisher of inclusive books. His own extensive list of picturebooks includes *Eco Girl* who has been joined this year by *Aqua Boy* (both (Otter-Barry Books). As the owner of independent publishing house Alanna Max and founder of Kumusha Books, an imprint of HarperCollins Children's Books, Ken nurtures and promotes talent, both new and experienced, and advocates for a more balanced publishing industry.

<https://www.kenwilsonmax.com>