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Reykjavik earns UN distinction as a City of Literature



Reykjavik, Iceland

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The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization ([UNESCO](#)) has designated the Icelandic capital, Reykjavik, as a “City of Literature” in recognition of its efforts to preserve, disseminate and promote its rich literary heritage.

It is the fifth City of Literature, joining Edinburgh, Melbourne, Iowa City and Dublin in enriching UNESCO’s Creative Cities Network with its best literary practices, the agency stated in a news release.

Reykjavik – with a population of about 200,000 – boasts an outstanding literary history with its invaluable heritage of ancient mediaeval literature, the Sagas, the Edda and the *Íslendingabók*, *Libellus Islandorum* (Book of Icelanders), according to the Paris-based UNESCO.

“This long-standing tradition has naturally cultivated the city’s strength in literature education, preservation, dissemination and promotion,” it [stated](#).

UNESCO added that Reykjavik is especially appreciated for demonstrating the central role literature plays within the modern urban landscape, the contemporary society and the daily life of the citizens.

“The city’s collaborative approach through cooperation between various actors involved in literature, such as in publishing, in libraries, etc, in addition to the strong presence of writers, poets and children’s book authors is also noted to give the city a unique position in the world of literature,” said the agency.

UNESCO’s Creative Cities Network connects cities that want to share experiences, ideas and best practices for cultural, social and economic development. It now has 29 members, covering the areas of literature, film, music, crafts and folk art, design, media arts and gastronomy.

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