

# A GUIDE TO THE ALLIANCE

## What is the Alliance?

The International Alliance of independent publishers is a professional collective that brings together more than [550 independent publishing houses](#) from **52 countries around the world**. Created as an association in 2002, it is composed of **six language networks** (English, Arabic, French, Spanish, Portuguese, and Persian). Members of the Alliance are publishing houses and national publisher collectives. The Alliance's activities promote and strengthen [bibliodiversity](#) (cultural diversity applied to the world of the book).

In alignment with its mission, the Alliance created a [Bibliodiversity Observatory](#) that gathers studies, analysis, and measurement tools produced by the Alliance, aimed at professionals and public authorities. The Observatory's objectives include assessing and strengthening bibliodiversity in world. The Alliance also hosts and facilitates [international meetings and thematic workshops](#) (for example on children's book publishing, digital publishing, etc.), enabling independent publishers from various continents to exchange ideas and initiate collaborations. These meetings support increasing capacity through peer sharing, an aspect developed in particular around the issue of digital publishing in the context of the [Digital Lab](#). The Alliance supports [international publishing projects](#) (co-publishing, translations, copyright transfers, etc.), for a greater circulation of texts and fair access to books for readers.

The Alliance also hosts and facilitates international meetings and thematic workshops (for example on children's book publishing, digital publishing, etc.) enabling independent publishers from various continents to share and initiate collaborations. These meetings support capacity building through sharing, an aspect developed around the issue of digital publishing in the context of the Digital Lab. The Alliance supports international publishing projects (copublishings, translations, copyrights transfers, etc.), for a greater circulation of texts and fair access to books for readers.

## Key Dates of the Alliance

- Gijón meeting (Spain), 2000 (an initiative led by four Spanish-speaking publishers in reaction to the emergence of Spanish multinationals in Latin America)
- Creation of the Alliance project by a group of publishers and Etienne Galliard – who would become the first director of the association
- Paris meeting (France), 2001 (a few days away from the UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity)
- Creation of the “Alliance of Independent Publishers Association for Another Globalisation”, as per Law 1901, (head office in Paris) 2002
- Dakar meeting (Senegal), 2003 ([Declaration of Unity Amongst Independent Publishers](#))
- Guadalajara meeting (Mexico), 2005 ([Declaration of Independent Publishers of the Latin World](#))
- International Assembly of Independent Publishers in Paris (France), 2007 ([International Declaration of Independent Publishers for the Protection and Promotion of Bibliodiversity](#))

- Name change of the association to International Alliance of independent publishers, 2008
- Creation of the [International Committee of Independent Publishers](#) (ICIP), 2009
- International Assembly of Independent Publishers – preparatory meetings and closing meeting in Cape Town (South Africa), 2012-2014 ([International Declaration of Independent Publishers, to Promote and Strengthen Bibliodiversity Together](#), and [80 Recommendations and Tools in Support of Bibliodiversity](#))
- Creation of the [Bibliodiversity Observatory](#), 2016

## Objectives for 2015-2018

The activities and projects undertaken by the Alliance are in alignment with the Alliance’s 2015-2018 objectives:

- Consolidate and support a united professional network;
- Support the development of national, regional, and international book policies, and assist with the regulation of authors’ rights;
- Reaffirm and defend freedom and equity of speech;
- Strengthen collaborative spaces, and innovate to better adapt to tomorrow’s transformations and issues (digital publishing, social economies, fair trade);
- Participate in a re-balancing of exchanges between exporting and importing countries (textbooks, book donations...);
- Develop and strengthen intercultural exchanges (translations, co-publishing, fair trade books, local language publishing).

## The collective decision-making process of the Alliance

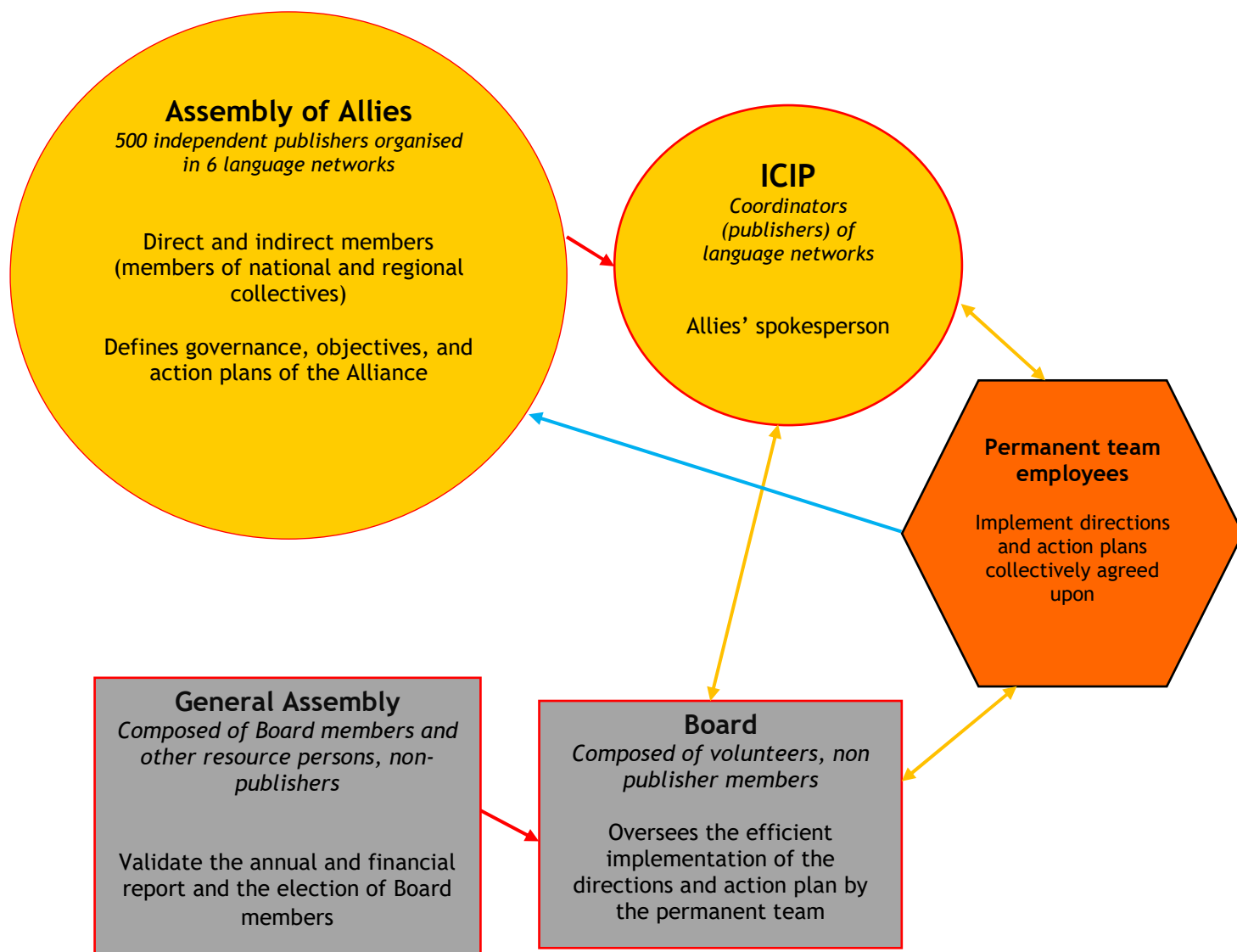
The governance and functioning of the Alliance for the period 2015-2018 were collectively agreed upon by the publishers, based on their answers to the “Questionnaire on the functioning and governance of the Alliance”, collected prior to the Cape Town Meeting (2014). The summary of responses to this questionnaire was discussed and commented on by the publishers during a language network meeting held in Cape Town on 19 September 2014. The coordinators and vice-coordinators presented the publishers’ feedback, questions, and points of clarification during the meeting between the ICIP, the Board, and the Alliance team on 22 September 2014, and then during the ICIP meeting in October 2015 in Paris. These steps assisted in clarifying and defining the functioning and governance framework of the Alliance for the next few years – which you will find below.

## Governance meetings of the Alliance

- International Assembly of independent publishers (every 4 to 7 years, depending on the Alliance’s human and financial resources)
- The Independent Committee of Independent Publishers meeting – ICIP (one meeting annually)
- Language network meetings (every 2 to 4 years, depending on human and financial resources of the Alliance)
- General Assembly (one meeting annually)
- Board meetings (approximately 4 to 5 meetings annually)

## Governance diagram

- = elected and represented by
- ↔ = meet with
- = consult



## The Assembly of Allies

The Assembly of Allies represents the 500 publishers of the Alliance and is organised in 6 linguistic networks. The Assembly of Allies is the voice of the Alliance. It meets physically at least once every 10 years, or more often depending on the human and financial resources available, bringing together at least 20% of direct publisher members.

- 84 independent direct publisher members
- 12 independent publisher collectives representing 415 publishers
- 3 observer members (Africultures, International Association of francophone booksellers; Fontaine O livres)

- Total: 550 members
- 50 countries represented, including 35 developing countries (Africa, Asia, Latin America, and Middle East) and 15 countries of the North

Of the 500 members, 63% are developing countries (i.e. 35 countries represented):

- In Africa: South Africa, Algeria, Angola, Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Ivory Coast, Gabon, Guinea Bissau, Conakry, Madagascar, Mali, Morocco, Rwanda, Senegal, Togo, Tunisia
- In Latin America: Argentina, Brazil, Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Equator, Guatemala, Mexico, Peru, Uruguay, Venezuela
- In Asia: Bangladesh, China, India
- In the Middle East: Egypt, Iran, Lebanon, Syria

Of the 500 members, 37% are countries of the North (i.e. 15 countries represented):

- In Europe: Germany, Belgium, Bulgaria, France, Italy, United Kingdom, Poland, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey
- In North America: Canada, United States of America
- In Oceania: Australia

The 12 national and/or regional collectives are: Afrilivres (Sub-Saharan Africa), IPD Alternatives (India), AEMI (Mexico), Contrabandos (Spain), EDIN (Chile), EDINAR (Argentina), EIP (Peru), FIDARE (Italy), Kurt Wolff Stiftung (Germany), Llegir en Català (Spain), LIBRE (Brazil), REIC (Colombia).

### Direct memberships and publisher collective memberships:

- To the extent possible, publishers are invited to become members of the Alliance via the national collective in their country, when one exists, and when the latter is a member of the Alliance.
- However, publishers who wish to become individual members of the Alliance (either because they do not want to become a member of their country's collective, or because there are several collectives in their country, or because they are no longer members of the collective in their country...) can apply. This application will be processed in the same manner as other membership applications.
- *A priori*, two collectives in a same country can become members of the Alliance, even more so if they are complementary to each other in terms of their respective activities and membership bases.

### The International Committee of independent publishers (ICIP)

The ICIP includes the six coordinators of the Alliance's language networks; the coordinators are nominated by the members of the networks. Since 2011, the ICIP has been an essential part of governing the Alliance, representing the voice of the Assembly of Allies. The ICIP meets once a year in the presence of the Board members and the Alliance team. The agenda is based on the aspirations and objectives of the Alliance, considering above all the needs and expectations of the allies.

#### Responsibilities and missions of the ICIP:

The ICIP's responsibility is to contribute to the activities and development of the Alliance within its mandate, as agreed upon by the Assembly of Allies.

Its missions, in addition to activities carried out by the coordinators of the language networks, are the following:

- Oversee the good governance of the Alliance;
- Keep up-to-date and oversee the good delivery of the mandate given by the General Assembly (GA) of the Board (see composition of the Board and GA below);
- Validate the policy and financial reports of the Alliance once a year;
- Actively participate in the Alliance's fundraising campaigns;
- Represent the Alliance before international organisations, partners of the Alliance, and the media;
- Undertake relevant initiatives for the philosophical and political objectives of the Alliance to be pursued and more widely diffused;

- Assist with the appointment of correspondents in the linguistic and geographical areas not represented or underrepresented within the Alliance;
- Mediate disputes arising between members of the Alliance or between a member and the Board of the Alliance;
- Contribute to the preparation and facilitation of the Assembly of Allies;
- Advise on the merger or partnership with another association.

Since 2015, a representative from a national or sub-regional collective member of the Alliance is invited to the annual meeting of the ICIP and the Board: a different collective is invited from one year to the next.

## Coordinators and vice-coordinators of language networks

Introduction to the coordinators and vice-coordinators: [click here](#)

### Role of the coordinator:

- Enable and monitor the good circulation of information amongst members of the network, and between the members and the Paris team;
- Determine, in collaboration with publishers, priority projects for his/her network from year to year;
- Monitor the progress of projects (co-publishing, experience sharing) that the network wants to achieve;
- Review and advise on the membership applications for his/her network;
- Organise the network's meetings in collaboration with the Paris team;
- Assist the Paris team, when possible, with fundraising.

A vice-coordinator – who can replace the coordinator when necessary – can be appointed on request from the coordinator, through consensus or vote, at the same time as the coordinator's election. The vice-coordinator has the same roles and responsibilities as the coordinator. Coordinators and vice-coordinators assume their role on a voluntary basis.

### Election of coordinators and vice-coordinators/duration of mandate:

- The coordinators and vice-coordinators are elected, to the extent possible, during the language networks' meetings;
- The duration of the coordinator and vice-coordinator's mandate is 2 years, renewable for another 2 years after validation by the network (validation by email by the network's publishers);
- At the end of the coordinator's 4-year mandate, an election process (through consensus or vote) takes place within the network to elect a coordinator for the new period. This election process can be done through computerised channels should there be no physical meeting possible.

## The General Assembly and the Board

Composition of the General Assembly and Board: [click here](#)

The members of the General Assembly and of the Board are book, cultural, and popular education professionals, former publishers, academics, inter-culture experts, and NGOs.

### The General Assembly

#### Responsibilities and mission of the General Assembly:

The GA meets annually before the end of the first semester of the current year to validate the policy and financial reports of the association, and if need be, to discuss the term renewal of members or admission of new members to the Board.

### The Board

#### Responsibilities and mission of the Board:

The Board meets approximately 4 times per year. The GA mandates it to:

- Oversee the operations of the association, as per the general guidelines agreed upon by the GA and the Assembly of Allies;
- Advise the permanent team on the implementation of general orientations;
- Assist with the recruitment of the association's employees;
- Monitor the management of the association's human resources.

The president also ensures the association's right of representation in all civil actions.

## The permanent team

### Composition:

The permanent team of the Alliance is composed of three full-time employees: Clémence HEDDE, Laurence HUGUES and Matthieu JOULIN.

### Responsibilities and mission of the permanent team:

The team's mission is to:

- Assist the language networks of the Alliance;
- Manage the functioning and operations of the association (administration, governance, research, funding...)
- Implement the objectives and agenda of the Alliance.

## The volunteers

Volunteers (approximately 3 to 4 individuals per year) support the Alliance's permanent team to implement the association's agenda. Volunteers work on specific projects, based on their interests and the Alliance's needs: for example, the "Terres solidaires" collection, collective stands in book fairs, communication materials, etc.

# FAQ

## How can we join the Alliance?

- A membership form, available from the permanent team of the Alliance, needs to be completed;
- This form is then sent to the coordinator of the relevant language network and to the president and/or vice-president of the Alliance, who review it together with the team;
- The team can seek more information from the publisher members in the same country and/or the same region (notably the connections between this publisher and local publishers);
- When publishers are consulted: if the feedback from existing publisher members is unanimously negative, the membership application is rejected. If the feedback from existing publisher members is mixed, and if the coordinator, president, and team of the Alliance have reservations, the applicant publisher is advised not to become a member immediately, but rather participate in the Alliance's projects (to know them better). If the feedback of existing publisher members is positive, the membership application is approved.
- When a membership is validated by the coordinator, president and/or vice-president, and team, and if necessary, local publishers are consulted, the publisher receives a welcome letter; the membership is formalised when all relevant items are received by the team for the creation of their page (in the "Publishers" section) on the website of the Alliance.

The Allies, although they do not wish to limit the number of memberships per language network, need to maintain a human dimension within their networks – enabling the development of trust that is essential to the good functioning of any international professional network.

The number of members per language network is not restricted, but a network’s growth must be done based on physiognomies and the practical functioning of the network, in order not to destabilize or burden the network’s administration and to maintain relations and exchanges “with a human and fair character”.

When possible, the membership of a publishing house that belongs to an existing national or regional collective member of the Alliance will have priority. The Spanish-speaking network gives membership priority to publishers via the national collective network – fewer direct memberships and more indirect memberships; when there is no collective in a country, support for the creation of a national collective could be offered.

New memberships to the Alliance must cover, to the extent possible, geographical regions that are not yet represented in the Alliance: in Europe, for example, or in Portuguese-speaking Africa (Cape Verde), etc.

## How much is the annual subscription?

Since 2015, the fee amount is open – determined by publishers, based on their financial capacity. Annually, at the beginning of the year, the permanent team sends information about the annual payment of membership fees. Publishers have the choice of paying their annual fees through EFT or at a meeting with a member of the team or Board. The payment of fees can also be made once every two years, to avoid excessive banking fees, for instance.

## How are Allies structured?

The Allies are structured in 6 linguistic networks, and are diverse – [click here](#).

The creation of thematic groups (youth, humanities and social sciences, local and national language publishing, digital publishing, etc.) to enhance the structure of the language networks was approved by the Allies at the meeting in Cape Town in September 2014. This system involves the strengthening and development of inter-network and inter-linguistic meetings and projects (translation funds, for example).

## Who are the observer members?

This status was created to enable membership by professional collectives, rather than publisher collectives, to the Alliance, the aim being to strengthen the presence and voice of other book professionals.

## How are the Alliance’s visuals (logos, images...) used?

- Projects funded by the Alliance: the logo of the Alliance is obligatory for any project supported by the Alliance (meetings, editorial projects, etc.).
- Projects not funded by the Alliance: to strengthen their sense of belonging to the Alliance’s network, and to indirectly promote the Alliance, publishers are invited to put the Alliance logo on their books but also on their communication materials (even if these projects are not directly funded by the Alliance), in two possible manners:
  - The Alliance logo accompanied with a caption, for example: “XXX publisher is a member of the International Alliance of independent publishers, a network of 500 independent publishers in 50 countries supporting bibliodiversity”;
  - A specific Alliance logo including the caption “member of the Alliance”.
- Statements and documents expressing the positions of individual publishers or publisher collectives: for all documents (reports, advocacy material) produced by individual publishers that express their own positions or opinions, the usage of the Alliance logo (or any other visuals created by the Alliance)

is subject to approval by the Alliance's permanent team (equipe@alliance-editeurs.org), thus avoiding situations where the Alliance could be unwittingly indicted in relation to an activity or communication not approved beforehand.



Network of 550 publishing houses from 52 countries  
around the globe in support of bibliodiversity

[www.alliance-editeurs.org](http://www.alliance-editeurs.org)

[Facebook](#) et [Twitter](#)

**Contacts:**

38, rue Saint-Sabin - 75011 Paris – France  
Tel. +33 (0)1 43 14 73 66 / +33 (0)1 43 14 73 67  
equipe@alliance-editeurs.org