

ICORN international cities of refuge network

About ICORN

The International Cities of Refuge Network is an association of cities around the world dedicated to the value of Freedom of Expression. Writers have consistently been targets of politically motivated threats and persecution, and the network believes it is necessary for the international community to formulate and implement an appropriate response.

Each ICORN city focuses on one writer at a time, each writer representing the countless others in hiding, in prison or silenced forever. By providing a Guest Writer with a safe place to stay and economic security for a standard term of two years, ICORN cities make an important, practical contribution to the promotion of Freedom of Expression.

The Administration Centre:

The International Cities of Refuge Network is both decentralized and coordinated. The Administration Centre in Stavanger, Norway serves as the communication hub for independently managed ICORN cities. The Administration Centre facilitates contact and cooperation between member cities, city coordinators, festival directors and guest writers.

The Administration Centre also works closely, through a formal agreement, with International PEN's Writers in Prison Committee. When applications are received and screened by the Administration Centre, they are sent on to the Writers in Prison Committee for a full evaluation. When appropriate, the Administration Centre will contact other organizations working for persecuted writers for referrals or evaluations.

The Administration Centre keeps in contact with approved candidates and presents them to each city when a guest writer position is available. The decision to invite a specific writer is made solely by each ICORN city. For this reason, the Administration Centre cannot guarantee that all approved applicants will be invited to a city of refuge.

It is important to note that *ICORN is not a refugee organization.*

Neither the network nor its individual cities have authority over the laws and regulations of any country. Therefore, the Administration Centre strongly discourages all applicants and candidates from relying on ICORN as their only option for refuge.