

HOW TO WORK WITH LITERARY AGENCIES?

SOME IDEAS

➤ **An agency: what for?**

To increase the possibilities of selling translation and film rights.

To make sure that your work can reach the international audience by reaching the international publishers first, and that someone is following up.

Agencies are professional teams specializing in different territories, attending the most important book fairs and film markets every year.

➤ **Rights markets not to be missed?**

= Frankfurt Book Fair (October) – the most international and important one.

= London Book Fair (April) – also very international and English language orientated.

➤ **How to contact an agency, what to send?**

If you are a publishing house looking for international representation, you can meet agencies in book fairs (with a previous appointment, their schedules are always very full!). Normally agencies are open to new clients with interesting catalogues.

If you are an author, it is better to have a look at the agencies' websites first and see what are their submissions' requests, which you can send by email. The most common requests are:

- Curriculum vitae, with contact details.
- Details of possible previous published works.
- Short synopsis of the work.
- A printed and bound copy.

If the agency's team feel that your work can be of their interest, they will get in touch with you as soon as possible. Given the huge amount of submissions received by agencies, be prepared that it is impossible for them to give an answer to everyone and more than impossible to send the materials back. Agencies will appreciate no phone calls claiming for their answers.

➤ **How does it work?**

In the case that an agency decided to represent you, and if the agency' s conditions would suit you, you would sign an agreement of representation.

The main conditions usually are:

= A minimum of two years period of representation.

= Representation in specific territories and certain languages (i.e.: Worldwide for any language; or Worldwide English language only; or Italy and France only, etc.).

= Agency commissions: the usual are 15% commission for selling rights in the original language and 20% for translation and audiovisual rights.

= Normally agencies don't sign any contract: every contract negotiated by the agency on your behalf will be signed by you and the publishing country or film producer buying the rights.

= However, agencies will deal with tax forms, invoices and collecting the payments from the buyers. Once deducted their commission, the agency will transfer the rest to you (the proprietor).

➤ **Which books are of interest internationally?**

Every agency has a different approach to new clients and different tastes and specializations. However, it is true that fiction books are easier to sell internationally (both in translation and audiovisual adaptation) than non-fiction books.

A book with a previous success in the original country may be more appealing for an agency. Every additional sale material will be welcome (press reviews, tv interviews, pictures, readers's comments...).

Information friendly compiled by:



www.pontas-agency.com