

The Finnish Association of Non-fiction Writers 2008

Never before in its 25-year history had the Finnish Association Non-fiction Writers witnessed a year as lively as 2008. The Association was founded in 1983 to meet the need in Finland for an organisation to represent non-fiction and textbook writers and to act as a repository for funds channelled to it through the Finnish copyright organisation, Kopiosto. Out of these funds the Association awarded grants totalling €1.7 million to 728 persons in 2008.

The Association is now the biggest writers' organisation in Finland, with 2,400 members. More than 80 per cent of the literature published in Finland is non-fiction (about 9,000 works per year). Less non-fiction is, in relative terms, translated than fiction, and over 90 per cent of the works by Finnish writers are non-fiction.

The Association of Finnish Non-fiction Writers is a national organisation. It has 11 regional representatives, who arranged a record number of events in 2008.

The 2008 Tietofinlandia prize for non-fiction went to **Marjo T. Nurminen** for a work entitled *Tiedon tyttäret* (The Daughters of Knowledge) about erudite European women from Antiquity to the Enlightenment. The 2008 Warelius Prize of €12,000 awarded by the Association went to non-fiction writer **Martti Häikiö** and textbook writer **Päivi Vehmas**. The Association also awarded numerous other prizes.

The Association Chairman for the period 2009-2011 is **Pirjo Hiidenmaa**, who was elected for a third three-year term at the autumn meeting in 2008.

Writers of non-fiction and textbooks rank low in the Finnish cultural funding hierarchy. Non-fiction writers receive only 10 per cent of the library grants awarded, and textbook writers none. The public lending right approved in 2007 covers only loans from public libraries, to the exclusion of research and educational libraries.