Society of Translators and Interpreters of British Columbia
STIBC
Founded in 1981

The Voice

June 2026 stibc.org

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AGM



STIBC held its 45th Annual General Meeting on June 7, 2026 at the Floral Hall in Van Dusen Gardens. It was a pleasure to welcome so many members in person for an event of community, board elections, announcements and important discussions (particularly, how do members spell STIBC? Please help us get to the bottom of this by answering this poll: How do you pronounce STIBC? :P – Fill out form).

A big thank you to everyone who joined us and congratulations to the newly elected Board members. We would also like to extend our gratitude to the outgoing Board members for contributing their time, energy and efforts to the betterment of STIBC, thank you **Jagjot Arora**, **Winnie Smrekar** and **Osama El-Bietar**! Executive Board, Office, Ethics Committee and Financial reports are now available on the website, so anyone can read through them at https://stibc.org/membership/members-only/for-members-eyes-only/ (you'll need to be logged in).

In the following pages you will also find pictures of the event and a section to welcome our new board members.




¡Fortalece tu curriculum!
दोस्त बनाओ!
розважайся!




PRESIDENT'S REPORT








OFFICE REPORT



WORKSHOPS

We have two great workshops lined up in the next few weeks, don't miss out and make sure to **read our interviews with both hosts** in the following pages of the magazine! Click on the links below for more information and to register:

- **Decoding the Dress Code: A Translator and Interpreter's Guide to Making Your Wardrobe Work For You**, June 18 at 5 PM (PST)
- **Why We Need Fairy Tales: A Conversation with Jack Zipes**, July 9 at 5.30 PM (PST)

PODCAST



The **first episode** of the recently launched **STIBC podcast** *Language Matters* is already out! You can listen to it here https://rss.com/podcasts/languagematters/ or on our website https://stibc.org/podcast/.

If you'd like to collaborate or participate as a guest, you can email languagematterspodcast@outlook.com or contact the STIBC office.

CTTIC AGM and Conference

CTTIC will hold its **2026 National Conference** in Regina, Saskatchewan on **October 2-3** this year, with La Cité (University of Regina) as host partners. Save the date!! More updates will be published soon!

FIT

FIT is pleased to invite our members to the **3rd ATA–FIT Symposium on Standards**, entitled:
Beyond Compliance: Shaping Trust, Quality, and AI Governance in T&I

The symposium, organized by the American Translators Association (ATA) with support from the FIT Standards Standing Committee, will take place online on **18 June 2026 from 12:00 to 1:30 p.m. ET.**
Participation is free of charge and open to all interested professionals.

The event will feature opening remarks by **FIT President Guillaume Deneufbourg** and **ATA President Andy Benzo**, as well as presentations by experts from ATA, FIT, ISO- and ASTM-related initiatives, and other stakeholders. Topics will include standards, quality management, professional trust, interpreting, AI governance, and the future of translation, interpreting, and terminology services.

Registration details are available at the following link:
https://www.atanet.org/event/ata-fit-standards-symposium-beyond-compliance-shaping-trust-quality-and-ai-governance-in-ti/

SURVEY: USE OF GENERATIVE AI IN INTERPRETING

Prof. dr. Koen Kerremans of the Vrije Universiteit Brussel, Belgium and Prof. Dr. Raquel Lázaro Gutiérrez of the Universidad de Alcalá, Spain, are currently conducting a **survey study on the use of generative AI by interpreters working in social and legal settings.** The survey is available in Dutch, English, French and Spanish, and is intended for interpreters who are active in these settings.

As part of this, they have issued the call below, which we are sharing in this newsletter:
Are you an interpreter working in public service settings (e.g. health, legal, educational, migration and asylum)? We invite you to take part in a **short survey on the use of generative AI in your work as an interpreter.** The survey is available in English, Dutch, French and Spanish.

👉 You can participate by clicking on the following **survey link.**
Your input will help map perspectives from practice and support future developments.

OTHER EVENTS

- CTP, the Peruvian Translators Association would like to invite our members to participate in the 4th International Congress on Translation and Interpreting – CITEI 2026, which will take place on November 13 and 14 of this year in Lima, Peru. For those interested, more information and registration is available here: **https://citei2026.cventevents.com/event/citei2026/summary**
- Likewise, the Saudi Translation Association is pleased to extend their invitation to our members to attend the First Translation Association Conference, which will be held in Riyadh. Details and registration at **https://satac.sata.org.sa/**

JOBS

- The Government of British Columbia is looking for a new Managing Director for their office in Beijing, China. **Click here** to read all the details of this job post. This opportunity closes to applications on June 16, 2026.

- The Government of Manitoba is looking for a Bilingual Jurilinguist. **Click here** to read all the details of this job post. (Version française). This opportunity closes to applications on July 12, 2026.

WELCOME TO OUR NEW BOARD MEMBERS



Leyli Niknafs

Leyli Niknafs holds a Bachelor's degree in English Translation and is currently pursuing a Master's degree in Translation Studies. She also earned the Award of Achievement in Community Interpreting from Vancouver Community College. Leyli has been a certified Community Interpreter since 2021 and has been a member of Society of Translators and Interpreters of British Columbia since 2016.
Leyli has served on the STIBC Board of Directors since 2022 and was a Member-at-Large for two years before taking on the role of Treasurer. She is currently seeking a second term as Treasurer, continuing her commitment to supporting the organization's financial stewardship, governance, and long-term sustainability. Driven by a deep passion for languages and communication, Leyli has also studied Speech Science and Linguistics at Simon Fraser University. With extensive experience in the language services industry, she has established herself as an interpreter instructor and coach, helping train and mentor the next generation of interpreters. Her academic background, professional expertise, and dedication to the profession enable her to contribute meaningfully to the advancement of interpreting and translation services in British Columbia.



Altynay Tanasheva

Altynay Tanasheva is a STIBC Certified Translator working in the English–Russian language combination, with a focus on legal, corporate, and education documents.
Originally from Kazakhstan, she brings over 20 years of experience as a corporate lawyer, including a decade at Dentons Kazakhstan and senior roles at EY Kazakhstan. Before relocating to Vancouver, she served on multiple professional association committees at the Kazakhstan Bar Association, EUROBAK, Foreign Investors Council, and the Association of International Pharmaceutical Companies. Her work spanned professional responsibility standards, legal education reform — bridging the gap between business needs and academic standards — and improving the investment climate through law reform and business-government dialogue.
She holds an LL.M. in International Trade Law from the University of Arizona.



Hardeep Sandhu

Hardeep Sandhu is a Certified Translator, Certified Court Interpreter and Certified Medical Interpreter, and she has been a member of STIBC since 2016. She has a Master's Degree in Journalism from India. Hardeep has served as a Commissioned Officer in the Indian Army, and she has also held a key position in Corporate Communications. She brings with her a rich experience of almost three decades in different domains. Hardeep is passionate about languages and hopes to use her time on the board to help empower our professional community.



Iryna Iudina

I am a professional interpreter and translator with a Master's degree in Translation, Interpretation, and Philology. I am a Certified Court Interpreter (Russian & Ukrainian ↔ English) with the Society of Translators and Interpreters of British Columbia (STIBC), a Certified Medical Interpreter (Russian CMI, Ukrainian Hub-CMI) with NBCMI-USA, and hold a certificate in Immigration Law from UBC. I work across legal, immigration, government, and healthcare settings in Canada and the United States, often in high-pressure environments where accuracy, discretion, and calm communication really matter.

Outside of work, I volunteer with SOURCES Legal Services and I contribute to medical education as a volunteer standardized patient with the Vancouver-Fraser Medical Program at UBC Faculty of Medicine, supporting the training of future physicians in clinical communication skills.

In addition I am a volunteer for the "100 Tails" Rescue community, and I also foster dogs—so life at home occasionally feels like a rotating cast of very opinionated four-legged roommates. I share my life with two beagles who believe personal space is a myth and that all snacks are community property. When I'm not interpreting or being outvoted by dogs, I love being in nature, and my favourite (and most humbling) hike is the Grouse Grind—equal parts fitness challenge and character building.



Laurie Bennett

Laurie Bennett is a STIBC- and OTTIAQ-certified French-to-English translator, as well as an active member of the American Translators' Association (ATA). From 2022 to winter 2026, she was on the ATA Business Practices Education Committee, which educates members and provides opportunities to network and share knowledge. She also served as the STIBC Treasurer from 2022-2024, helping to ensure financial oversight and improve systems in STIBC offices. As Director at Large, she looks forward to supporting current board and staff initiatives, bringing members together around emerging topics like AI, and strengthening the profession through industry partnerships and advocacy.

DID YOU KNOW?

Preparing for your certification exam? Beyond our CTTIC preparation workshops, there are a few great ways to get exam-ready.

Head over to our **Shop** to purchase one or two practice exams — each one marked by evaluators trained to CTTIC standards, so you know exactly where you stand.

A text You can also download a free English text sample from the For Members Eyes Only page. Scroll to the bottom right and you'll find the file alongside the CTTIC Exams Orientation Webinar slides — a perfect pairing to help you walk in on test day with confidence.

INTERVIEW WITH KELSEY TROTTA

An Interview with Kelsey Trotta: Fashionista and Language Professional Extraordinaire

NB: Trotta is running an STIBC workshop on June 18th. We'd love to see you there!
Kelsey Trotta remembers the moment she knew she would become an interpreter. She was thirteen, watching a TV journalist reporting live from some far-flung place. Another person approached her, and without missing a beat, she switched from English to another language, and then back again. It was a revelation for Trotta, and a starting point for a successful career translating and interpreting in a handful of European languages.

In addition to her career in languages, Trotta runs a successful media/education company which marries her two passions: language work and fashion. The themes of her lectures and workshops vary from appropriate attire for court interpreters, to the basics of building a personal wardrobe, to dressing for your target market.

The Voice caught up with Trotta over Zoom in early May:

The Voice: We've talked about how you discovered languages—how did your passion for fashion develop?

Trotta: I have kind of always loved it. I've been involved and been in and out of the fashion industry since I was a teenager. As a kid, I would start drawing on my notebooks. I think I designed my first set of dresses by the time I was ten. And when I was fourteen, I interned for a fashion designer named Cynthia Rowley. I learned so much from her about fashion, market research, how to listen to feedback, and how to enact it. And during that time, I read lots of biographies of different fashion designers, how they worked, and where they drew their inspiration. I've also modeled part-time, and so I have seen the ins and outs of clothing not only from a construction perspective, but also from a wearing perspective.

The Voice: So how were you able to take these two passions and turn them into a career?

Trotta: Well, a huge shout-out to my parents--they gave me my first investment. They said, "Here's a hundred bucks. If you make it back, you can pay us back." And that's what I did. Since then I've pretty much been self-financed. And that's how I was able to get to Brazil. That's how I was able to take intensive courses in Paris to learn how to translate French better.
But in terms of connecting the two, a really important moment was when I went to my first ATA conference. The dress code was business casual. At that point I was pretty confident in myself and how I dressed and I really wanted to express myself. At the dance, I noticed that people were either dressed in the most beautifully tailored suits that had been cut down to the millimeter or they looked like they had rolled out of bed three days ago and threw something on. I got a lot of compliments on my outfits, people asked like, "Oh, where did you find that, how did you find that?" So I said, you know, next conference, I'll just take people thrift shopping with me—I put a lot of my outfits together through thrifting and consignment shops. And as a result, I had the inspiration to create a lecture series.

The Voice: As a language professional, there are so many things you have to be able to do. You have to master at least two languages, be knowledgeable in a number of domains, if you're a court translator, be assertive. So are style and the professionalism it entails overlooked?

Trotta: Yes, absolutely, style is so overlooked. And I think that it's just because, let's be real here. Translators and interpreters are very, very smart people. Interpreters are Renaissance people par excellence. We deal with everything from the most esoteric 18th-century translations of Rumi, to molecular biology, to the lowest register humanly possible.
So when we're dealing with such high-state stuff all the time, I hate to say it, but a lot of us tend to be really overlooked in terms of the power we have. I think that we really need to show our power more and make ourselves more visible, and I think style is a great way to do that. It can be transformative.

The Voice: Transformative how?
Trotta: Well, I'll give you an example. I was working with a Brazilian jewelry dealer who was visiting New York. He came dressed completely inappropriately. He was wearing a leather jacket and a baseball cap and sneakers in the middle of February. I knew that the jewelry district was notoriously conservative, and I also knew that we were going to get doors slammed in our faces. I dressed as conservatively as possible, with fabrics that were stylish but also matched, what a lot of people in the jewelry district

would wear. But as I predicted, he got nowhere. In the end, he was convinced to get rid of the hat and buy a blazer, and after that, he couldn't stop making sales. That's what style can do for you.
Dressing for your target market can open doors and lead to opportunities that wouldn't otherwise be there.

The Voice: It seems like you work isn't just about fashion, but also professionalism, and maybe even personal development and self-esteem. Am I taking that too far?

Trotta: No, not at all. Fashion is about so much more than just clothes. It's about learning who you are and reflecting that. Showing that to the world. It's a process of constant self-exploration, constant understanding, not only of yourself, but understanding the people around you. It's about political history, it's about what is and isn't socially acceptable at the time, it's about art history. It's about who you identify with, it's about how you show your allegiance to people, or your allegiance to yourself and the message that you're trying to convey. To me, that is the most important part: how do you understand yourself? How do you show others what you're about?

The Voice: Amazing. Lastly, you have a book coming out soon, can you give us a preview? And where can listeners find it and find you online?

Trotta: Sure. My book should be coming out in the fall (probably around mid-September), and people can find me online on LinkedIn at kelsey-trotta-translates/ or on Instagram at @trottatranslations or @themodelinterpreter.

Kelsey Trotta's upcoming book, *Decoding the Dress Code*
Your closet can be one of your most powerful networking tools, leading to new clients, stronger business relationships, and even new jobs. It can make you a walking advertisement for your services and open doors that you never thought possible. If you know how. My upcoming book *Decoding the Dress Code: A Style Guide for Language Professionals*, teaches readers how to dress for their target market, understand different dress codes, how to build a wardrobe and develop their personal sense of style, and finally how to find and take care of quality clothes.

INTERVIEW WITH JACK ZIPES

An interview with Professor Jack Zipes: Scholar, Author and Fairy Tale Translator

NB: Jack Zipes is running an STIBC Workshop on Thursday, July 9th. We'd love to see you there!
Jack Zipes spent his youth in the fifties and sixties soaking up literature and traveling to far- away places. A passion for literature and the magic of fairy tales (along with a good dose of serendipity) led him to take up a professorship at Columbia University. One of his passions was "exhuming" little-known fairy tales in German and French, shaking the dust of history from them, and translating them into English, breathing new life into them. STIBC is proud to partner with Professor Zipes for a workshop titled "Why We Need Fairy Tales: A Conversation with Jack Zipes"

The Voice caught up with Professor Zipes over zoom in late May:

The Voice: It seems that with so many distractions and technologies these days, fairy tales might be falling out of fashion. If you had to impart the wisdom of three fairy tales to every kid in our society, what would they be?

Jack Zipes: Oh, my goodness, big question! I think I would have to write a book to answer that question. Well first of all, let me point out that fairy tales were really not written for children or even taught to children. It's a myth that fairy tales are only for children or primarily for children. Actually, we adults hear fairy tales, listen to fairy tales, have fairy tales told to us in some form or another. So that that's really important to know.

The Voice: Yes, I remember you saying the author of Bambi took exception to the fact that people thought it was a children's book.

Jack Zipes: Right, Exactly. Bambi was all about the forthcoming Holocaust that the author, Felix Salten, saw coming. I think that we can use stories in ways that can really open up the conflicts that people are having with the kings and queens and in society. Almost all fairy tales end up exposing the power that is being misused by the upper classes, by the kings and the queens, giants, ogres, wicked witches and so on. Take Cinderella, who was abused by her stepmother, and is not really allowed to come into her own and to reclaim her own identity. Or Hansel and Gretel, in which parents are forced to abandon their children because they are starving and the children have to resolve this situation by themselves—or think for themselves and to outdo a witch who is exploiting them. Most tales deal with the ways in which we abuse one another and how must we act in order to resolve the injustices that exist.

The Voice: You have said in your work that the evil kings and queens and witches are stand-ins for the fascists and dictators in the real world.

Jack Zipes: Yes. A lot of those kings and queens and dictators are irredeemable narcissists. I think that's a lot of the reason we have wars. Hitler and the fascists, for example...we had to use violence to fight them. There are times when people are forced to use the very type of violence that they object to.

The Voice: In terms of translation, you translate fairy tales from French, German, and Italian into English. Can you talk a bit about how that came about?

Jack Zipes: That's another long story! I went to Columbia University for my PhD. At that time you had to take one foreign language and study that foreign language for at least two years. And so that's when I learned Spanish. Growing up I learned Hebrew and Russian as well, so I had a feeling for languages, but I never thought they were going to be useful. After university, I ended up going to Germany where I became fluent in German. I had the advantage of being able to travel very cheaply and live abroad for many years in different countries and took advantage of these different cultures to develop my own thinking.
I eventually went to Columbia and got a PhD in American literature and then got a job as an assistant professor at New York University in the German department.

But the real turning point in my career came when I went to a conference in Princeton. I gave a talk on Little Red Riding Hood and the many different versions of that as a rape story and horrified a lot of people at this convention. And so as I was leaving, a woman asked me if I would translate the Brothers Grimm for Bantam. And that's how it started, really.

The Voice: Thank you, Professor Zipes! We look forward to talking to you on July 9th!

THE ART OF CRAFTING A FIRST SENTENCE

By Ben Crompton

There's a lot riding on the first line of a novel—a banger can make the difference between a book flying off the shelves, or languishing in the discount bin. Writers agonize over those first few words, hoping to get their hooks into readers, like literary Oliver Twists in reverse: "Please, sir, could you take some more?"

But if writers sweat, imagine their poor translators! Not only do they shuttle often obstinate words and ideas from one language and culture to another, jamming square pegs into round holes, but they have the added stress of knowing they are tinkering with someone else's dream.

Take the first sentence of Kafka's phantasmagorical Metamorphosis, as translated by Susan Bernofsky in 2014: *When Gregor Samsa woke one morning from troubled dreams, he found himself transformed right there in his bed into some sort of monstrous insect.*

The word insect here does not jump off the page. It is nestled at the end of the sentence; the reader notes it for an instant, then glides on to the next word. Of course, the reader has no idea about the time and talent expended in the debate over that one, seemingly simple word.

In the original German, the word is *Ungeziefer*; while there is no direct translation, the word connotes some type of giant dirty

insect or vermin. In her translation, Bernofsky deals with the inherent ambiguity of the word by adding the qualifying phrase, “some sort of.”

Throughout the years, other translators have attempted everything from “gigantic insect,” proffered by Edwin and Willa Muir in 1933, to “enormous bedbug” by Christopher Montcrieff in his 2014 translation, to simply “cockroach” by Michael Hofmann in 2007.

The word “vermin” and its derivatives were employed by brave, or perhaps foolhardy, translators Stanley Corngold in 1972 (“he found himself changed in his bed into a monstrous vermin”) and John R Williams in 2014 (“…found he had turned into a large verminous insect”).

The sheer number of possibilities for this single word is a great lesson to aspiring translators in an age of the all-seeing AI. There is no monolithic, perfect translation of any work or any word. Each translator brings their own skillset to every job, their own research, their own understanding of the author, and their own interpretation.

And each will have their own method of dealing with the terrifying task of translating that first critical sentence.

HEARTS AND LUNG BLOOPER

By Romina Espinosa

Context

Earlier this 2026, I made a mistake while interpreting. It certainly was not the end of the world. As a matter of fact, everyone, including me, during the medical office visit laughed. I appreciated this moment because it calmed the patient's nerves a little bit.

Laughter is good medicine! It was the antidote the patient needed. I am using a fictitious name for the patient to protect her confidentiality. Let’s call her Georgina. Georgina was nervous for most of the medical encounter. The visit was a gynecological cancer treatment follow-up. She was waiting to get the green light from the oncologist to see if it was safe to continue with her chemotherapy that day. I have learned while interpreting that it is the protocol at U.S. hospitals to pause a chemotherapy treatment when a patient has several side effects or an infection (low white blood count levels). In this case, if Georgina’s lab work results were normal, she was going to proceed to the infusion center for her next chemo cycle.

Funny Blooper

"Let me listen to your heart and lungs," said the provider while holding her stethoscope when it was time to do a quick exam of Georgina's vital organs. My interpretation into Spanish was, "Permítame auscultar sus corazones y pulmón” (Let me listen to your hearts and lung). As the words rolled out of my mouth, I realized I was making a language and a conceptual mistake. I corrected myself right away. Oh my! I crisscrossed ideas. From an anatomical perspective of the human body, the meaning made no sense at all. The provider, the patient, and I laughed together. Everyone needed laughter. After all, it was a Friday evening. As an essential healthcare worker, I had had a non-stop work week providing language access. I have no doubt it was also a busy week for the oncologist and for the patient herself fighting cancer.

In addition, this blooper served me as a reminder to have grace with myself. It was a long week interpreting for several medical topics at various departments across the hospital campus where I work. Mistakes happen and show a vulnerable side of our humanity. Interpreters are not perfect! I was motivated to truly be intentional about my self-care practice that weekend. Self-care allows me to be fully present to help others. I needed that time and space to come back to work the following week feeling fresh. I sure felt ready to continue saving lives as a medical interpreter with a clear and focused mind, one patient at a time.

Romina Espinosa (Lima, Peru) is an interpreter and translator based in San Diego, California. A left-handed eclectic soul, Romina holds degrees from UC San Diego and the University of Oviedo (Spain). She is either catching a sunset, buying flowers for herself, or running outdoors when she is not on a mission saving lives as a medical interpreter at UC San Diego Health.

Get involved. Earn CE credits. Strengthen your Society.

There are many ways to participate in Society of Translators and Interpreters of British Columbia activities and support the growth of our professional community — while also earning Continuing Education (CE) credits (required for Certified Members).

Have an idea you'd like to explore? We'd love to hear from you. Reach out to the Office at office@stibc.org.

Here are just a few ways you can contribute:

- **Workshops** – Propose a topic, volunteer to present, or recommend a speaker you think would benefit our members.
- **The Voice** – Share your expertise or experience by contributing to our quarterly magazine, The Voice.

- **Regional meetings** – Most in-person events take place in Vancouver, but members live across BC. If you're interested in organizing a gathering in your area, we can help you promote it.
- **Event volunteering** – Support the Society at events such as the AGM, certification exams, and the End-of-Year Dinner.

Your involvement makes a real difference. Whether you can give a little time or take on a larger role, your contribution helps keep our community active, connected, and thriving.



Would you like to contribute to The Voice?

Please send us your suggestions to office@stibc.org

Editors:
Kamile Dias
Oriol Moalem

Contributors:
Ben Crompton
Romina Espinosa

Proofreader:
Carl Rosenberg

STIBC Society of Translators and Interpreters of British Columbia
Founded in 1981

Suite 220, 1501 W Broadway
Vancouver, BC V6J 4Z6 Canada
T. 1-604-684-2940
E. office@stibc.org