

## **INDIES UNITED PUBLISHING HOUSE**

Welcome to a new kind of publishing house where you, the author, are in control.

Greetings my fellow Indie authors, and welcome to what, I hope, will become your new home in the publishing world, a place where Indies are welcomed into a community of like-minded authors. We are a co-op working together to help promote our books, encourage our creative endeavors, and providing guidance through the pitfalls of publishing.

In this packet you will find all the information about our publishing house, what we offer and what we expect from our authors in return. If you have any questions, please feel free to reach out to us at: [indiesunitedpublishing@gmail.com](mailto:indiesunitedpublishing@gmail.com).

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I'm interested. Sign me up.

## Meet our Founder

Greetings my fellow Indies, let me briefly introduce myself. My name is Lisa Orban, and in 2013 I sat down and started my first book, publishing two years later in October of 2015 as an Indie author. I have since written a total of four books, in three genres, and created four adult coloring books. All Indie published.

I will admit, when I began my adventure in publishing I had no idea what I was getting myself into. Nor did I realize the enormity of the learning curve when I sent my first book out into the world until the reality of the situation crashed down upon me, and I began my crash course in all things publishing. Even now, I continue to learn new things as the publishing world grows, changes and adapts to the ever changing landscape we all must navigate through.

In the years since I published my first book, I have learned one constant that has not changed, as sad as it is to say, Indie authors are often seen as the unwanted stepchildren of the publishing world. Traditional Houses will shun you, vanity publishers will prey on you, bookstores avoid you, and libraries are wary of you. As individuals, Indies are subject to the whims of companies, like Amazon, tolerated so long as we continue to bring in a profit at little to no cost to them, but ignored if anything goes wrong for any reason. Indies are allowed, but not respected.

In 2017, this disconnect between Indie authors and the rest of the publishing world started me thinking that a new kind of publishing house, that wasn't vanity press only in it for whatever money the traffic would bear, nor a more traditional publishing house that would give you a contract if you fit their narrow definition of a profitable author, but takes away creative control of your books once submitted, was needed. And so, I started Indies United, a place where Indies are welcomed and encouraged in a community of like-minded authors.

I look forward to working with you.



## Frequently Asked Questions

### **Why should I join Indies United?**

As a traditional Indie author, going it alone can be hard. To be truthful, very hard. Our goal is to give Indies a home where they can thrive in the often confusing, frustrating, and occasionally hair-pulling publishing world. Unlike traditional publishing houses, Indies United allows you to keep the control many Indie authors enjoy having, while offering the support of a community of like-minded authors. Can we guarantee that you'll become the next great J.K. Rowling? No, and we will never imply otherwise. But what we will do is give you the best tools available to us, to give you and your books, a chance to shine. We will never ask you for money to promote your books or inhibit you from the highest success as an author that you can reach, even if that turns out to be with another publishing house. To find out more about how we will do this, please continue to scroll down.

### **Does Indies United accept manuscripts?**

Yes, we accept manuscripts. We also accept previously published Indie books. If you are an already established Indie author and have a 3-star or above average rating, and do not violate any of our ethical guidelines, welcome aboard! If you are a first time author, we ask that you submit your manuscript for review. If for some reason it does not meet our review standards, a critique will be sent of the things needed to be fixed and you will be allowed to resubmit your book after making the corrections.

### **What are your review standards for new authors?**

Books, like all art forms, are subjective. We ask when you submit your book to let us know if you are giving us a finished (completely edited and ready to print) manuscript, or an ARC (an uncorrected proof or review copy). We will also require the category of your book. Novels, both fiction and non-fiction, are judged by a different criteria than a book about healthy lifestyle choices.

We prefer that you submit a finished copy, but if you are submitting an ARC novel, we are looking for a book that engages our attention. Does it have a good plot line? Is it entertaining? Can we see the diamond in the rough shining through? If we agree your book has potential we will ask that you have it edited and resubmit it for review for publication.

If you are submitting a finished copy, we expect it to be relatively free of errors. We understand that some errors do occur, and even the best editor can let mistakes pass through, but if we find it to be difficult to read, or have a distracting number of errors we will send it back to you for re-edit.

If you are submitting a non-fiction book that is not a novel (ie: self-help, historical, cookbook, etc) our criteria varies as widely as the subjects. We will not judge a cookbook by the same standards as a historical book for instance. We will expect the book to have a clear purpose that does not meander, is factually accurate, and free of errors that inhibit the reader from understanding the subject.

For poetry, children's books, comic books, graphic novels and coloring books we ask that all books be submitted in final form and free of spelling and grammatical errors.

### **What are your ethical guidelines for books?**

Here at Indies United we embrace our diversity and hope to give every author a chance to be discovered. But, there are some things that go against our ethical policy. We do not accept books that promote, encourage or glorify, intolerance, racism, pedophilia, domestic violence, rape culture, xenophobia, homophobia or violence against children or minorities.

### **If I join Indies United what percentage do you take for royalties?**

Zero. No, your eyes did not deceive you, here at Indies United we do not take any of the royalties from your book sales. If you become a member you will be asked to purchase the ISBN's for your books through us at a rate of \$25 per ISBN (subject to change if purchase rates increase through Bowker). At purchase, we will ask you to submit all required information about your book so we can properly register it and Indies United will be listed as the publisher. We will also provide you with our logo graphics for the copyright page and all other pertinent information you'll need to publish under our umbrella. Indies United will provide guidance setting up your sales channels, but you, the author, will be in total control of your books and all revenue generated from sales will belong to you.

### **Would I have to sign a contract if I join?**

Yes. The contract will cover services provided, obligations expected of our authors, and other pertinent information. Most of the information in the contract is addressed here in FAQ. After reviewing the contract, if you have any further questions, please feel free to contact us and we will do our best to answer any questions you may have that are not covered in this packet.

### **Is there a limit on how many books I can publish through Indies United?**

We place no limitations on how many books you are allowed to write, or put restrictions on the subject matter, provided they do not violate our ethical standards. We wish for you to stretch your wings and explore your abilities as an author to the fullest wherever your muse takes you. Nor do we place time constraints in between books, take the time you need to write the best book possible that you have in you, we will never push you to publish before you and your book are ready. We encourage quality in our authors over quantity.

### **Do you offer advances or sign on bonuses if I join?**

Because Indies United does not take any percentage of your royalties, we do not offer either advances or sign on bonuses to our authors.

### **Who controls the buy links for my books?**

Indies United will set up your buy links on the website using the information you provide, but all royalties will go to you through your sales channels. Indies United will not collect any sales proceeds on your behalf. If you wish to sell your books or ebooks directly from our website, a PayPal buy link will be added to your page. Please be clear what formats you will offer and expected delivery time for each book. You will be responsible for delivery.

\*If there are consistent complaints from buyers about delivery issues, Indies United reserves the right to remove your personal buy links and leave only site links to Amazon, Smashwords, etc.

### **My ebook(s) are currently in KDP Select. Is this a problem?**

While we don't require our authors to remove their current ebooks from Amazon's KDP Select program if they are already enrolled, we do highly recommend it. Keeping your ebooks in KDP Select inhibits our ability to fully promote your books over a broad spectrum of outlets, including to libraries and other paid book sharing programs. We do however, require that all new ebooks not be placed into restrictive programs such as this.

### **Who registers the ISBN's for my books if I join?**

Indies United will register all ISBN's that are purchased through us. We will send you a form that will detail all the required information for registration at the time of purchase. Upon its return, we will register your book(s) in all provided formats and send back to you all ISBN codes for each book format.

### **How many ISBN's will I need to buy per book?**

You are required to have an individual ISBN for every format you generate for each book. You will need one ISBN code per paperback, hardback, Mobi, ePub, PDF, and audiobook. If you create an open source format for your digital books using a .doc program, you can combine Mobi, ePub, and PDF under one ISBN, but it is entirely up to you.

When producing any physical copy of your book, hardback, paperback, or audiobook, you will have to have an individual ISBN and barcode for each individual format. But, you are under no obligation to offer your book in all formats available to you. You may pick and choose which formats works best for you. One caveat, if you produce an audiobook that is only available in downloadable form, you will not need a barcode, but it will require an ISBN.

So, as an example, you decide to have code specific Mobi (Kindle), ePub (general eReaders), paperback, and hardback as the formats you will offer you book in, it will cost \$100 for 4 ISBN's.

\*The current cost of purchasing an individual ISBN is \$125.00 USD

### **If I buy an ISBN and don't use it, can I return it?**

We sell ISBN's only for books that are completed and ready to be published, and only in the amount you need. Because we sell our ISBN individually, rather than in blocks, you should never have any leftover ISBN's when you finish publishing your book in all the formats you have decided to use.

### **But, do I have to have an ISBN for my eBooks? Can't I just use an ASIN number?**

By solely using an ASIN number and not purchasing an ISBN you are registering your book through Amazon and they will be the publisher on record and will exclude your books from being placed under the umbrella of Indies United Publishing. Sole use of ASIN also excludes your books from being available through other sites such as Smashwords, Barnes & Noble, and Kobo who require an ISBN for all books registered on their site. It limits the searchability of your books from sites other than Amazon and their affiliates and hinders inclusion into a majority of libraries and bookstores.

\*ASIN stands for Amazon Standard Identification Number. It's a 10-character alphanumeric unique identifier that's assigned by Amazon and its partners. It's used for product identification within the Amazon organization. ASINs are only guaranteed unique within its marketplace.

### **Will you provide barcodes for physical books?**

Yes, we can provide you with a unique barcode, with pricing, for your book through Bowkers, at their cost of \$25.00 per code. But, you can also obtain free barcodes through CreateSpace but they may have a more generic coding for pricing. If you are using InstagramSpark you can obtain a barcode through them as well. There are also sites that offer free barcodes, but if you use those make sure they provide high quality images or they may be rejected by CreateSpace and InstagramSpark. We would suggest you do a little research and decide which approach is best for you.

### **Do you provide QR codes?**

If you would like to add QR codes to your books, they are free to create and only take a few minutes to produce. We would be happy to provide you with the information on how to generate your own.

### **Would I have an individual author page and how much control would I have over it?**

Once you are a member of Indies United, you will receive your own author's page on our website. Each author's page will include a short bio, profile photo, a list of all your books, buy links, and links to your personal website and other social media accounts you would like added. You will be required to provide all relevant information for your author page, individual books, social media links, and buy links using the forms we will provide.

Indies United will set up each page and will make adjustments as needed to keep your page up-to-date. If you find any errors or omissions simply contact us and we will make all the necessary corrections.

### **If I join Indies United, what obligations would I have upon joining?**

Because Indies United is a co-op, if you decide to join we will ask three things of you. Most will take very little time or effort. As the saying goes, you get out of something what you put into it, and a little effort from each of our authors can create big waves further down the line.

1. Once a week, on Sundays, Indies United will post a new social media meme highlighting some aspect of our community that we will send throughout all our social media accounts. To help spread the word, we ask that you share our Sunday memes on your social media accounts as well. You can repost just on Sunday, throughout the week, or anything in between. But the more you participate, the higher our visibility becomes.
2. A public newsletter will also go out once a month to highlight new authors who have joined, book releases, and other things that we believe will be of interest to our readers. To help spread the word, we ask that you share the newsletters on your mailing lists and through your social media channels.
3. To help support each other, once a quarter we're asking our authors to pick another Indies United author to read and review one of their books and give an honest review. You are not required to purchase the book, but we do encourage everyone to do so. At a minimum, please request a free ebook from the author of your choice and post your review on GoodReads. But if you only request free books, don't expect other authors to buy yours. If you have a review blog we encourage you to share there as well. The more locations we post our reviews, the more visibility we give to one another. Once you have posted the review, please send a copy of the review link for our records.

## **How will Indies United verify I am in compliance?**

While Indies United cannot force the above social media and book review requirements, if you choose not to participate, your books will not be eligible for the review exchange, inclusion in our newsletters, or promotion through our company until you choose to participate. As a co-op, we lift ourselves up by helping others.

As to how we will verify compliance, we will spot check our authors randomly. We also ask, to help keep track of posts, that you tag Indies United in all social media from us you share on your social media. If we notice a trend of non-compliance we will notate it, and an email will be sent out asking why you haven't been participating. We all understand that sometimes life can interfere with our best intentions, but if it becomes a habit, you will be added to the non-compliance list. Before any author is given an author's spotlight on the Home page, or promotion for a new book, activity or event we will verify that you have a 90% compliance rating for the preceding three months.

Please keep in mind, the more time we are forced to spend on compliance checks, the less time we have to dedicate to getting the word out about your books. If you don't want to participate, then let us know so we can simply remove you from our promotional rotation. Your books and author page will remain on our site for as long as your books have an Indies United ISBN, but promotional services are based on your corporation. So, please don't force us to play internet police and rob other active authors from what we can provide for all of you when not distracted.

In addition, in our author's newsletters, we will post if any authors are not currently eligible for the book review exchange as well. Again, we cannot force compliance, but it is also not fair to the other authors if your book is getting reviewed but you are not doing the same for your fellow authors. Reviews are the lifeblood of all authors, and we honestly spend far too much time begging people to review our books. Reading a book once every three months is not too much to ask of one another and benefits us all. We will also provide a list of places you can post reviews for your fellow authors outside of Amazon and GoodReads. And if you know of someplace you think we should add to the list, we welcome your input.

## **Where does the information for the newsletters come from?**

From you. And, a little from us. We will actually have 2 newsletters that will go out each month. The public newsletter that we ask you to share, and a newsletter that will go out just for our authors.

For our public newsletter, if you have anything to share that you believe will be of interest to our readers, please share it. Have a new book coming out and doing a presale? Share it. Going to be on a radio or tv program? Share it. Going to be doing a blog tour? We want to hear from you. Going to be doing a book signing? Tell us when and where. Going to a book trade show or convention? Let our readers know. Share your exciting news with us so we can share it with our readers. We will also introduce new authors joining our community to our readers, information on book fairs or book expos that Indies United will attend, and any other exciting news we think our readers might be interested in.

For our author's newsletters, we still want to hear from you. Have a helpful tip you think might be useful to other authors, we'd love to know about it. Find a new place to advertise your book that has



had promising results, we want to hear about it. Have you stumbled across an article you think other authors would like to know about, share it. This is your newsletter, let us hear from you about the things that matter to you.

### **What kind of promotion will Indies United do for me?**

Here at Indies United, we will be constantly on the lookout for new and inventive ways of standing out from the crowd and getting our authors noticed. And this is where the biggest chunk of your investment in buying our ISBN's comes into play. A large portion of all proceeds from our sales will be going back out as advertising. We will never ask you to pay for advertising with us or charge you to be in our newsletter or on our social media posts, and we will never try to upsell you on any other products or promotions.

We have a social media presence on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, LinkedIn, Google+ and GoodReads. When appropriate we will do targeted news releases whenever something big or exciting happens that we feel is newsworthy. We will use a variety of media to help advertise our company, that will, in turn, bring more attention to our authors. We will be on the prowl for ways to help boost social awareness and if you have any suggestions, we are always open to new ideas.

For our YouTube channel, we will be promoting your video book readings and trailers. If you would like to be included, simply send us an email with the video attached and a short blurb.

### **Does Indies United have a Facebook page?**

Actually, we have two. We have a public page open to anyone who wants to join us, and a private page for our authors only.

On the public page, we ask that you do not post self-promotional material. Each day, Indies United will have a theme for the day, it might be "authors that inspired me" or "self-help books that changed my life" and we will encourage readers and authors to participate in the discussions. We will also do author spotlights for a variety of reasons and will share articles, blog tours, discount specials from our authors, and other things that might interest our readers. In addition, we will host a weekly blog takeover for our authors to interact with readers.

Our private page is just for you. Have a problem and need some guidance, ask your fellow authors if they have any suggestions. Need an opinion on something, ask away. Frustrated by something and need a short vent, I'm sure others authors have been where you are and may have helpful advice or just understanding. This is our page to connect, share, and encourage one another.

### **Where else does Indies United have a social media presence?**

In addition to Facebook, Twitter and Instagram, we are also on LinkedIn, Google+, and Pinterest. Other social media sites may be added in the future as trends change.

### **How many followers does Indies United have on social media?**

We are a new company, and as such, our following is still being built. We hope, with your help, to build something grand, but even the biggest tree had to start as an acorn, and that is where we are at right now. We are a seed we hope will very soon blossom forth into something magnificent that will shelter us all.

### **If I decide I want to leave Indies United, how do I do that?**

Indies United is dedicated to helping authors thrive in the best environment suited to them. If, after becoming a member of Indies United you decide to go back to being an Indie author or if you come to the attention of a more traditional publishing house and they offer you a home with them, there is an exit clause in the contract. We have no intention of holding any of our authors back from the highest level of success you can achieve.

Simply contact us and let us know you wish you leave, and provide us with a list of all books you have registered with us. Within 5 to 7 business days, we will retire your current ISBN's and your books will be open for a new ISBN assignment. We will send you a confirmation of retirement by email.

Please note, when an ISBN is retired your book will no longer be searchable in any database, nor will it be eligible for purchase through any sales channel until a new ISBN is assigned. If you are not joining a new publishing house, you will be required to obtain new ISBN's on your own if you wish to continue selling your books independently.

We will encourage you to carefully look over and consider all aspects of any contract, including ours, that you might sign with us or with any other publishing house. If you are confused or unsure of anything written in the contract, we would suggest you have an attorney look it over, and ask for clarification from the publishing house, before signing.

### **If I leave Indies United, will my books and author page remain on your website?**

If you decide to leave Indies United, along with retiring your ISBN's we will remove all books, author page, and any links you may have with us from our website and social media posts within 5 to 7 business days.

### **Am I obligated to buy services or packages from Indies United?**

As a co-op, various services for your books can be purchased from our independent vendors but you are under no obligation to do so. The only required purchase with Indies United is our ISBN's. Any services you purchase from our vendors will be an individual contract between you and the vendor. Our independent contractors are here for your convenience, but you are not prohibited from using any other outside services for your books.

Indies United does not take a percentage of any sales from our vendors, and all contracts and price negotiations are between you and the vendor. All prices will be set by the individual vendor. We only ask that when a book is submitted, it is the very best version possible of that book.

### **If I have a problem with one of your vendors, what do I do?**

All contracts with our independent vendors are between you and the vendor and each vendor will have their own process to settle disputes. Before signing any contract for services with them we will encourage you to look over the contract carefully and ask questions about anything you are unsure of before signing.

### **This is my first book, how much money should I set aside for therapy?**

Okay, this is not a serious question, but I'm pretty sure every veteran writer out there is nodding and nudging one another reading it. Because writing is a form of insanity from which there is no cure. It involves long periods of time alone, lost in our own thoughts, weird google searches, stacks of coffee

cups and untouched dinners, and sometimes manic activity as we try to write down some inspired piece of writing we created in our head and are now afraid we'll lose before we can get it all down. Writing means being both a part of the world and apart from the world, as we try to put into words the thoughts that other people grasp for. To quote Anais Nin, "The role of the writer is not to say what we all can say, but what we are unable to say." Writing requires us to put our souls onto paper and then having the courage to send it out into the world for all to read, and criticize. It is an act of faith that our words matter more than our ego that might be crushed if the reviews are negative. So, when becoming a writer, a little bit of insanity can go a long way towards a happier ending at the end of your journey.

Whether you choose to join our merry band of Indies or not, I wish each of you well on your writer's road. I believe in my heart the role writers play in our society is a sacred one, as we hold a mirror up for all to see their reflection in. We bring joy, tears, terror, and triumph, and allow our readers to live a thousand lives or more within their one lifetime. And in doing so, gain insight into themselves and the world, or give the reader a place to lose themselves in when their own life becomes too much. Never let your voice be stifled, strive for perfection while understanding we are all only human, be the best writer you can be and give the world your words. Happy writing to you all. - Lisa

### **I'm interested. Sign me up.**

If you are interested in joining our merry band of Indies and you are an established Indie author with more than 10 collective reviews, please submit the following:

- A list of all your current books
- Genre
- Review links
- Contact Information

If you are an author with less than 10 collective reviews or are a new author, please send the following:

- Book Title
- Genre
- Links to any reviews you may have
- Contact Information
- A copy of your manuscript in either PDF or Mobi

Once you submit your book(s) for consideration, Indies United will review each submission and respond within 30 days with either our acceptance or denial.

If you are denied, we will give a comprehensive explanation of why you were denied and you will be allowed to resubmit once the corrections are made.

If you are accepted, a Welcome Packet will be sent to your listed email. Please return within 10 business days.

If you have any questions not covered within this Information Guide, please contact us at:  
[Indiesunitedpublishing@gmail.com](mailto:Indiesunitedpublishing@gmail.com)