

NEWS

THE PATTIS
FAMILY FOUNDATION
GLOBAL CITIES
BOOK AWARD

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Simten Birsoz Inanc

Coordinator of Foreign Affairs at Istanbul Planning Agency (IPA), expert in urban innovation and public policy

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Simten Birsoz Inanc: Insights on the Power of Books and Storytelling in Urban Change

Friday 13/06/2025

We asked Simten Birsoz Inanc, Coordinator of Foreign Affairs at the Istanbul Planning Agency, to reflect on the power of books, her motivation to join the Judging Committee, and the role of storytelling in urban transformation. These were her insights:

AN ANTIDOTE TO THE NOISE AND FRAGMENTATION OF THE DIGITAL AGE

*"Books allow us to deep dive into ideas, realities and their background stories, that is something we urgently need amid the rapid pace and fragmentation of today's information landscape. They give us the space to trace context, connect structural dots, and navigate around perspectives. While everything quickly slips away and gets lost in an overwhelming flood of information, **books offer us solid anchors to hold on to.**"*

HOW CURATION PROMOTES A MORE INTENTIONAL AND REWARDING READING EXPERIENCE

*"I'm especially excited about being a part of **a platform that elevates critical thinking about cities** at a time when local action is key to global transformation. I believe books continue to shape how we imagine, question and live. Honestly, we may delay reading great books or feel overwhelmed by the sheer number of options. Being part of the jury is exciting because the books we engage with have already been carefully curated. What's more, the fact that the final selection will ultimately be a recommendation to a wider audience motivates me to carefully identify the most impactful and insightful work."*

STORYTELLING AS A TOOL FOR POLICIES, PERCEPTIONS AND PURPOSES

*"I hope the award highlights that storytelling is not just a way to explain things — it can actually drive change. Stories influence policies, shape how people see the world, and help build a shared sense of purpose. By recognizing authors who combine solid research with powerful storytelling, we show that empathy and evidence can **work together to make cities better.**"*

* Simten's work explores inclusive urban strategies, migration management, climate resilience, and the role of collective movements in shaping modern cities. With a background in international relations and governance, she brings a cross-sectoral approach to addressing the interconnected challenges of today's multi-crises world, with a strong emphasis on data and impact-oriented methodologies.