

# Sustainability report

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# A word from the CFO

Sustainability has been a focus at Storytel Group for several years, and we are continuously focusing on sustainability and Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) matters through the group's "Footprint", "Brainprint", and "Fingerprint", in the same way as it's been described in previous years.

In 2024, Storytel Group continued its focus on adapting to changed reporting requirements for environmental and social impact. A key milestone was the conclusion of our double materiality assessment. This aligns with Storytel's commitment to transparency and accountability, which we believe are crucial for both Storytel Group and the industry to ensure fair comparisons and to drive necessary changes regarding environmental and social impact globally.

As our company vision is "to make the world a more empathetic and creative place", we are proud to support both short- and long-term initiatives that promote reading among children. We view our efforts not only as "creating readers" among children today but also as building a foundation for our common future.

We are actively standardizing our ESG reporting, and continuously developing our sustainability efforts in response to evolving external factors and their impact on our business. This enhances transparency and comparability, enabling stakeholders to better assess our sustainability performance and progress. Furthermore, our commitment to the UN Global Compact, which we joined in 2021, remains steadfast, guiding our actions toward the wellbeing of the people and the planet.

**Peter Messner,**  
CFO Storytel Group



**“ We view our efforts not only as “creating readers” among children today but also as building a foundation for our common future.**

# About the 2024 sustainability report

2024 Objectives	Comment
<b>Brainprint</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Help more than 1.15 million people consume at least one book per month.</li> </ul>	In Q4 of 2024, 1.11 million customers consumed more than 10 hours of content per month, just below our ambitious 2024 target of 1.15 million. This highlights the significant value we deliver to our users, fostering a culture of regular, meaningful engagement with enriching stories.
<b>Footprint</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Align our data collection and reporting with the CSRD/ESRS.</li> </ul>	During 2024, a double materiality assessment was conducted in accordance with CSRD, and the result lays the groundwork for Storytel Groups ESG framework.
<b>Fingerprint</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue preparing the Storytel Group for compliance with the Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD)</li> </ul>	A new sustainability platform was also procured to support Storytel's data collection. The preparation phase has been implemented to address potential gaps, secure data quality and internal processes, which will continue throughout 2025.

## Overall objective 2025

- Enhance data collection and reporting to achieve a more standardized reporting format, and to ensure consistency and comparability across reporting periods.

**Storytel's vision is to make the world a more empathetic and creative place.**

Stories are common references that bring us closer. They help us think bigger, see beyond ourselves, and build understanding for our fellow humans.

**Storytel's mission is to move the world through story.**

Stories evoke emotions. Stories change the way we view the world. And the world itself. We make stories available for everyone to discover. Anytime. Anywhere.

## About Storytel Group

Storytel Group aspires to be a leader in innovative storytelling. The Company consists of two business areas, Streaming and Publishing, which operate within the media & entertainment and the publishing industry, respectively. Being a digital platform provider of stories as well as a publishing group, allows Storytel Group to bring together the best of publishing and technology. By accessing stories via a digital platform, Storytel's subscribers can enjoy the benefits of reading and listening in a way that fits the modern lifestyle.

## About the report

The Sustainability Report is prepared in accordance with the Swedish Annual Accounts Act.

# ESG at Storytel

ESG stands for Environmental, Social and Governance and constitutes a well-established framework for corporate sustainability. Storytel has drawn from this framework and has divided its approach to ESG into Footprint, Brainprint and Fingerprint to create a better understanding and clearly showcase the impact Storytel has on society at large.

- Footprint – Wellbeing of the planet
- Brainprint – Wellbeing of customers
- Fingerprint – Wellbeing of employees and partners

## ESG & Risk Management

On an annual basis, a risk assessment is carried out within the Storytel Group to identify, evaluate and prioritize the key risks in achieving set business objectives within the Group. Thereafter, appropriate activities are decided upon in order to either reduce the probability of the risk occurring, or to mitigate any consequences. Risks are assigned to an owner who is responsible for monitoring and following up on decided activities and their impact on lowering the risk as intended. A review and status reporting of the most significant enterprise risks are carried out at least annually and included in reports to the Audit Committee and Board of Directors. ESG-related risks are part of the Group-wide risk assessment, and a description of the significant risks and related risk responses for the Group can be found in the Governance Report.

## Division of responsibilities

Once a year the goals, policies and processes connected to sustainability are reviewed by the Board of Directors. Storytel reports the progress towards the goals in the annual Sustainability Report, which the Board of Directors reviews and approves. Within the Board of Directors, the

Audit Committee reviews the Group's sustainability work to ensure the Board's fulfillment of the supervisory and reporting responsibility in relation to environmental, social, and governance (ESG) matters of the Company. The Audit Committee also ensures that the Company operates strategically and systematically with sustainability across the business, manages goal-setting and reporting processes, strengthens relations with external stakeholders, operates with high business ethics and supports the Board in fulfilling its responsibilities.

## Double Materiality Assessment

Storytel Streaming conducted its first materiality assessment in 2018 to establish a foundation for its initial sustainability strategy and focus areas. The materiality assessment was subsequently refined in 2022, and included representatives from publishing to cover the Group level. In 2024, the Storytel Group undertook a double materiality assessment. This process involved identifying and evaluating impacts, risks, and opportunities (IROs) as the basis for determining the materiality of sustainability issues, resulting in a comprehensive double materiality assessment (DMA).

To identify the material sustainability matters, a range of stakeholders were engaged through interviews, workshops and desktop research, as well as a review of prior materiality assessments. Alongside this, financial risks and opportunities related to sustainability issues were assessed, evaluating whether any financial impacts might arise from identified dependencies or impacts within these areas.

Internal leads with in-depth knowledge of key stakeholders and sustainability topics were appointed as stakeholder representatives to offer insights into relevant sustainability matters and to identify and assess IROs. Each sustainability matter underwent a thorough review and scoring process through multiple interviews and workshops with the designated representatives. Scoring methods followed

ESRS guidelines, with thresholds and time horizons grounded, wherever possible, in Storytel's enterprise risk management (ERM) framework and supported by desktop research on the various sustainability factors across the value chain.

## Impact Materiality

### Environmental

- Energy (E1)

### Social

- Personal safety for consumers and end-users (S4)
- Social inclusion of consumers and end-users (S4)

### Governance

- Social Corporate culture (G1)
- Protection of whistleblowers (G1)

## Double materiality

### Environmental

- Climate change mitigation (E1)

### Social

- Equal treatment and opportunities for all (S1)
- Working conditions for own workforce (S1)
- Working conditions for workers in the value chain (S2)
- Information-related impacts for consumers & end-users (S4)

## Result of Double Materiality Assessment

The double materiality assessment disclosed Storytel Group's impact, financial and double materiality across the ESG framework, as well as the respective sub-topics within each European Sustainability Reporting Standard. After completing the DMA, the focus shifted to analyzing reporting requirements and conducting gap assessments for the material areas.

The matrix shows the final result of the conducted double materiality assessment.

## Non material

- Pollution of soil
- Direct impact drivers on biodiversity loss
- Resource inflows
- Waste
- Other work-related rights (Own WF)
- Other work-related rights (WVC)
- Affected communities
- Rights of indigenous people
- Management of relationships with suppliers

- Political engagement
- Pollution of air
- Pollution of water
- Impacts on the state of species
- Resource outflows
- Equal treatment and opportunities for all (WVC)
- Rights of affected communities

## Financial materiality

### Environmental

- Climate change adaptation (E1)

### Social

- Corruption and bribery prevention and detection including training (G1)

# Value chain



Storytel's **key upstream** operations involve content creation partners and technical infrastructure providers. Authors, studios, and professional narrators collaborate to produce our audiobooks, while specialized printing services and paper suppliers support our print book production. Our technical foundation relies on data centers and server providers who maintain the digital infrastructure necessary for content storage and distribution. These upstream partnerships are essential for delivering high-quality storytelling across both digital and physical formats, ensuring our content meets platform requirements before reaching customers.

Storytel's **own operations** center on content production and platform development. Our audiobook production facilities handle recording, editing, and quality assurance, with specialized equipment and software to create finished audio products. Key operational partners include studio facility providers, technical equipment suppliers, and quality control specialists. Our technology development teams maintain and enhance the streaming platform infrastructure, requiring data hosting services, development tools, and testing environments. These operations generate digital waste that requires secure data deletion processes and hardware recycling services. Our business operations team manages subscription services, billing systems, and customer data protection, supported by payment processors and cybersecurity providers.

Storytel's **downstream** impact centers on transforming how people consume literary content worldwide. Our streaming platform technology enables users to access stories anytime, reducing paper consumption and transportation emissions compared to traditional book distribution. By digitizing literature, we help decrease deforestation while our recommendation algorithms connect readers with relevant content efficiently. For printed books, we partner with environmentally conscious distributors who optimize delivery routes. At the end of their lifecycle, digital content requires no physical disposal, while our print books can be recycled, donated, or resold through partner programs.

# Footprint

- Wellbeing of the planet



## Climate Impact & Emissions

Companies play a central role in driving down greenhouse gas emissions, and in building a resilient zero-emissions economy. The race is on to limit global warming to 1.5°C and prevent the worst effects of climate change. Storytel Group is committed to reducing the environmental impact from its direct and indirect business operations in order to help protect the planet.

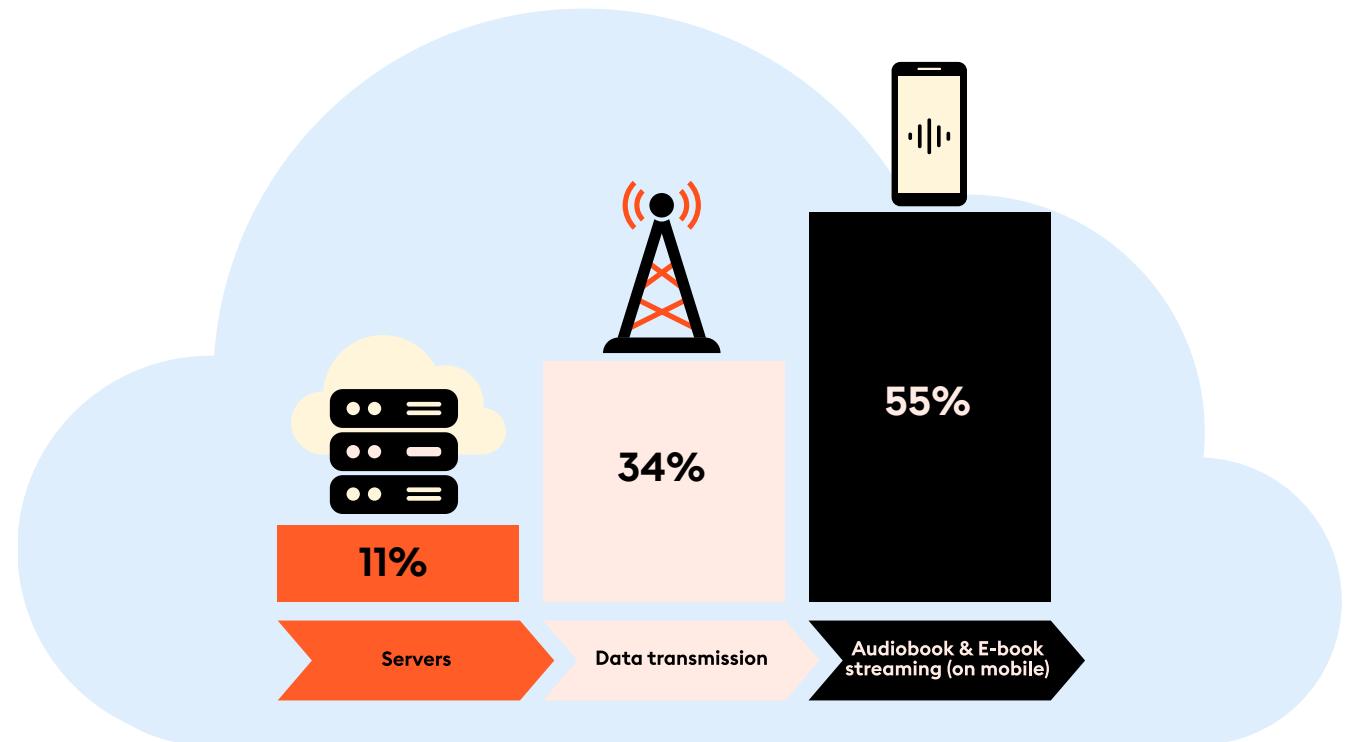
Opportunities & Risks	Primary Stakeholders	Steering Documents
+ Future-proofing the Business	Investors	Code of Conduct
+ Access to financing	Employees	Travel Guidelines
- Rising cost for emissions	Employees	Supplier Code of Conduct
- Reputational damage	Authors	

## Climate impact from audiobook streaming

Storytel is a user of Google Cloud Services to run the streaming service. Google has carbon-neutral operations, and is working towards running on carbon-free energy at all of its data centers by 2030. Although Storytel's net operational emissions from Google are zero due to Google's climate compensation, we are optimizing cloud utilization, for example by identifying underutilized resources, and implementing changes to reduce waste.

Looking at the value chain, the main sources of emissions are an approximation based on calculations from the energy required for data transmission and from the device used to stream an audiobook. One hour of listening to an audiobook on Storytel emits 2.3 grams of CO2e.<sup>1</sup>

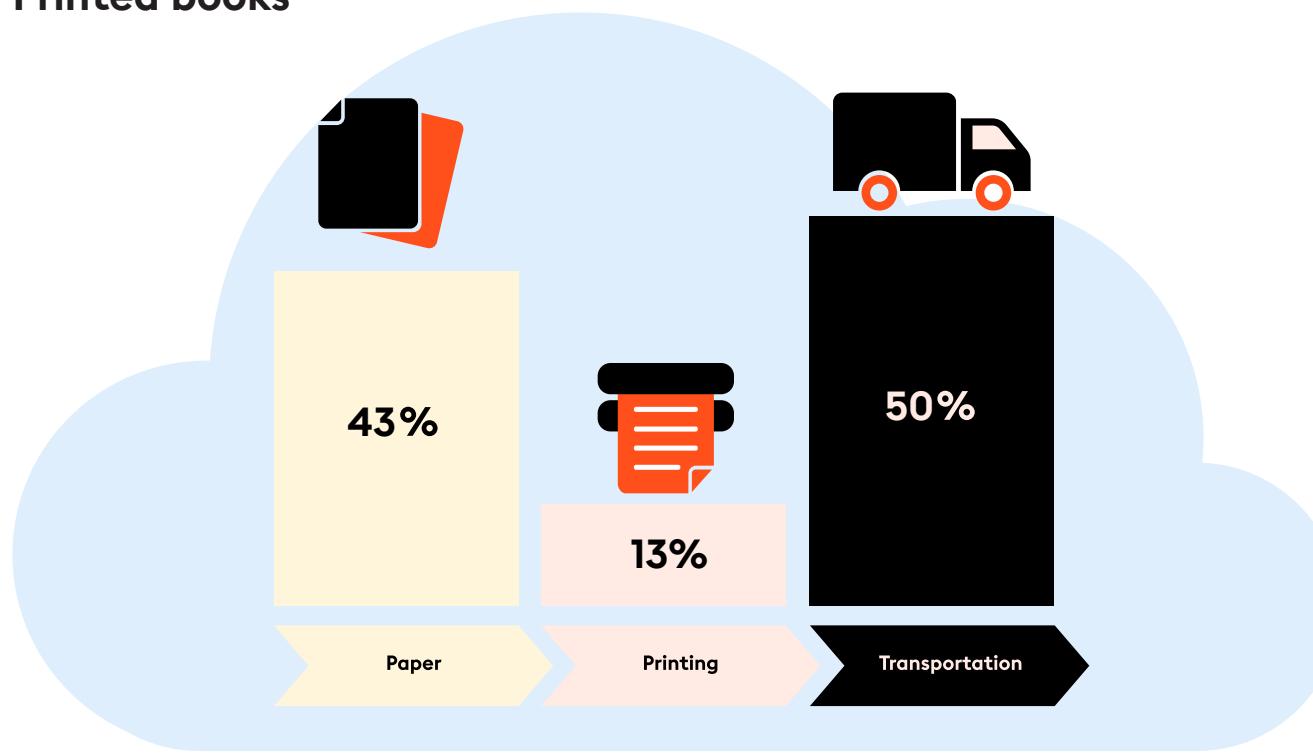
## Streaming service



Picture from Sustainability Report 2023

<sup>1</sup> Measured for 2023.

## Printed books



### Climate impact from print books

Within the Publishing segment, emissions primarily occur from the paper required for printing books and from the transportation of the books. High-impact initiatives include using more sustainable paper for the books, and transporting books in ways that are fossil-free. One printed book from our publishers emits, on average, 400 grams of CO2e.

### Overview of emissions within Storytel Publishing

The market-based approach has been used to calculate the environmental impact from our publishers. We do not yet include emissions from Lind & Co, in which the company owns 70% of the shares.

### Storytel Books AB

tCO2e	Scope 1	Scope 2	Scope 3	Total
2022	6.2	47	3,120	3,174
2023	4.8	49.3	1,743.5	1,798
2024	1.2	22	1,945	1,968

During 2024, Storytel Books' emissions increased slightly, which is expected given the rise in purchased paper, driven by a growing demand for books from Storytel Books.

Storytel Books continued efforts to reduce its climate footprint. Among them are the following actions:

- We avoid air freight.
- We pack smaller quantities on the same pallet to minimize waste.
- We choose the wood quality with the lowest impact.
- We use a new, low-impact uncoated paper quality.

Since we have sold more books, paper purchases have increased, but we have continued our underlying efforts to reduce the climate footprint by:

- We have lowered the paper weights used.
- We have printed fewer four-color books.
- We have improved data on paper qualities, calculating on data from Life Cycle Assessment (LCA) and Environmental Product Declarations (EPD).
- We have enhanced and acquired more detailed data from paper mills.
- Transportation emissions have been reduced through the use of lower weights.

### Resource Efficiency & Circularity

Supply chains are the engines of today's global economy, serving to deliver goods and services around the world. A sustainable supply chain integrates ethical and environmentally responsible practices into a competitive and resilient model. As a signatory of the UN Global Compact, Storytel Group wants to engage with its suppliers to address environmental impacts, apply the precautionary approach, and promote greater environmental responsibility and the usage of clean technologies across its value chain.

Opportunities & Risks	Primary Stakeholders	Steering Documents
+ Industry Leadership	Suppliers	Code of Conduct
+ Decreased Scope 3 Emissions	Authors	Supplier Code of Conduct
- Reputational damage	Employees	
- Increased supplier costs		



## Sustainable Book Publishing

We strive to develop print production with environmental labels that place high environmental requirements. As part of the environmental work, a majority of all books within our publishing segment are printed on FSC-certified paper (Mixed Sources). Furthermore, all non-book products within the company are CE-certified (Conformité Européenne) according to European regulations.

In our sustainable practices, we consistently evaluate lower grammage options based on the final product. We prioritize the use of wood-containing paper for black and white books, emphasizing eco-friendly choices. Our decision-making process involves utilizing a footprint list to carefully select paper with the lowest environmental impact. To further enhance sustainability, we minimize the usage of color proof prints, promoting a reduction in resource consumption. In line with responsible file management, we adhere to the correct FOGRA standard when sending PDF files, ensuring efficiency and precision in our printing processes. Additionally, we opt out of post-press finishing options such as foil, special laminate and cloth spine, aligning with our commitment to simplicity and eco-consciousness. Emphasizing aesthetics without compromising sustainabil-

ity, we favor embossed front and back sheets over colored alternatives.

We advocate for responsible quantities, printing lower volumes to avoid excess inventory and potential damage. Exploring innovative solutions, we consider seamless printing-on-demand methods to minimize waste and optimize resource utilization. Collaborating with suppliers who share our environmental values, we actively engage in efforts to reduce their environmental impact. This collaborative approach includes offsetting the remaining environmental footprint, with ongoing improvements year by year. Our commitment to sustainable practices extends throughout our production chain, reflecting our dedication to a greener future.

Unsold books in Sweden are recycled in cooperation with our distribution partner Speed Logistics, which in turn engages a paper recycling center. The unsold books are chopped into small pieces and pressed into bales, which the paper recycling center runs to paper mills for reuse. These can be recycled 6-7 times before the fiber is consumed. Books with lower recycling quality, for example plasticized or thinner books with little paper are taken care of in another flow to become paper material.



## Supplier Engagement

Since 2013, Norstedts Förlagsgrupp has enforced a strict Code of Conduct for its suppliers worldwide, and prioritizes suppliers who have a clear environmental policy. Suppliers of both goods and services to Norstedts Publishing Group must meet the requirements of the Code of Conduct and take measures to ensure that their subcontractors meet the requirements of the Code of Conduct.

Since 2021, the streaming segment has maintained a Supplier Code of Conduct aligned with the UN Global Compact principles for responsible business. In 2024, the streaming and publishing segments merged their Supplier Code of Conduct into a single policy that encompasses the entire Group. This policy extends to suppliers' subsidiaries, employees, consultants, subcontractors and other representatives.

# Brainprint

- Wellbeing of customers



## Customer Empowerment

Storytel Group is on a mission to help people discover the right stories at the right time, promote reading and make books more accessible and compatible with everyday life. Stories improve our wellbeing as the brain releases the “feel-good hormone” oxytocin<sup>1</sup>, and can help people relax and unwind<sup>2</sup>. Stories also provide tools that empower people in emotionally and practically challenging times. Whether a person wants to learn something, find a moment of comfort, or just feel less bored, stories can give them the power to do so. We want to help people read more, and our purpose is to empower and enhance the wellbeing of people through stories.

Opportunities & Risks	Primary Stakeholders	Steering Documents
+ Brand strength	Customers	Code of Conduct
+ Customer Attraction & Retention	Partners	Brand Platform
+ Partnerships		
- Loss of subscribers		

**Storytel offers the best stories for me. It is time well spent.**

Whether you are looking for entertainment or simply want to learn something new, Storytel is the place to be. We create captivating original stories, and with over 1.6 million stories in all genres, we strive to have something for everyone.

## Brand values

### Progress

We constantly strive to change things for the better.

### Passion

We love stories and are passionate about letting more people discover them.

### Empathy

We build our relationships on empathy and respect.



<sup>1</sup> How Stories Change the Brain by Paul Zak in the Greater Good Magazine, 2013. [https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/how\\_stories\\_change\\_brain](https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/how_stories_change_brain) Storytelling increases oxytocin and positive emotions and decreases cortisol and pain in hospitalized children by G. Brockington, A. Gomes Moreira, M. Buso, S. da Silva, E. Altszyler, R. Fischer and J. Moll, 2021. <https://www.pnas.org/content/118/22/e2018409118>

<sup>2</sup> Reading can help reduce stress according to University of Sussex by Any Chiles in The Argus, 2009. <https://www.theargus.co.uk/news/4245076.reading-can-help-reduce-stress-according-to-university-of-sussex-research/>

## A product that enables people to consume more books

Storytel's goal for the core user experience is to make it easy for as many people as possible in the world to consume at least one book per month. Our guiding metric is the number of people consuming stories for 10 hours or more per month, which roughly translates to one book.

Measured in thousands	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025 goal
Number of people consuming stories for 10 hours or more per month (Q4 average excluding Audiobooks.com)	680	828	909	994	1,107	1,250

On a global level, our customers spend an average ~30 hours per month on the Storytel platform, which means that Storytel is a truly integrated part of users' everyday lives. On an average day in the Nordic region, more than 50% of all paid subscribers listen to Storytel.

### Product Missions

Storytel's product teams within the streaming segment are guided by two key missions to continuously enhance the core experience: To help users find the right stories, and to help users enjoy those stories. These missions shape the product development and ensure that prioritization aligns with the overarching goals.

### Helping Users Find the Right Stories

To make story discovery both inspiring and engaging, Storytel combines algorithmically personalized recommendations with expert editorial curation. In 2024, we scaled our recommendation algorithms to enable dynamic re-ranking of any book list in the app based on each user's unique preferences. At the same time, we expanded our curation efforts, focusing on presenting content in more inspiring and contextually relevant ways. These combined improvements have driven all-time high user engagement and book completion rates.

### Helping Users Enjoy Their Stories

Our commitment to creating a seamless and delightful story consumption experience remains a top priority. In 2024, we introduced Voice Switcher, an innovative feature allowing users to personalize their listening experience by seamlessly switching between narrator voices. This feature, launched in Poland, Sweden, Finland, and Denmark, includes state-of-the-art AI-generated voices of beloved narrators like Stefan Sauk, Sanna Majuri, and Maria Garde. The response has been positive, and plans are underway

to expand this feature to more markets and titles in 2025. Additionally, we have developed a completely new reading experience, set to launch in early 2025. This enhanced feature will make it easier and more enjoyable for users to engage with stories, regardless of their preferred format.

### Research Study GIH

In 2021, Storytel partnered with a research project led by The Swedish School of Sport and Health Sciences, GIH, which aims to understand how physical wellbeing is connected to mental wellbeing. In phase 1 of the study in 2022, 2,700 14-15 year-old Swedish students had their school day prolonged by 60 minutes three times per week to do physical activities such as audiobook-walks provided by Storytel. The students were then evaluated on sedentary time, physical activity, cognitive functions, mental health, self-esteem and motivation. In 2023, the study was conducted on a larger scale and was additionally extended into 2024. The final results are estimated to be presented in the second half of 2025.

### Accessibility

Storytel Group works to develop products that are inclusive and accessible. Developing the Storytel product with accessibility criteria considered is an integral part of product development as the company prepares for compliance with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines. Recent developments include conducting an accessibility assessment of the Storytel app, introducing new digital ID colors

with sufficient color contrast, and accessibility training for app developers and testers.

### Promoting children's reading (Storytel Books)

The Great Reading Challenge, Sweden's largest reading competition, was organized for the fourth time in 2024. A record number of fourth-grade classes participated, with an impressive 47,000 fourth graders crossing the finish line—approximately 40 percent of the country's students. Together, they read over 1,148,000 hours, averaging 20 minutes per day per student. On average, each fourth-grader has read for 25 hours during the competition period, from September, 15 to December, 1. Participating classes reported a more than 60 percent increase in reading time during the fall. The goal of The Great Reading Challenge is to support the promotion of reading fitness and contribute to making reading a daily habit. The competition offers numerous activities with competition leaders, participating authors, and selected idols, along with comprehensive digital materials and, not least, an attractive prize pool as motivation. In 2024, all participating classes were also sent an inspirational resource, and thanks to a grant from the Swedish Academy, all reading classes that finished the challenge were rewarded with generous book packages. The initiative was made by Rabén & Sjögren and today we cooperate with Adlibris, Bonnier Carlsen, and Natur & Kultur.

### Promoting reading in Preschools

In the autumn of 2024, Rabén & Sjögren invited preschools across Sweden to join The Reading Ladder initiative in the spring of 2025, a free program designed to inspire children's love for stories through 50 engaging reading sessions. Participants have the chance to win book packages from Rabén & Sjögren, and a full-day trip to Junibacken, Stockholm's celebrated cultural center dedicated to children's literature, founded with the legacy of Astrid Lindgren in mind. The initiative aims to integrate stories into the daily lives of our youngest children by turning reading into a fun, measurable challenge.

The initiative recognizes the transformative power of stories in developing empathy, sparking imagination, and expanding vocabularies. According to research, children

regularly exposed to storytelling can amass vocabularies of 50,000–70,000 words, compared to just 15,000 for those without similar experiences.

Reading is proven to significantly impact cognitive and emotional development, and with the rise of concerns about excessive screen time, storytelling emerges as a healthier and more engaging alternative for children.

### Encouraging children and young people to read at least one book

The Grand Book Choice (Stora bokvalet) is a project initiated by Rabén & Sjögren and Bonnier. The Grand Book Choice aims to promote the reading of newly published literature among children and young people and to amplify their voices. We encourage children and young people to read at least one book published during the current year and then vote for their favorite. The following year, three winning authors were announced, one in each age group: 6–9 years, 9–12 years, and 12–16 years. This award is one of Sweden's most prestigious prizes because it is chosen by children and young people themselves!

### Creating “Passion for Reading”

During 2024 Rabén & Sjögren and B. Wahlström continued their inspirational events 'Läslust' (Passion for Reading) held throughout Sweden, specifically targeted at those working with children and reading in grades 1–6. Librarians, teachers and school librarians meet authors and illustrators who share insights into their work, their books, and engage in discussions on how we can encourage children to love reading and explore new worlds. The events are free of charge.

### Content Responsibility

Organizations that create and distribute content hold a powerful position in society through the impact and influence of that content. The Storytel platform has a broad catalog of content, which is a mix of content produced by publishers within the Storytel Group across all the local markets, and licensed content from third-party publishers globally. This makes Storytel both a publisher and distributor of content. Storytel has responsibilities pertaining to

human rights, such as freedom of expression, and through diversity and pluralism in its content, Storytel aims to facilitate understanding and cultivate empathy in its readers, while being compliant with local laws and regulations.

Opportunities & Risks	Primary Stakeholders	Steering Documents
+ Trust & Safety for users	Customers	Content Guidelines
- Reputational damage	Authors	Content Sensitivity Mapping
- Legal proceedings	Publishers	Content Contingency Plan
- Failure to protect content rights		

### Content Guidelines

Storytel's Content Guidelines consist of two parts. The first part is the Technical Criteria, which refer to the technical and editorial quality of audiobooks and ebooks. For example, each title must have proper credit, a registered publisher and correct metadata. The latest update refers to AI-generated content and AI-voices which publishers need to specify within the metadata according to new international standards that Storytel implemented at the end of 2024. The second part is the Content Principles, which refer to the compliance of the content with legal and ethical standards. For example, Storytel does not accept toxic content such as hate speech, disinformation or misinformation, encouragement or idealization of self-harm, suicide or solicitations to commit crimes. If a title breaches the Content Guidelines, Storytel has the right to remove it from the service.

To complement the Content Guidelines, Storytel has performed content sensitivity mapping to better understand topics that are culturally sensitive in each local market and to ensure appropriate considerations related to that. Storytel has also developed a content contingency plan to guide Storytel employees in critical situations connected to the content in the service. The plan points out three broad areas of risk and how to handle these:

1. Breach of rights
2. Ethically questionable content
3. Harmful content

### Content Committee

The Content Committee within Storytel is the decision-making body on content-related issues. This group works to mitigate risks related to handling and monitoring content from an integrity and safety perspective. The committee is responsible for updating the Content Guidelines toward publishers and authors when necessary and works to resolve content-related issues both proactively and reactively. Users, employees, partners or other stakeholders can report content on the service, allowing the Content Committee to review complaints. The Content Committee is a collaboration between various departments in the organization to provide a unified Storytel view on content reported as illegal, unethical, or otherwise unsuitable for the service.

### Curation

At Storytel, curation is the process of aggregating, selecting, arranging and exhibiting content with the main goal of engaging customers to find their next great book. Curation can also be used to quickly withdraw a reported title while it is being investigated by the Content Committee, and is awaiting a formal decision.

Storytel has a function called Kids Mode in the app, which serves as parental control. When Kids Mode is switched on, content is restricted to the Kids category, and remains that way until a parent enters a passcode. This filter allows children to explore stories safely on the Storytel platform.

### Protecting Intellectual Property (IP)

At Storytel, Intellectual Property (IP) serves as the foundation on which the business can thrive. Consequently, Storytel strives to protect the integrity of its owned and licensed content and takes a strict and consistent approach against any unlawful use of IP. It is important for Storytel to respect the IP of others and to be a safe place for publishers and creators to harbor their rights. Hence, Storytel conducts awareness training for its staff regarding the use of IP and invests in IT security and technology designed to prevent illegal copying, file sharing and other misuse of IP distributed through the streaming service.

# Fingerprint

- Wellbeing of employees and partners



## Sustainable Business Model

Since its inception in 2005, Storytel has been at the forefront of driving the digital transformation within the book industry. A primary focus is to make the audiobook relevant in the digital age and to attract and expand new audiences to the book format. Storytel has invested heavily in growing the industry and the ambition is to have a fruitful relationship with publishers, authors, narrators and translators, and together nourish the storytelling tradition in different formats. For Storytel to operate successfully in the future, the business needs to be financially sustainable by assuring a profitable business model across our entire value chain.

Opportunities & Risks	Primary Stakeholders	Steering Documents
+ Increased investment in the audiobook market	Investors Authors Publishers	Code of Conduct Supplier Code of Conduct
+ Better access to financing - Failure to sign and maintain critical content agreements - Reputational damage		

## Storytel Streaming's Business Model

Storytel's business model is about connecting storytellers and authors with their audience. Having a sustainable business model means setting the right price points for the customer while having terms with publishers and authors that are sustainable for both Storytel and the content providers.

The vast majority of Storytel's publishing partners are compensated on a revenue share basis.

Storytel remains one of the few providers offering a subscription plan that enables unlimited consumption, which was the foundation for the growth and success of audiobooks in our core markets. We offer access, not ownership, which in combination with our unlimited plan and our revenue model is based on volume rather than high unit prices, comparable to Book Clubs sales.

## Creating value for the Industry

Storytel is proud of its contribution to the overall industry, to publishers and authors. As a pioneer of unlimited listening for audiobooks, Storytel has consistently increased total payouts to publishers. By attracting more subscribers and growing revenues each year, we've demonstrated that the key to enhancing audiobook compensation is by attracting more users. Since inception in 2005, we've paid out close to 7 billion SEK in royalties to our 1,600+ publishers worldwide, and our annual payouts continue to increase.

Storytel contributes to both increased book consumption and new revenue streams for many authors through its global catalog of 1.6 million titles in more than 40 languages, and by more than 300,000 authors. In 2024, more than 76 percent of the audiobooks consumed on Storytel were books that were released earlier than at least a year back, also known as backlist titles. In other words, Storytel

enables older books and authorships to come back to life and find new audiences.

The vast majority of the Storytel catalog comes from third-party publishers and is not exclusive to Storytel. Our strategy is therefore to differentiate Storytel with content and product features, where Storytel Originals, written and produced exclusively for Storytel, serve as one of our core differentiators. While their number, as a percentage of our overall catalogue, is relatively small for now, these titles have the power to attract new listeners and act as an effective customer acquisition tool. We have created Storytel Originals since 2016 and will continue to do so going forward.

## Human Capital Development

Storytel is committed to attracting and developing exceptional talent by fostering a diverse workplace built on trust, innovation, and collaboration. The contribution of our employees is crucial to driving the company's performance and achieving its goals. We are dedicated to creating a workplace that promotes employee engagement, development, and wellbeing, with a focus on attracting, nurturing, and retaining top talent.

Opportunities & Risks	Primary Stakeholders	Steering Documents
+ High Performing Organization	Employees	Code of Conduct Employee Handbook (SE, DK & FIN)
+ Employer Brand	Investors	Public Flexible Holidays Guidelines Work Environment Instructions
- Failure to attract and retain key personnel, and associated costs		Plan for Diversity
- Employee absence		Hybrid Work Instructions

## Overview of The Storytel Group

Storytel's streaming business is conducted under the brands Storytel, Mofibo (Denmark) and Audiobooks.com (North America, UK and Australia), and operates in over 25 markets around the globe, with a focus on ten core markets: the five Nordic countries, the Netherlands, Turkey, Poland, Bulgaria, and the USA. The headquarters are located in Stockholm, Sweden.

The publishing division comprises the specialized audiobook publisher Storyside and the Storytel subsidiary Storytel Books, which includes renowned publishing houses and imprints such as Swedish publishers Norstedts, Printz Publishing, Rabén & Sjögren, B. Wahlströms, Tiden, Brombergs, Lind & Co, the Danish publisher People's, and the Finnish publisher Gummerus.

## Employee Engagement

Employee engagement is a key priority at Storytel, as empowered teams are fundamental to the company's culture, innovation, and sustained success and growth. Therefore engagement levels are measured on an ongoing basis.

In 2024, Storytel Streaming introduced the employee experience platform OfficeVibe to measure engagement through weekly qualitative and quantitative surveys. The Employee Engagement Score is derived from the average of all scale-based questions in the pulse surveys, covering areas such as motivation, collaboration with managers and colleagues, alignment, job satisfaction, and wellbeing. As a different survey tool was used in previous years, the overall engagement score cannot be accurately compared to past results, but it offers a valuable insight on the current engagement level scoring 7.6 compared to OfficeVibe's external benchmark\* of 7.8.

## Career Development

The succession planning process at Storytel ensures the identification and annual review of high-potential employees who are capable of stepping into key leadership and critical business roles, with discussions held in the Remuneration Committee.

The Storytel performance appraisal process is designed to facilitate discussions around individual development goals, enabling employees and their managers to collaboratively establish development action plans that are regularly reviewed. This process also helps identify high-potential talent capable of taking on greater responsibilities.

Storytellers participate in a yearly appraisal with their manager to review the past year's performance and achievements and to plan growth and development goals for the upcoming year. The process also includes peer feedback and is further complemented by at least one mid-year review.

Storytel Streaming	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Target
% av heltids- anställda som del- tagit i någon form av utvärderings- process	94%	93%	96%	96%	94%	100%

In 2024, a job architecture framework was designed and introduced within our Streaming organization to provide a clear understanding of all roles within the organization, defining the impact and complexity of each position and how they align with varying levels of seniority.

The need for job architecture goes beyond clarifying seniority levels; it aims to make career paths more visible, support advanced workforce planning, and enhance succession planning. Additionally, it helps clarify compensation structures, including salary bands, incentive programs, and other benefits.

## Leadership

In 2024, Storytel Streaming leaders participated in a range of webinars, training sessions, and Q&As designed to enhance their ability to build high-performing teams and empower their employees. Key areas of focus included leading through change, fostering employee engagement through the new OfficeVibe survey tool, and driving effective performance conversations.

Managers received continuous feedback from their teams via the OfficeVibe engagement survey, which includes questions about the manager-employee relationship. Additionally, a new "upward feedback" section was introduced in the performance appraisal process, promoting open dialogue between managers and employees. This allows managers to gain valuable insights into areas where they can improve and better support their teams.

Storytel Streaming	External Benchmark Results 2024*	External Benchmark mark 2024*
Relationship with Managers	8.6	8.3

\* Data as of January, 2025

## Employee Wellbeing

Storytel is dedicated to fostering a supportive and healthy work environment for all its employees. In 2024, Storytel Streaming continued efforts to create a work culture where everyone feels safe to talk about wellbeing to prevent illness and reduce the barriers to seeking help.

Through initiatives like flexible work arrangements, anonymous talks with therapists through BlueCall, structured return-to-work plans, and regular wellbeing check-ins, we actively work to create a workplace where employees feel supported.

Additionally, our engagement survey includes targeted questions on wellbeing and work-life balance, providing

managers with valuable insights to proactively address team concerns and ensure the necessary support to enhance employee wellness.

Storytel Streaming	Storytel Results 2024*	External Benchmark 2024*
Wellness	7.4	7.5

\* Data as of January, 2025

## Compensation, Benefits & Incentives

### Fair and Competitive Compensation

Building on the compensation evaluation project for the senior leadership team conducted in 2023 and the job architecture framework introduced in 2024, we also undertook a comprehensive analysis of the company's internal pay structure. The primary objective of this assessment was to identify any discrepancies in job leveling and compensation within our internal structure.

For Sweden, this analysis was complemented by an in-depth external salary benchmarking study to evaluate how our compensation levels compare with those of similar-sized companies in the market. The external analysis was anchored in the job architecture framework, which is based on Mercer's job evaluation methodology and IPE levels. Mercer's salary data also served as the foundation for our benchmarking efforts.

The results of the internal and external analysis will play a pivotal role in shaping a cohesive compensation logic for the organization, fostering greater transparency and providing a clear framework for managing and discussing compensation.

### Benefits

Storytel adheres to local market benefit structures, ensuring that our offerings are aligned with regional standards and meet the diverse needs of our employees across different locations.

In 2024, Storytel continued its efforts to support employees by offering parental salaries in Sweden, Denmark, and Finland, alongside a hybrid work model that allows remote work up to three days a week. Employees also enjoyed the

benefit of Public Flexible Holidays, giving them the option to swap public holidays for a day off of their choice.

### Incentive Programmes

Storytel launched its first Long Term Incentive Plan program in 2019, a Stock Option Program where employees were granted options that could be exercised after three years. In 2024, Storytel launched a prolongation of the 2023 performance-based Long-Term incentive program, in which new or promoted employees could be offered restricted stock units that give the right to free shares. These restricted stock units are earned throughout certain dates during a four-year employment period. There are also short-term incentive plans within Storytel Group.

## Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Belonging (DEIB)

For Storytel to be successful in the long term, the workforce needs to be as diverse as the people and partners served. Storytel Group is dedicated to fostering a working environment that embraces diversity, equity, and inclusion, empowering individuals to bring their true selves to work. Furthermore, the Storytel platform serves as an impactful tool for promoting Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion to a wider audience through its content, service and operations.

Opportunities & Risks	Primary Stakeholders	Steering Documents
+ Employer Brand	Employees	Code of Conduct
+ Relevant catalog and service for a global audience	Authors	Plan for Diversity
- Failure to attract and retain key personnel	Investors	Supplier Code of Conduct
		Work Environment Instruction

We always strive to be inclusive and are strong believers that individuals who feel safe and can be themselves are happier and more productive at work. Storytel's goal is to be a diverse workplace where we can evolve and learn from everyone's differences. All employees at Storytel are entitled to equal opportunities and treatment. We have employees all over the world and welcome people regardless of gender, transgender identity, disability, sexual orientation, ethnicity, age, religion or other beliefs.

To be able to gather timely feedback and identify areas for improvement related specifically to DEIB, Storytel Streaming launched a monthly DEIB survey in OfficeVibe during the second half of 2024. Employees are asked to answer five questions related to diversity, inclusion, equity and belonging. This approach allows us to quickly detect potential issues and take proactive measures. Additionally, it provides employees with a more frequent opportunity to report any behaviors that are inconsistent with our policies or company culture. The overall DEIB score for 2024 is 7.6 out of 10.

In 2024, we have continued the work outlined in the yearly Diversity Plan that covers topics such as working conditions, practices on salaries, recruitment and promotion, education and competence, development, and the possibility of combining work life and parenthood.

Every year, Storytel conducts a salary mapping in Sweden and Denmark, where the majority of all employees are located, to detect and prevent gender pay gaps.

### Equal opportunities

Equal opportunities entail ensuring a good work environment for all and an unbiased recruitment process. The Work Environment Instructions outline the goals and responsibilities regarding the workplace and what behaviors Storytel accepts and does not accept. Storytel investigates all cases of unhealth, accidents or incidents at work or during work time. Storytel does not accept, and works proactively against, any type of discrimination, harassment, sexual harassment and retaliation. The whistleblowing tool provides an opportunity for employees to anonymously report shortcomings in the work environment.

The Storytel Talent Acquisition function is committed to continuing to use anonymous applications to decrease unconscious bias among Storytel's employees. No personal information about the candidate is showcased until the candidate's experience is rated as relevant, and is applied as a mandatory step in all recruitment processes. In addition, the usage of application questions helps us focus on the critical aspects of the candidate's profile and makes the screening process fairer and more accurate.

We have continued using our psychometric assessment tool for recruitment purposes. By utilizing this tool Storytel

will be able to increase inclusion and continue to focus on competency-based recruitment.

As part of the 2024 performance appraisal process, the People team organized several Performance Calibration sessions, where managers collaborated to align employee ratings across teams and departments. This important step ensures consistent and fair evaluations, helping to minimize biases and maintain equity throughout the organization.

### Diversity Policy Board of Directors

Storytel, through the nomination committee, strives for the Board to have a composition that is appropriate with regard to the company's operations, development stage and other conditions, characterized by versatility and breadth regarding the competence, experience, age, education and professional background of the members elected by the AGM. The nomination committee strives to ensure diversity and equal gender representation on the Board.

### Age and Gender Distribution

#### - Storytel Streaming

Data is based on permanent employees of Storytel Streaming (excluding consultants, temporary employees and interns) as of 31 December 2024.

#### Age distribution

	30<	31-50	50+ Undeclared
Board of Directors	0%	14%	86%
Management Team	0%	50%	50%
Managers	2%	81%	17%
Employees	13%	83%	4%

#### Gender distribution

	Female	Male	Other	Undeclared
Board of Directors	43%	57%	0%	0%
Management Team	50%	50%	0%	0%
Managers	50%	46%	1%	3%
Employees	59%	40%	<1%	<1%

### Age and Gender Distribution – Storytel Books

Data is based on permanent employees of Storytel Books (excluding consultants, temporary employees and interns) as of 31 December 2024. This includes Norstedts Förlagsgrupp, Gummerus, People's and Lind & Co. Each Publishing House has its own Board of Directors and Management.

#### Age distribution

	30<	31-50	50+ Undeclared
Management Team	0%	60%	40%
Managers	0%	37%	63%
Employees	10%	68%	22%

#### Gender distribution

	Female	Male	Other	Undeclared
Management Team	70%	30%	0%	0%
Managers	50%	50%	0%	0%
Employees	73%	27%	0%	0%



## Business Ethics & Compliance

Growing sustainably means ensuring ethical business practices and compliance across the organization and value chain. Storytel is committed to operating with high ethical standards. Policies are vital documents for assuring compliance and steering Storytel employees to act ethically and in line with the Storytel Code of Conduct. Storytel is also committed to the UN Global Compact and has no tolerance for corruption and anti-competitive behavior.

Opportunities & Risks	Primary Stakeholders	Steering Documents
+ Build trust and confidence among investors, customers and employees	Employees	Code of Conduct
- Failure to adhere to core values, policies and guidelines	Investors	Anti-Bribery and Corruption Guidelines Whistleblowing Instruction
- Legal proceedings, fines and penalties		Risk Management and Compliance Policy Trade Sanctions Instruction
- Reputational damage		Insider and Communication Policy Work Environment Instructions Supplier Code of Conduct Related Party Transaction Instruction

## Policy Development

Storytel works actively with its policies and each policy is reviewed and revised on an annual basis or more often if needed. In addition to the policies, there are several global instructions and guidelines that complement the policies and give Storytel's employees more information and guidance on how to interpret and use the policies.

## Compliance Process

Storytel has a compliance process focused on ethical business practices, and compliance training is part of the onboarding for all new employees. All new employees are expected to read and understand the Storytel Code of Conduct and the other applicable policies. The Code of

Conduct also needs to be signed by everyone representing Storytel.

## Anti-corruption, bribery and fair competition

Storytel is committed to fully complying with the applicable laws and regulations in the countries in which it operates. Storytel's Code of Conduct outlines a zero tolerance for bribery and corruption and includes specific instructions to avoid or declare potential conflicts of interest. Due to the international nature of its business, Storytel has a presence in countries where both legislation and the business operational environment may differ and be more challenging. To mitigate the complexities resulting from differences in business culture in the various territories within Storytel's footprint, the company has a Supplier Code of Conduct to ensure the use of ethical suppliers and business partners.

## Whistleblowing Tool

Storytel employees and stakeholders can report any misconduct anonymously using a whistleblowing channel provided by a third-party and managed by a team at Storytel. The service is separate from Storytel's IT solution and does not track IP addresses or other data that could identify a person sending a message. Storytel has Whistleblowing Instructions in place to guide employees and stakeholders, and the tool can for example easily be accessed on the intranet.

## Work Environment

Storytel has established a Work Environment Committee in Sweden and Denmark, in which both employees and management are represented. Storytel's Global Work Environment Policy outlines the work environment that Storytel provides, and what is expected of each employee in terms of behavior and responsibility. As stated in the Code of Conduct, Storytel has zero tolerance for harassment, bullying and retaliation. If Storytel is made aware or suspects that someone has been subject to, or has subjected someone else to, harassment, sexual harassment, bullying or retaliation, an investigation will be promptly initiated, and appropriate actions will be taken, including termination of employment.

## Commitment to Human Rights

In 2021, Storytel became a participant in the UN Global Compact (UNGC). Storytel has incorporated the 10 principles into the internal Code of Conduct, and the external Supplier Code of Conduct requires suppliers to operate in line with the UN Global Compact principles.

Within Storytel Publishing, Norstedts Förlagsgrupp, Gummerus and People's are members of their respective national PEN Organizations. Norstedts Förlagsgrupp is also a member of the International Publishers Association, PEN International and a shareholder of the World Expression Forum (WEXFO).

## Cyber Security & Data Protection

Information security and data protection are crucial areas for Storytel to build and retain the trust and confidence of our customers, investors, partners, and employees. Strong security and data protection practices are essential for delivering our streaming service, achieving our business goals, and ensuring compliance with rules and regulations.

Storytel takes a proactive approach to promote security and data protection throughout the entire software lifecycle. This approach is based on the following principles:

Principle	Description
<b>Risk-Based Approach</b>	Security controls are tailored to mitigate identified risk levels.
<b>Zero Trust Architecture</b>	We follow zero trust principles: verify explicitly, least privilege access, and assume breach.
<b>Security by Design</b>	Security is incorporated into systems from the outset.
<b>Policies &amp; Procedures</b>	Policies and procedures guide our security practices (aligned with ISO/IEC 27001).
<b>Continuous Improvement</b>	We continually enhance our security posture.
<b>Compliance Assurance</b>	Regular assessments ensure compliance with internal and external requirements.
<b>Accountability</b>	Defined roles and responsibilities for security e.g. information assets have a designated owner.

## Governance

Storytel implements information security and data protection measures through established processes and procedures integrated into business operations. Key policies include:

- **Information Security Policy & IT Policy:** Define principles for protecting data, information, and IT assets.
- **External Privacy Policy & Internal Privacy Instruction:** Govern data privacy for customers, employees, and contractors.

These policies apply to all Storytel companies and are reviewed annually by the Board of Directors. Detailed instructions and procedures support these policies, and no affiliate may deviate from them unless required by national law.

## Security & Data Protection Team

Storytel has a dedicated security team responsible for key security activities and controls, including a Data Protection Officer (DPO) and Data Protection Coordinators (DPC) within different business functions.

## Security Audit & Assurance

Storytel's public-facing systems are continuously assessed through a private bug bounty program and automated security scanners.

## Vulnerability Disclosure Program

Storytel encourages external security researchers to report vulnerabilities through its Vulnerability Disclosure Program. The Storytel **Vulnerability Disclosure Program** is accessible here: <https://security.storytel.com>

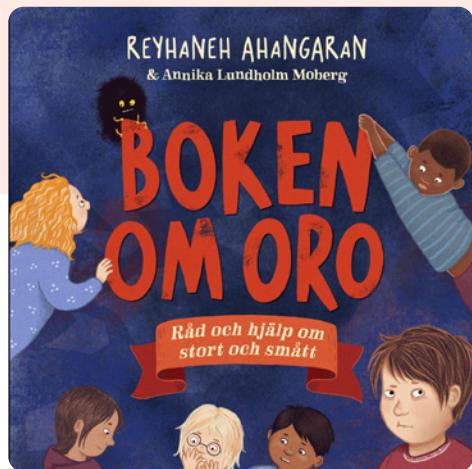
## Awareness Training

Storytel employees and contractors receive ongoing information security and data protection awareness training.

## Third-Party Security

Before engaging new system and service vendors, Storytel conducts due diligence and incorporates security requirements into major agreements.

# Impact through publishing



Reyhaneh Ahangaran

## **Boken om oro: råd och hjälp om stort och smått**

How do we protect children's mental health in an era of increasing stress and uncertainty? Psychologist Reyhaneh Ahangaran offers practical strategies to understand and manage anxiety, emphasizing children's right to security and emotional support.



Yaqoub Ali, Louise Elly Meyer

## **Mit had**

32-year-old Yaqoub Ali shares his experiences from a boundless and extreme life. It is the story of growing up in war-torn Iraq, coming to Denmark and choosing a criminal path, serving time in prison, becoming a leader of jihadists – and turning his back on it all. Everything except the overwhelming hatred he constantly struggles to keep in check. 'Hatred' is a brutally honest and self-critical biography about extremism, hatred, and hope. And a revealing of terror plans against the Danish Queen's castle, Rosenborg, in Copenhagen.



Sofia Rutbäck Eriksson, Sanam Gharaee

## **Glöm aldrig Tintin: En sann berättelse**

The Tintin case received a lot of attention in the spring of 2023. In Never Forget Tintin, Sanam Gharaee depicts the fight for her son's freedom. The book is a true story about a mother who tries to save her son from a violent man – and loses to the Swedish legal system. About having her child murdered by the man she once loved the most. The question on everyone's lips was and still is: How could this happen?



Jenni Janakka

## **Tekkimimmit – Inspiroivat digiuranuurtajat**

The technology industry's gender paradox gets a ride in a compelling non-fiction book. Technology has developed at a dizzying pace as we enter the 2020s, and the possibilities are endless. Finnish society is also quite free today, and women can fulfill themselves in the way they want and follow their desired career path. So why will only a good fifth of the technology industry be women in 2023? Why are 90 percent of Wikipedia article writers men? Why is the identity of a serious video game player still assumed to be male, even though half of the players are women?