

The Sheila Thorn Authentic Listening Scholarship

Sheila Thorn originally qualified as a teacher of German and French, before switching to ELT. Having acquired near-fluency in French, German and Swedish, largely through listening to proficient speakers of those languages, Sheila subsequently devoted her ELT career to writing listening materials based on authentic recordings of planned and spontaneous spoken English.

For nearly 25 years, Sheila presented talks at IATEFL promoting the crucial need to expose learners to authentic recordings in order to prepare them for the real-life spoken English they would encounter outside the ELT classroom. During that time, she wrote her Real Lives, Real Listening series (Collins) and her methodology book, Integrating Authentic Listening into the Language Classroom: Practical guidance of how to teach real-life listening (Pavilion ELT), which was published in 2021.

Sheila officially retired from ELT at IATEFL Brighton 2024 to pursue a new career as an artist. She has set up this scholarship to encourage teachers and teacher trainers to research and promote the benefits of using authentic recordings to train learners to listen more effectively to real-world spoken English.

The scholarship consists of:

- registration for the IATEFL Conference
- a prize of GBP 1,250 (if attending the conference in person),
- the gift of an original artwork signed by the sponsor.

To qualify you must:

- be a member of IATEFL
- work in the field of English language teaching, training or research
- be committed to the need to use authentic L2/X recordings with learners to supplement coursebook recordings
- agree to write an article based on your proposal for submission to an ELT publication

To be considered you must submit:

- a speaker proposal related to any aspect of teaching L2/X listening using authentic recordings by the scholarship deadline
- an essay of between 400 and 500 words in which you:
 - outline briefly your experience of using authentic L2/X recordings with learners
- an up-to-date CV (include a link to this document in your submission)

The submission deadline is **16.00 (UK time) on Wednesday 18 June 2025**. Early submissions are very welcome; late submissions will not be considered.

The result of your application will be emailed to you between **12 and 22 August 2025**. Please do NOT contact the IATEFL Head Office about scholarship decisions; the Scholarship Committee will send everyone the results as soon as they are available.