



Category

Book of the Year

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#britishbookawards

The categories this year as follows

Fiction

Début Fiction

Non-Fiction: Narrative

Non-Fiction: Lifestyle & Illustrated

Children's Illustrated

Children's Fiction

Children's Non-Fiction

Pageturner

Discover

Crime & Thriller

What the judges are looking for

To win a Book of the Year award you need a combination of three elements: the writer's and/or the illustrator's creative genius; brilliant publishing, especially during another challenging year; and fantastic sales/charts success, including sustained sales over the year.

Which comes first? If there were one single answer, judging would be easy. Topping the bestseller lists through sheer heft of marketing spend or publicity hours is success, of course, but then so is hitting the heights on a début or with an unfamiliar author. An unconventional publication strategy or unusual positioning can highlight a unique bond between writer and publisher – transforming steady sales into unexpected success. Maybe the sheer quality of writing shines through and even the barriers of diminished review space and the lure of other entertainment choices can't stop a book from becoming a triumph.

Whatever the route the book has taken, the Book of the Year awards celebrate the whole journey from the author's mind to the reader's hand, and showcase the range and depth of modern publishing.

Who can enter

Imprints in major publishing houses or independent publishers. Please note that there is a limit of three (3) books per imprint. Entries from self-publishers are welcome so long as they meet the criteria.

What to submit

Please submit a single PDF of up to 1,500 words addressing the category criteria and including required book data. The PDF can include supporting graphics but should not exceed 10 pages in total. Supplementary material such as author image and a high-res image of the full book jacket should be included as separate attachments. Please send eight copies of the book, clearly marked with the category for which the book is being entered, to "Book of the Year, The Stage Media Company Ltd, 47 Bermondsey Street, London SE1 3XT".

Our submission site works best with file sizes lower than 50MB. If you encounter any difficulties please email awards@thebookseller.com.

Please include

Book data required

- Book title
- ISBN
- Author
- Publisher
- Imprint (if appropriate)
- Editor/publisher's name
- Publicist
- Agent
- High-res author image (jpg) and book jacket image (jpg)

Success measures

- What were the TCM results for the year, e-book and/or AudioBook sales (where relevant) and non-TCM data? Were there any standout markets, or segment of the retail space where the book did particularly well? Did it outsell comparable editions? Or do something unexpected either in terms of format/genre of the author's past sales track-record? For brand writers, or books that are part of the series, either detail how sales have grown over time, or how this particular title behaved differently.
- List the prizes the book was shortlisted for, or won. Tell us how the book charted – in The Bookseller, The Sunday Times or others.

The book itself

- What is distinctive about this book? From a novel's prose style to a cookbook's ease of use, what made this book do so well? Include here what the author was trying to achieve and – preferably – the author's own words. Was the book a new departure for the imprint/publisher or was it a natural extension?
- Who and what made this a bestseller?

The acquisition story

- Tell us how the book came about: when was the book acquired; was it agented, a direct deal or commissioned; what was the editor/publisher's role in acquisition; tell us about the price; how long was it from acquisition to publication? Tell us about the publication strategy. What did you set out to achieve? Who drove the strategy – editorial, sales, marketing and publicity, or all the above? Tell us about product development, design and production. Judges are particularly interested in how cover design, and, where relevant, illustration, were used to differentiate the book. Tell us about the target market and how you positioned the book. If relevant, which prizes did you target? What were your sales targets?

The marketing and publicity strategy

- What was the campaign strategy? What was the marketing and publicity resource, internally and externally? What was the overall budget? How was the author involved and how important were they to success? Did you pursue any collaborations or partnerships and how did they further your goals? What unexpected challenges or opportunities arose and how did you adapt to/take advantage of them?

Category guidance

Eligible titles for Children's Fiction

- Black and white fiction/chapter books
- Fiction with occasional black & white illustrations (e.g. How to Train Your Dragon novels)
- Fiction with doodle style illustrations (e.g. Wimpy Kid or Tom Gates)
- Young fiction with two tone illustrations (e.g. Reeve & McIntyre's Pugs of the Frozen North)
- YA fiction

Eligible titles for Children's Non-fiction

- Black and white non-fiction
- Non-fiction with occasional black and white illustrations
- Non-fiction with doodle-style illustrations
- Young non-fiction with two-tone illustrations
- YA non-fiction
- Poetry

Eligible titles for Children's Illustrated

- Board books
- Picture books
- Gift books (e.g Harry Potter illustrated editions; Bedtime Stories for Rebel Girls)
- Graphic Novels
- Illustrated Non-Fiction
- Novelty Books

Eligible titles for the Discover award

- The Discover award is for first publication of titles in print (and e-book) from any genre (including fiction, non-fiction and children's), but specifically for books and authors from marginalised communities, including but not restricted to Black, Asian and minority ethnic, LGBTQ+, disabled, and working-class writers. All publishers can submit to this award, but the intention is to showcase publications from independent publishers, small presses, and/or imprints focused on these sectors. In particular, we are looking for titles that have sold under 20,000 copies through Nielsen's Total Consumer Market, but might benefit from the amplification this award can give.

Eligible titles for Pageturner

- The Pageturner of the Year Award is specifically aimed at fiction titles not otherwise submitted to the Début, Fiction, or Crime & Thriller Awards. The intention is to reward commercially successful fiction titles across all formats, including science-fiction, fantasy and horror titles, romance books, historical fiction, as well as other popular categories of fiction.
- Books must have been published in the UK or Ireland during the calendar year January to December 2023 in any format, including hardback, paperback, and e-book. Books previously shortlisted for the British Book Awards are not eligible for re-submission, except under exceptional circumstances (i.e. the paperback far outsold the hardback). There is no minimum sales criteria, but sales must be substantial in the period from January to

end-December 2023. Entries must show evidence of wide-spread availability in high street stores, mixed- multiple outlets and/or supermarkets, or through online stores. Books exclusive to one particular retailer are not eligible.

General guidance

- Not all titles fit easily into our designated categories; the chair of the judges will make a final decision on placement
- Books need to be published in the UK or Ireland in first format (except for Pageturner) during the calendar year January to December 2023
- In the case of digital-first books, subsequent print publication will also need to have taken place during January to December 2023 in order to show widespread availability across formats
- Entries must show evidence of availability in high street stores, mixed-multiple outlets and/or supermarkets, as well as through online stores
- The Pageturner award allows e-books to be submitted, providing there is a print-on-demand option also made available
- The award is open to English-language (only) books. This includes books in translation as long as the translation has been published during the year

Terms and conditions

- On shortlisting a further five copies of shortlisted books must be supplied for judging and publicity purposes. Books are non-returnable
- Publishers of shortlisted books agree to make a contribution of £1,550 towards the general promotion of winning and shortlisted books and usage of official awards shortlisted and winning branding. There is no further cost for the overall winner of the Book of the Year
- For shortlisted publishers with fewer than 10 employees the contribution will be reduced to zero.
- Publishers wishing to limit the number of titles shortlisted should contact the organisers in advance. Publishers will be notified in advance of the shortlist's publication
- Barring unforeseen circumstances, our intention is to host the awards in-person on 13th May 2024. We want to celebrate the breadth and variety of the British book trade and the presence of shortlisted authors and illustrators is fundamental to this, therefore publishers submitting for Books of the Year should use their best endeavours to ensure that authors are able to attend The British Book Awards in whatever format the event takes this year. The submitting publisher will be expected to meet the cost of attendance at The British Book Awards. In the situation that the in-person event cannot take place, publishers must make sure authors are available to take part in a virtual event
- Publishers and authors agree to make themselves available for promotional activity around The British Book Awards including cooperating with the media at key points such as announcements of shortlisted and winning books
- Where reasonable, publishers agree to encourage authors of winning or shortlisted books to make themselves available for pre or post-Awards appearances e.g. video or print interviews, podcasts, vox pops and events (ie Nibbies Salon)
- Shortlisted and winning publishers agree to use their best endeavour to use official British Book Awards artwork

on future reprints, digital editions, social media and their own websites in order to assist in the promotion of additional sales