



SELF-PUBLISHED BOOK AWARDS

EARLY- BIRD DEADLINE
April 3, 2023

An illustration of a desk setup. On the left is a potted plant with blue and green leaves. Next to it is a stack of books in various colors (blue, orange, green, red). In front of the books is a laptop displaying a landscape image. To the right of the laptop is another stack of books. In the foreground, there is a cup of coffee with a polka-dot pattern on a saucer, and an open book lies flat on the desk surface.

2023 COMPETITION PROSPECTUS



Whether you're a professional writer, a part-time freelancer or a self-starting student, here's your chance to enter the premier self-published competition exclusively for self-published books. Writer's Digest hosts the 31st annual self-published competition—the Annual Self-Published Book Awards. This self-published competition spotlights today's self-published works and honors self-published authors.

EARLY-BIRD DEADLINE: 4/3/2023

ENTER NOW! Writer's Digest's Self-Published Book Awards is currently accepting submissions. This is the only Writer's Digest competition exclusively for self-published books.

THE PRIZES

ONE GRAND PRIZE WINNER WILL RECEIVE:

- **NEW!** \$10,000 in cash
- An interview with them in *Writer's Digest* (March/April 2024 issue) and on WritersDigest.com
- A paid trip to the Writer's Digest Annual Conference, including a trophy presentation at the keynote
- A coveted Pitch Slam slot at the Writer's Digest Conference where the winner will receive one on one attention from editors or agents
- Publication of an excerpt from their winning book on WritersDigest.com

One First Prize winner in each category will receive:

- \$1,000 in cash
- Their name and the winning book's title published in *Writer's Digest* (March/April 2024 issue) and on WritersDigest.com

All Grand Prize and First Prize winners will receive:

- A one-year subscription (new or renewal) to *Writer's Digest* magazine
- A one-year subscription to Writer's Digest Tutorials
- 20% discount off of purchases made at Writer's Digest University
- A special graphic recognizing their winning status

Honorable Mention recipients will receive promotion on www.writersdigest.com and a special graphic for use in promoting your selection.

All entrants will receive a brief commentary from one of the judges.

THE PARTICULARS

Everything you'll need to know has been assembled in an easy-to-follow PDF. Inside you will find:

- PRIZES
- DEADLINES, PRICING AND NOTIFICATION
- RULES AND GUIDELINES
- PREPARING YOUR ENTRY
- HOW TO ENTER
- FAQ's
- COMPETITION SEASON PLANNER



WD's writing competitions recognize writing excellence on a global scale. See below for pricing and deadline information. All entry fees are due in U.S. Dollars. Entry fees can be paid by credit card/debit card (MC, V, AMEX & DISC) or PayPal.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

Early-Bird Deadline*: April 3, 2023

First entry—\$100

Each additional** entry—\$85

Regular Deadline*: May 1, 2023

First entry—\$125

Each additional** entry—\$110

**All deadlines are at 11:59 PM EST, on the specified date.*

***Additional entry discounts only apply after submitting and checking out your first entry. All deadlines are at 11:59 PM EST, on the specified date. All payments must be submitted at the time of entry.*

Top Award Winners will be notified by before October 16, 2023. The top winners will be listed in the March/April 2024 issue of *Writer's Digest*. All winners' names will be listed on www.writersdigest.com after the March/April issue is published. Commentaries will be sent to entrants by December 11, 2023.



RULES AND GUIDELINES

- The competition is open to all English-language self-published books for which the authors have paid the full cost of publication, or the cost of printing has been paid for by a grant or as part of a prize.
- Entrants must send a printed and bound book*. No handwritten books are accepted. It is preferred that you include a copy of your submission form with your book. If your book is shipping direct from the publisher however, we understand that it may not be possible. Please do not email forms separately as they cannot be matched with your package.
- All books published or revised and reprinted between 2018 and 2023 are eligible. (Writer's Digest may demand proof of eligibility of semifinalists.)
- Entries will be evaluated on content, writing quality and overall quality of production and appearance. Judges' commentaries are final. A judge's commentary is based on their opinion and experience in the entered category. Their thoughts are not to be a wholesale condemnation or appraisal of the book. Please remember that all commentaries should be taken with this understanding.
- You may enter more than one book and/or more than one category; however, you must include a separate book, entry form and the additional fee for each entry.
- Judges reserve the right to re-categorize entries.
- Payment of entry fees must be received before a title is forwarded to the judging panel.
- Refunds are not provided for disqualified, withdrawn or non-winning entries.
- The following are not permitted to enter the contest, neither under their legal names nor pen names: employees of Active Interest Media and their immediate family members; Writer's Digest Books authors; Writer's Digest contributing editors and columnists; and Writer's Digest instructors for online courses and live webinars. Grand Prize Winners from the previous three years are not eligible. Ineligible entries will be disqualified. Books that have previously won awards from Writer's Digest are not eligible.
- If the Grand Prize Winner accepts the Writer's Digest Conference portion of their prize they must agree to travel (flying round-trip from the same city) during the conference dates in 2024. This prize includes airfare, hotel and conference registration.
- Winners must provide an appropriate tax form (W9 or W8BEN) in order to receive their cash awards. If the forms are not received within 60 days of the request date, cash awards may be forfeited.
- Writer's Digest is not responsible for the loss, damage or return of any books submitted to the competition.
- Due to U.S. Government restrictions, we are unable to accept entries from Syria, Iran, North Korea, or Crimea.
- Entrants must send a printed and bound book. PDF's, galley proofs, ARCs, etc. are not accepted. E-book versions should be submitted into the Writer's Digest E-book Awards; you may enter the same book in both competitions.
- All books not registered online must be accompanied by an Official Entry Form. Be sure that the submitter name on the official entry form is the same as the author's name (as published).
- Books should be postmarked within 5 business days of the posted entry deadline at the time of submission and should arrive within 5 days of the postmark date.
- Delivery confirmations must be tracked by the author; we are not able to confirm deliveries (this includes entries being shipped on behalf of the author).
- If you are having your book shipped on your behalf, submit your entry form & payment online. Be certain that the book is shipped to the complete & exact address as is listed on the entry form; we also recommend that you request tracking information as we are not able to confirm delivery of packages.
- Mailed in entries can take up to 60 days (after the entry deadline) to process.



PREPARING YOUR ENTRY

Important & Helpful Information Prior to Entering

Have your necessary information available when you are ready to submit your entry.

- All entries must be submitted online through Submittable. If you already have a Submittable account, simply log in!
- Please be sure that the email address that you provide will be valid throughout the competition span. Competition related updates and winner notifications are sent via email. Please type carefully, and list only one valid email address. Check your spelling carefully including all login information, email addresses etc. Incorrect email addresses may result in the transmission of important information being delayed and/or unsuccessful. Be sure that our email addresses (both Writer's Digest and Submittable) are not blocked, or you may not receive critical information, receipts, confirmations etc. Check your SPAM folder for any expected but unaccounted for email communications.
- Once an entry has been submitted, no edits, replacements or exchanges will be accepted. If you wish to submit an edited or revised version of a previously submitted entry, you may enter it as a new submission (you may wish to edit the title slightly as well so that you can differentiate them).
- The submitter is who we will refer to as the author, and who we will contact with any questions, updates etc. If the submitter and the author are not the same, please indicate accordingly in parenthesis, on the submitter name line. If you write under a pen name, please indicate.
- Check your spelling carefully including all login information, email addresses etc. Incorrect email addresses may result in transmission of important information being delayed and/or unsuccessful.
- Be sure that neither Writer's Digest or Submittable email addresses are blocked. Blocking either address, including marking either as Spam or Junk, will prohibit you from receiving competition related updates, critical information, receipts, confirmations, etc.
- If you write under a pen name, or if there are multiple authors, please indicate names on PEN NAME line of the submission form.
- Writer's Digest assumes all entries are original and are the works and property of the entrant, with all rights granted therein.
- Writer's Digest is not liable for any copyright infringement on the part of the entrant and will not become involved in copyright disputes.
- Writer's Digest reserves the right to reject work deemed unsuitable for publication or that does not meet all named criteria.
- Winner Notification dates refer to the date that all winners will be notified by.
- Non-Winner Notification: Entrants not selected as winners will not be notified individually; non-winners will be emailed a competition status update in the weeks following the winner notification date. If you enter multiple times, please excuse duplicate emails, as you may receive an email for each separate entry.
- All entries must be submitted online. Only the Self-Published Book Awards accepts physical mail, as physical books are reviewed (see prospectus for details).
- Entry fees may be paid online by credit/debit card (MC, V, AMEX & DISC) or PayPal.
- All deadlines are at 11:59 PM EST, on the specified date. This is the date that all related materials (when applicable) must be shipped by as well. Mailed in entries/materials must deliver within 5 days of the current posted entry deadline, as listed on the website at the time of your submission



ENTERING IS EASY!

Create your free Submittable account by clicking the SUBMIT button. If you already have a Submittable account, simply log in!

NEW You can now compete in multiple WD competitions with a single login! Check back often for an updated list of competitions.

When you are ready to submit your work to the WD Self-Published Book Awards readers, you'll want to have the following information available:

- ✓ Your contact information (be careful that the information provided is accurate). Contact information is to be provided only on the submission form (not on the submission's file upload). Time sensitive information such as credits and contact information (for prize distribution) is taken directly from the submission form. Due to the nature of deadlines, corrections to this information are not guaranteed.
- ✓ Your Printed and Bound Book (see the PREPARING YOUR ENTRY tips for more information).
- ✓ Your method of payment (see the ENTRY PRICING, SUBMISSION DEADLINES AND WINNER NOTIFICATION page for tips for all pricing and deadlines).

Ready to enter?

Copy and paste the following link <https://www.writersdigest.com/writers-digest-competitions/self-published-book-awards> into your browser and follow the 'CLICK HERE TO SUBMIT' button!

We offer a discounted entry fee to those submitting multiple entries. If you'd like to take advantage of the one time offer for multiple entry discounts, click **YES** on the submission for as instructed. Additional entry discounts only apply after submitting and checking out your first (full price) entry.

- Clicking YES entitles you to a discounted entry fee, which is only available when using the linked entry form. We cannot offer refunds for discounts not redeemed through the linked form.
- The linked entry form will open automatically for you in a new tab and should be completed/checked out AFTER you submit/check out your first entry.
- This discount is not available, outside of the online submission form (that includes refunds/partial refunds).



SENDING YOUR BOOK

After completing the online submission form, a copy of your book (one copy per submission) must be mailed to our office. **Entries must deliver within 5 days of the current posted entry deadline, at listed on the website at the time of your submission.**

Preparation notes:

- Complete your online submission in Submittable.
- After submitting the submission and submission fee, download and print a copy of your [submission summary](#) from within your Submittable account, and include it in the package with your book. Please do not include supplementary information with your book. Please do not send the submission summary separate from the book.
- Need help finding your submission summary? Copy/paste the following link into your browser: <https://submittable.help/en/articles/904859-how-can-i-view-a-submission-that-i-ve-made>

Mail a copy of your book to:

Writer's Digest Self-Published Book Awards
[Indicate your submission category here] Category
4667 Malsbary Road
Blue Ash, OH 45242

Shipping notes:

- We ask that you try to ship your book to us within 5 days of submission. As long as your book arrives before the posted deadline at the time of submission, there will not be an issue. We ask that books ship immediately after submissions to ensure that you remember to mail the book (refunds are not provided if you forget), and to allow for the judging team plenty of time for evaluation. (Early-bird submissions for example, should deliver to us preferably within 5 days of submission, but no later than the early-bird deadline. Regular deadline submissions should deliver within 5 days of the final deadline.)
- It is preferred that you include a copy of your [submission summary](#) form with your book. If your book is shipping direct from the publisher however, we understand that it may not be possible. In this case, please do not mail or email form separately, as it cannot be matched with your package in that case.
- We do not accept weekend deliveries.
- Do not select a delivery service that requires a signature required upon receipt of delivery.
- Please remember to mail a copy of your book to our office upon completion of this form. Books should deliver within 5 business days of the current posted entry deadline, as listed on the website at the time of your submission.
- Delivery confirmations must be tracked by the author; we are not able to confirm deliveries (this includes entries being shipped on behalf of the author).
- If you are having your book shipped on your behalf, submit your entry form & payment online. Be certain that the book is shipped to the complete & exact address as is listed on the entry form; we also recommend that you request tracking information as we are not able to confirm delivery of packages.
- *Blue Ash, OH 45242* is a suburb of Cincinnati. On occasion, when creating mailing labels, shippers might identify our zip code '45242' as being in Cincinnati (that is acceptable).



CATEGORY SELECTION

Select the category that best represents your entry. If the judges feel that another category is more appropriate, we will switch the category for you, on your behalf. There are no word count requirements. Novellas, Epic Novels and everything in between are all welcomed!

•**Mainstream Fiction and Literary Fiction:** For the sake of separating them entirely from genre fiction, are combined into their own category. Literary fiction is generally more concerned with style and characterization and may be paced more slowly than commercial fiction. It usually centers on a timeless, complex theme. Mainstream fiction is usually faster paced, with a stronger plot line (and more events and/or higher stakes). Characterization may not be as central to the story and the theme may be more obvious than literary fiction. The category of both of these two indicates that the book would generally appeal to a larger audience and isn't confined by the rules and structure you might see in a typical genre.

•**Genre Fiction:** Includes all sub-genres such as Romance, Horror, Science Fiction, Humor, etc.

•**Nonfiction/Reference:** All sub-genres of Nonfiction and/or Reference (Cookbooks, Guidebooks, Textbooks, How-To etc.)

•**Inspirational/Self-Help:** Spiritual, New Age etc.

•**Memoirs/Life Stories:** Biographies, Autobiographies, Family Histories etc.

•**Early Readers/Children's Picture Books:** Stories told through a combination of text and pictures, generally written for children.

•**Middle Grade/Young Adult:** Stories written for a young audience but not told through a combination of text and pictures.

•**Poetry Collections:** All styles



ANSWERS TO FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS...

For all Writer's Digest Competition related questions and queries, please contact the WD Competitions coordinator Nicole Howard at: writersdigestselfpublishingcompetition@aimmedia.com

Having troubles logging in? For help, go to: <https://submittable.help/en/articles/923459-how-do-i-sign-in-to-my-submittable-account>

Are there any restrictions as to the number of submissions, restrictions regarding content, language, subject matter etc.? No, we do not have any restrictions or preferences. One entry [book] per submission. We do not have any word count requirements for either versions of the WD Self-Published Book/E-book Awards. Novellas, Epic Novels and everything in between are all welcomed!

Do you allow simultaneous submissions? Yes, simultaneous submissions are certainly allowed. Simply inform us of acceptance elsewhere, if applicable.

What if my printed book is not yet published? Entrants must send a printed and bound book. PDF's, galley proofs, ARCs, etc. are not accepted. E-book versions should be submitted into the Writer's Digest E-book Awards; you may enter the same book in both competitions.

Are pen names allowed? You may enter under a pen name. Include your pen name on all forms as you would wish for them to appear in any credits. If there are multiple authors, please list the additional authors on the line for pen names. Please be advised (and advise us of it if you are notified as a winner) that we only need your legal name if you are chosen as a winner (in order to issue prizes).

What if I wanted to submit a series of books into the competition? We cannot guarantee that multiple titles as part of a collection or series will be assigned to the same judge, however we will do our best to try. Please rubber band books in a series together and include a brief note asking that the books to be kept together and assigned to the same judge *IF POSSIBLE*.

What if I would like to edit or exchange an entry that I have already submitted? Edits must be done prior to submitting & checking out an entry. Once an entry has been submitted, we do not accept edits, replacements or exchanges. If you wish to re-enter an edited piece, it is certainly acceptable & common practice. These entries are considered new entries.

Can I submit an anthology?

We do not have any rule prohibiting anthologies from being submitted. Please keep in mind however that a commentary will not be provided for each individual story within the book; is really designed and intended for a single story.

Is there an age limit for entrants? All contest entrants must be aged 18 years or older or over the age of majority in the jurisdiction in which they reside.

How do I submit my entry fees? All entry fees are due in U.S. Dollars. Entry fees can be paid online by credit card/debit card (MC, V, AMEX & DISC) or PayPal.

Can I have my book shipped on my behalf? After submitting an entry/payment online, it is acceptable to have books mailed direct from the publisher in order to speed things up. There is no need to send (or email) the online submission forms or payment receipts (as long as all paperwork and fees have been submitted online ahead of the book being mailed).

What if my book doesn't deliver within 5 business days of the current posted entry deadline? We ask that books be postmarked within 5 business days of the posted entry deadline at the time of submission and should arrive within 5 days of the postmark date. As long as your book arrives by the posted deadline at the time of submission, there will not be an issue. We ask that books ship immediately after submissions to ensure that you remember to mail the book (as refunds are not provided if you forget), this also allows for the judging team plenty of time for processing and evaluation. (Early-bird submissions for example, should deliver to us preferably within 5 days of submission, but no later than the early-bird deadline. Regular deadline submissions should deliver within 5 days of the final deadline.)

How will I know if you received my book? Because we cannot track deliveries, as stated in our guidelines, you will need to track the delivery on your end if you wish to receive shipment confirmation.

Once the competition is over, will you return my entry? Entries are not returned; books are donated after judging is complete.



The Writer's Digest collection of competitions, all which are held on a yearly basis, have long-standing respect within the writing community. Over ninety years ago, Writer's Digest launched its first writing competition. Today, Writer's Digest holds six competitions, with a combined twenty-eight categories. Honoring writers across a variety of genres and formats including short pieces (fiction and non-fiction), poetry, performance scripts, articles (print or online) and self-published books, Writer's Digest has a competition to highlight your work. Winners are eligible for cash prizes, free trips to our ever-popular Writer's Digest Annual Writing Conference, promotion in our print magazine and website, and more. We hope that you'll join us and share your work in any (better yet--all) of the competitions! Sharpen your pencils, sync your devices, and mark your calendars!

WD ANNUAL WRITING COMPETITION

Early-Bird Deadline: May 5, 2023

- Poetry entry—\$20 for the first entry; \$15 for each additional* poetry entry.
- Manuscript entry—\$30 for the first entry; \$25 for each additional* manuscript entry.

Regular Deadline: June 5, 2023

- Poetry entry—\$25 for the first entry; \$20 for each additional* poetry entry.
- Manuscript entry—\$35 for the first entry; \$30 for each additional* manuscript entry.

WD POETRY AWARDS

Early-Bird Deadline: 10/2/23

- First entry—\$20
- Each additional* entry—\$15

Regular Deadline: 11/1/23

- First entry—\$25
- Each additional* entry—\$20

WD SELF-PUBLISHED BOOK AWARDS

Early-Bird Deadline: 4/3/23

- First entry—\$100
- Each additional* entry—\$85

Regular Deadline: 5/1/23

- First entry—\$125
- Each additional* entry—\$110

NEW! WD PERSONAL ESSAY AWARDS

Early-Bird Deadline: September 1, 2023

- All entries—\$25

Regular Deadline: October 2, 2023

All entries—\$30

WD SHORT SHORT STORY COMPETITION

Early-Bird Deadline: November 15, 2022

- All entries—\$25

Regular Deadline: December 15, 2022

- All entries—\$30

Extended deadline: January 16th, 2023

All entries—\$30

WD SELF-PUBLISHED E-BOOK AWARDS

Early-Bird Deadline: 8/15/23

- First entry—\$99
- Each additional* entry—\$85

Deadline: 9/15/23

- First entry—\$125
- Each additional* entry—\$110

**Additional entry discounts only apply after submitting and checking out your first entry. All deadlines are at 11:59 PM EST, on the specified date. All payments must be submitted at the time of entry.*