

INDIE BOOK AWARDS 2026

For the best Australian books of 2025



About the awards

Since 2008, the Indie Book Awards have celebrated the best Australian writing, nominated and selected by Australian independent booksellers. While shining a light on the finest Australian literature, the awards also recognise the crucial role independent booksellers play in promoting and nurturing local literary talent.

Booksellers nominate across six categories – Fiction, Non-fiction, Debut Fiction, Illustrated Non-Fiction, Children's, and Young Adult – as well as vote for the overall 'Book of the Year'.

The Awards allow Australian independent booksellers to showcase their unique strengths, supporting Australian authors and publishing, promoting diverse voices and providing informed recommendations and advice to their customers.

The Awards provide local publishers with significant sales and publicity potential for titles that are longlisted, shortlisted, for titles named category winners and for the title named overall Indie 'Book of the Year'.

Leading Edge Books is proud to coordinate the administration and promotion of the Indie Book Awards.

2026 Guidelines

Nomination & Judging Process

1. Australian independent booksellers are invited to nominate their bookshop's favourite titles from 2025 (a maximum of 4 titles per category) in the following **categories: Fiction, Non-Fiction, Debut Fiction, Illustrated Non-Fiction, Children's and Young Adult**
2. One nomination submission per independent bookshop will be accepted. No submissions from online-only or franchisee stores will be accepted.
3. A **Longlist** of 60 titles will be announced on 9th December 2025.
4. A **Shortlist** of 24 titles (4 titles per category) will be announced on 14th January 2026.
5. The Judging panels, each consisting of 4 independent booksellers, members of Leading Edge Books, and 1 Leading Edge Books Support Office staff member will read all shortlisted titles and choose what they consider the highest quality title in each category.
6. A **Category Winner** will be chosen in each category based on judges' rankings.
7. All participating Australian independent bookstores, those taking part in the award nomination process, will be invited to vote for a single book from the 6 category winners as their choice of the overall **Book of the Year** 2026.
8. The **winners of each category and the overall Book of the Year** will be officially announced on 23rd March 2026.

Eligibility

1. To be eligible, books submitted for the Awards should be published between 1 January 2025 and 31 December 2025 and be entirely authored and illustrated by current Australian citizens or permanent residents.

2. Only original editions published within the 2025 calendar year will be considered.
3. Eligibility for the Debut Fiction category is limited to authors who have no previous fiction works published in Australia.
4. Poetry, short story collections and novellas are eligible for nomination.
5. Books can be co-authored or co-created, but all creators, authors and illustrators must be current Australian citizens or permanent residents. Edited collections are not eligible.
6. All works must be in English and have been published in printed book form. Bilingual editions where one of the languages is English are also eligible.
7. All entries must consist entirely of the author/s original work.
8. The majority decision of the judges and Leading Edge Books/its nominee on the interpretation of all Awards rules and conditions shall be final and legally binding and no correspondence will be entered into.
9. Publishers of the 24 shortlisted titles will be expected to contribute \$300 ex GST per title towards the cost of production and distribution of the Shortlist POS.
10. Category-winning publishers will be expected to contribute an additional \$550 ex GST per title towards the costs of production and distribution of category winners & overall winner POS.
11. Publishers will be asked to make publicity resources available to Leading Edge, and our designated publicist for the specific purpose of promoting their shortlisted and winning author/s.
12. Authors will be made available for interviews and events where possible.
13. Publishers will be expected to provide 6 printed copies of each shortlisted title for judging purposes and promotion.

Important Information for Authors and Publishers

Promotion & Publicity

Point of Sale and Display materials will be produced and distributed by Leading Edge Books to all participating Australian independent booksellers along with digital assets to share via Social Media.

- **Shortlist POS** - each participating store to receive Shortlist posters.
- **Category winners** and the **Indie Book Awards 'Book of the Year 2026' winner POS** - each participating store to receive a POS kit containing: poster, bookmarks, stickers, shelf talkers and counter cards.

A dedicated multi-stage Indie Book Awards publicity and PR campaign will be run by a freelance publicist, ensuring wider media reach and maximum opportunities for the promotion of longlisted, shortlisted, and winning books.

- **National press releases** for the announcement of Awards Longlist, Shortlist, Category Winners and overall Indie Book Awards 'Book of the Year' winner.
- **Local press release** drafted for stores to target their local communities and customers.
- **Social media campaign** to promote longlisted, shortlisted, category-winning titles and Book of the Year.

Sponsorship Opportunities

The Indie Book Awards provide publishers, industry bodies, cultural institutions and corporations with an opportunity to be associated with a highly positive industry event – awards that recognise and celebrate the

role of independent booksellers, contribute to the positive growth of Australian publishing and increase sales of locally published titles.

The following sponsorship options are available for the 2026 Indie Book Awards campaign:

- OVERALL INDIE BOOK AWARDS 2026 SPONSOR - \$2000 ex GST (x1), including \$1500 prize money to the Book of the Year winner
- INDIE BOOK AWARDS 2026 CATEGORY SPONSOR - \$1200 ex GST (x6), including \$1000 each prize money to a category winner
- INDIE BOOK AWARDS 2026 PARTNER - \$500 ex GST (multiple)
- INDIE BOOK AWARDS PRINTING PARTNER - acknowledgement on all marketing, media and website
- INDIE BOOK AWARDS MEDIA PARTNER - acknowledgement on all marketing, media and website
- IN-KIND SUPPORT – acknowledgment on Awards website www.indiebookawards.com.au

Partnering with the Indie Book Awards will give your brand exposure in multiple ways:

- Association with a highly positive industry initiative celebrating Australian writing and the role Australian independent booksellers play in its promotion and growth.
- Logo placement, company profile and acknowledgement on the dedicated Indie Book Awards website: www.indiebookawards.com.au
- Logo placement on bespoke Awards marketing collateral and store POS for Shortlist and Winner announcements.
- Acknowledgment throughout the campaign, official press releases and dedicated social media campaign
- Company logo placement on Awards trophy
- Digital Marketing package from Leading Edge Books valued at \$200 ex GST

In addition to the above 2026 sponsorship options, we seek a partner to secure the future of the Awards by providing **an annual grant** towards prize money and covering the costs of running the Awards. Please get in touch if interested in exploring this option.

Indie Book Awards 2026 – Key Dates

Bookstore nominations open: 1st November 2025
Bookstore nominations close: 30th November 2025
Longlist announcement: 9th December 2025
Shortlist announcement: 14th January 2026
Winner's announcement: 23rd March 2026

Award Enquiries

To find out more about the Indie Book Awards, please visit: www.indiebookawards.com.au

For enquiries and sponsorship opportunities please contact:

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