

The Children's Book Council of Australia Book of the Year Awards Policy (2025)

January 2025

Policy Name:	The CBCA Book of the Year Awards
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Summary of Policy:	This policy contains The Children's Book Council of Australia guidelines for implementing the Book of the Year Awards.
Enquiries:	All enquiries regarding the policy, award guidelines, and Book of the Year entries should be directed to the CBCA Awards Administrator at awards@cbca.org.au
Opening date:	1 February
Closing date and time:	1 November 11:59 PM (AEST)

Persons Affected:

CBCA Staff

CBCA National Board Members and Convenors
CBCA State and Territory Branch Members to the Board's
Committees and Sub-Committees
CBCA Judges of the Book of the Year Awards

Awards entrants

Publishers and creators of entered works

Supersedes Policy Number:

PL-007-11 dated March 2024

PL-007-10 dated March 2023

PL-007-09 dated April 2020

PL-007-09 dated February 2020

PL-007-08 dated November 2019

PL-007-07 dated August 2019

PL-007-06 dated February 2019

PL-007-06 dated October 2018

PL-007-05 dated 5 March 2018

PL-007-04 dated 8 May 2017

PL-007-03 dated 8 March 2017

PL-007-02 dated 6 March 2016

PL-007-01 dated 26 October 2015

Previously this policy was part of the Awards Handbook, last updated in 2014

Other Relevant Forms:

Awards Procedures and Templates, Judges Forms (job description, application, conflict of interest, deed of agreement), CBCA Book of the Year Awards Entry Form, EOI CBCA Awards Convenor, Category criteria summary table

Approved at the CBCA National Board meeting of: **January 2025**

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1. Policy intent

This policy incorporates all rules and regulations that relate to the CBCA Book of the Year Awards. It includes:

1. the framework for implementing the CBCA Book of the Year Awards
2. the eligibility criteria
3. the judging criteria

It is strongly recommended to read this document before submitting an entry. Any queries regarding this document must be addressed to the CBCA Awards Subcommittee at awards@cbca.org.au

2. Background

Since 1945 the Children's Book Council of Australia (CBCA) has grown from a small Sydney-based group to a national organisation which exerts a profound influence on children's literature. The advocacy role played by the CBCA promotes the literary experience for children and assures the scope and vitality of books for children. The annual CBCA Book of the Year Awards affirm the quality of some of Australia's most creative people and provide a boost to their capacity to devote time to their craft. Throughout the life of the Awards, several valued sponsors assisted with funding the monetary prizes. However, in the financial climate of the 1990s it became increasingly difficult to attract sponsorship.

In its golden anniversary year, the CBCA, at the 1995 Annual General Meeting in Brisbane, adopted a proposal to establish an Awards Foundation (AF). Margaret Hamilton (former National President) and June Smith (former National Vice-President) were appointed managers of the CBCA Awards Foundation and heads of the National CBCA Awards Foundation Committee. This national committee was made up of representatives from all Branches of the CBCA and reported to the National Council. The CBCA Awards Foundation was established to raise money to fund prizes for the Children's Book of the Year Awards in perpetuity. The initial goal of the committee, raising one million dollars, was realised in 2006. The future and independence of the Awards are now secure.

2. Background – 4. Responsibilities and implementation

The prizes for the CBCA Book of the Year Awards are funded from the CBCA Awards Foundation investment earnings. None of the principal is used for any purpose other than investment in order to earn the highest return. The available funds are then distributed amongst recipients of the CBCA Book of the Year Awards.

The CBCA Awards Foundation permanently acknowledges Benefactors (\$20,000 and over) and Major Donors (\$5000 and over).

In 2017, it was agreed that the Crichton Award, previously administered by the Victorian Branch, would be incorporated into the National CBCA Book of the Year Awards. This award was established to recognise and encourage new talent in the field of Australian children's book illustration. It was first awarded in 1988 but since 2019, the award is known as the CBCA Award for New Illustrator.

3. Review

This policy is intended to be reviewed annually by the CBCA Awards Subcommittee with approved amendments endorsed by the CBCA National Board. Annual reviews of the Awards Procedures and templates are undertaken by the CBCA Awards Subcommittee to ensure alignment with the CBCA Book of the Year Awards Policy without the necessity of National Board endorsement.

4. Responsibilities and implementation

The CBCA Awards Subcommittee is responsible for all questions of eligibility, conflicts of interest, interpretations of rules and difficulties experienced by or with judges and award entrants. Their decisions are reported to the CBCA National Board. Any decisions made by the CBCA Awards Subcommittee, in consultation with the CBCA National Board are final and not subject to discussion.

Changes to the Awards structure and Policy, as approved by the CBCA National Board, are implemented in the following year. The CBCA Awards Subcommittee reserves the rights to determine and implement matters that arise during an Awards year and that might not be covered here.

Other CBCA awards, including Branch awards are not included in this policy.

5. Aims and objectives

Established with the first Awards in 1946, the annual CBCA Book of the Year Awards aim to:

- promote quality literature for young Australians,
- support and encourage Australian publishers, writers and illustrators of children's books, and
- celebrate contributions to Australian children's literature.

6. Categories of the CBCA Book of the Year Awards

The CBCA Book of the Year Awards are for books with an implied readership of age 18 and younger. There are 6 categories

1. CBCA Book of the Year: Older Readers

Entries in this category are books intended for young people aged between 13 and 18 years (secondary school level). Readers require a degree of maturity to understand the themes and scope of emotional involvement. Books in this category may be fiction (including hi-lo fiction), drama, illustrated text, poetry or graphic novels.

2. CBCA Book of the Year: Younger Readers

Entries in this category are books published for children in the age range from 7 to 12 years (lower to upper primary school level). Books in the category may be fiction, drama, graphic novels, illustrated text or poetry.

3. CBCA Book of the Year: Early Childhood

Entries in this category are books suitable in content and style for pre and beginning readers for children in the age range 0 to 6 years (pre-school and infant level). Books aim to introduce new concepts and/or vocabulary with particular attention on developing reading skills. This includes works of fiction, poetry, wordless, board and concept books. There is a strong sense of "show, don't tell" throughout the book.

5. Aims and objectives – 6. Categories of the CBCA Book of the Year Awards

4. CBCA Picture Book of the Year

Entries in this category are books of the genre in which the text and illustrations achieve artistic and literary unity, and the story, theme or concept is enhanced and unified through the illustrations. A picture book can be written and illustrated by a sole creator or a collaborative effort between two or more creators. The text and illustrations work cohesively. In the case of wordless picture books, the illustrations alone successfully convey a cohesive story. The illustrations are an integral part of or extend the meaning on the page. Books in this category can be suitable for any audience within the range 0 to 18 years.

5. Eve Pownall Award

Entries in this category are books which introduce or extend information and knowledge on a given topic. Consideration should be given to imaginative presentation and variation of style. This includes works of non-fiction, autobiographies, biographies, and books described as information picture books or fictionalised nonfiction picture books. This category does not include activity books, textbooks or procedural texts. Books in this category may be suitable for any audience within the range 0 to 18 years.

6. CBCA Award for New Illustrator

Illustrators are eligible to enter the CBCA Award for New Illustrator category in their first year of publishing children's books where their illustrations develop a narrative which significantly adds to the appreciation of the work as a whole. More than one entry per illustrator may be made if they have published more than one eligible title in that year. If multiple titles by one illustrator are entered in this category, only one may be chosen for the New Illustrator Shortlist. Prior publication of work-for-hire projects (where the illustrator was paid a flat fee to work to a tightly prescriptive brief) or children's books where the illustrations do not form a significant part of the work (e.g. spot illustrations in a children's novel) would not preclude entry in this category. Publishers may be asked to clarify previous work in some cases. The age range for this category is 0 to 18 years.

7. Eligibility criteria

To be eligible to apply for the Book of the Year Awards, the book being entered must meet all of the requirements outlined in section **7.1. Eligibility criteria for books** and **7.3. Eligibility criteria for creators**.

Entries must be submitted online, be paid in full, and receipt acknowledged for 5 physical copies by the entry closing time and date, to be considered for judging.

The CBCA Awards Subcommittee reserves the right to request entrants' supporting documentation regarding any of the listed requirements.

Decisions by the CBCA Awards Subcommittee regarding eligibility are final and not subject to discussion.

Books and entry fees will not be returned if an entry is deemed ineligible.

The completed list of entries will remain confidential. Branches can apply to the National Office for a full list of entries to be used (exclusively) for research purposes, professional development or to fulfil the mission statement of the CBCA.

7.1. Eligibility criteria for books

Entries in the Book of the Year Awards must meet all of the following criteria:

7.1.1. All entries must be the original work of the creator/s.

- a. Original work may include art collage, provided the creation of the collage itself is the original work of the creator/s.
- b. Original work may include re-tellings of stories, providing the text in the work is original to the creator/s.

7.1.2. Books must be **published** between **1 January and 31 December** of the year of entry (irrespective of *printing* date).

Special note on books published in November and December: Entrants must contact the Awards team at awards@cbca.org.au to advise the submitted entry is not yet published. Entrants must then provide an ePUB or PDF version of the book as a means to “hold” the entry until the physical books are available. However, the physical* copies must arrive at the CBCA National Office no later than **14 November**.

(*Advance or proof copies as a means of *holding* an entry)

If an entrant's book is scheduled for printing between 1 November-31 December and still has a publication date in November or December of the same year, entrants must contact the Awards Subcommittee in order to discuss eligibility. No guarantee is made that these entries will be permitted, and every effort should be made by the entrant to provide the required physical copies by 14 November.

Imprint information: Where the imprint information in an entered book does not clearly indicate the year of publication, or lists copyright year that is not the year of entry, the CBCA Awards Subcommittee may accept a Statutory Declaration as evidence of publication date, stating the following:

1. The book was published in the current year (include year)
2. The book was not available for purchase, or accessible to the Australian public in any format, until the current year

Where a book has a publishing date of the immediate past year, but the book was not available for purchase, or was not accessible to the Australian public until the current year in any format, the CBCA Awards Subcommittee may accept a Statutory Declaration stating the following:

1. The book was published in (include year)
2. However, the book was not available to purchase by the Australian public until the current year (include year)
3. Reason for delay in availability post publication date

7.1.3. Books must have a valid International Standard Book Number (ISBN).

7.1.4. Books must be deposited to the National Library of Australia* and relevant state or territory libraries.

Legal deposit requirements come under the Copyright Act 1968. For more information on Australian publication legal obligations visit

<http://www.nla.gov.au/legal-deposit/what-is-legal-deposit>

7.1.5. Books must be available for purchase by the general public in Australia.

7.1.6. Books must be written in the English language or if bilingual texts, one language must be English.

7.1.7. Books entered must meet at least one of the following criteria to be eligible:

- a. not previously published;
- b. new picture book version of previously published text;
- c. retelling of traditional materials;
- d. anthology, collection or omnibus, of which the greater part of the work has not been published in a single volume, or;
- e. substantially revised edition. (Publishers must provide proof of the extent of the revisions by providing both the original edition and the new work)

7.1.8. Books must be in a printed format, as distinct from digital or audio-visual formats. It is recommended but not mandatory that entrants upload a digital copy of the book to the entry form to assist in the review and judging processes. The digital version will not be judged without physical copies of the book also being available.

7.1.9. Books must have an implied readership of age 18 or under.

7.1.10. Additional details regarding eligibility criteria for books:

7.1.11. any entries with accompanying non-book materials (such as CDs and DVDs, QR Code links to other materials, etc.) will be judged solely on the merits of the book component,

7.1.12. any bolstering documents (such as teachers notes, cover letters, letters to judges or staff, etc.), or gifts (such as bookmarks, keychains, photographs, etc.) included with an entry will be discarded,

- a. books written as part of a series or published in serial form will be judged as separate entities which must be able to “stand alone” as a complete work in their own right. Each must have an independent structure and not be reliant on other parts of the series,

7.1.13. books entered as a boxed set with an ISBN for the set will be judged as a whole and attract only one entry fee.

7.2. Non eligible entries

Entries that meet any of the following conditions will be deemed ineligible:

- Books published in a year different to the year of entry, regardless of format
- Textbooks, activity books, colouring books or catalogues

- Manuscripts, or books still or supplied in manuscript form

7.3. Eligibility criteria for creators

The term “creator” includes authors, re-tellers, editors of anthologies and illustrators whose work makes a significant contribution to the book entered.

Note: If the creators of an entry have a prior agreement that one of them will not take credit, or will take a lesser credit (e.g. the spot illustrator of a novel), prior to entry in the Awards Judging rounds, the entrant will discuss with the Awards Subcommittee the scope of their contribution, and confirm/negotiate how the entry will be listed in official announcements and to clarify what accolades the uncredited creator will and won't receive. Uncredited creators must still meet the eligibility criteria.

Publishers do not have to be an Australian registered business, but do need to have satisfied eligibility criteria of the book and all creator criteria.

- 7.3.1. All creators must be Australian citizens or have Australian permanent residency status, regardless of who owns the rights to the work. Books with illustrations by non-Australians are ineligible even if: the illustrations were commissioned by the author (and regardless of how much input the author had on the design); the author owns the rights to the illustrations; the illustrator is not credited in the book or entry form. Likewise, books illustrated but not authored by Australians are ineligible.
- 7.3.2. In the event of a creator being under the age of 18, a parent or guardian must be responsible for the entry and all communications. The parent or guardian will always act on the best interest of the creator.

- 7.3.3. Illustrators are eligible to enter the CBCA Award for New Illustrator category in their first year of publishing children's books where their illustrations develop a narrative which significantly adds to the appreciation of the work as a whole. Prior publication of work-for-hire projects (where the illustrator was paid a flat fee to work to a tightly prescriptive brief) or children's books where the illustrations do not form a significant part of the work (e.g. spot illustrations in a children's novel) would not preclude entry in this category. Potential entrants who have priorly contributed illustrations to a children's book must contact the [Awards Subcommittee](#) to discuss eligibility, and may be asked to provide digital copies of their previous work to prove their eligibility. Failure to supply requested evidence may result in disqualification.

7.4. Acceptance of entry

CBCA Book of the Year Awards entry comprises 3 components:

1. completion of the online entry form,
2. payment of entry fee, and
3. provision of the required number of physical copies of the books.

Entries will not be eligible without fulfilling all 3 components.

Entries must be submitted within the open period. Entries will not be accepted outside of the listed annual dates.

Entries open 1 February

Entries close 1 November

The CBCA reserves the right to change those dates if required.

Entries include only books published from 1 January to 31 December of the same year, with the results to be announced in the following year – i.e. books published in 2025 must be submitted for entry in 2025, and in doing so are entering the 2026 Book of the Year Awards which are announced in 2026.

All entries will be acknowledged and receipted. Receipt is acknowledged with the eligibility check, but entrants may request acknowledgement earlier.

Eligibility of the entry will be confirmed by the Awards Administrator on behalf of the Awards Subcommittee.

An entry deemed eligible may have its eligibility revoked at any time by the Awards Subcommittee if the entry is found to be in violation of any eligibility requirement. The entrant will be notified of any changes to their entry's eligibility status.

The CBCA Awards Subcommittee reserves the right to request supporting documentation in relation to any or all of the eligibility criteria at any time. Supporting documentation might be a Statutory Declaration or other official documents.

Entries deemed ineligible for the Awards will not be returned, nor the entry fee refunded.

Only eligible entries will progress to the judges.

While all reasonable care will be taken, no responsibility will be accepted for the loss or damage of submitted entries prior to their arrival at the CBCA National Office. The entrant will not be obligated to replace books lost or damaged in the care of the CBCA.

An entered book will be judged only in the nominated category against that category's criteria.

If judges or the Awards Subcommittee consider that a book has been entered in the wrong category and would qualify more suitably against the criteria in a different category, then the Awards Administrator may contact the entrant on behalf of the Awards Subcommittee to discuss possible reallocation of categories. The CBCA will arrange for the books to be moved to the new panel of judges. However, if difficulties are encountered, the CBCA may require provision of additional 3 copies of the book. If the entrant declines to change category, the book will only be considered against the criteria of the original category entered. (Please read section **7.4.3. Copies of books entered.**)

If an entrant is found attempting to lobby or correspond with a judge with the aim to influence the judging process and results of the Awards, the entry or entries will be automatically deemed ineligible. Similarly, entrants found lobbying inappropriately with the Awards Administrator, Awards Convenor or other CBCA-affiliated persons with aim to influence eligibility decisions may be deemed ineligible.

7.4.1 Entry method

All CBCA Book of the Year Award entries are completed online. Entries can be saved part way through and completed at a later stage. Information collected is used for the eligibility review process, to assist the judging process, for important correspondence, to compile statistics and to help promote books and creators that are successful in achieving recognition in the Notables list (long list), Shortlist, or as the final Honour and Winners of respective categories.

Books that successfully reach the Book of the Year Shortlist automatically enter the Shadow Judging Book of the Year Awards. This is the only means of entry into this parallel annual award. One Shadow Judging Winner will be announced for each Book of the Year category (except the Award for New Illustrator) alongside the CBCA expert judges' choices.

The CBCA Awards Subcommittee reserves the right to make any changes to the online entry form, even mid-season, in order to improve the processes of the Awards. Entrants automatically sign up to the Awards mailing list and Award Force broadcast system. Entrants can opt out of this correspondence at any time.

For further information regarding the storage of personal information please refer to the [CBCA Privacy Policy](#).

7.4.2. Payment of the entry fees

The CBCA reserves the right to review the entry fees annually. The basis of the fees are to cover the administration and promotion costs of the Awards. The listed fees do not include any online credit card or direct debit administration fees applied by the software at time of checkout.

Current fees (including GST):

- **Early-bird Entry Fee \$121 for the period: 1 February to 31 August**
Breakdown \$121 Early-bird Fee*:
 - Administration (staff, facilities, support) \$75
 - Handling (storage, posting) \$22
 - Services (software & IT) \$24
- **General Entry Fee \$199 for the period: 1 September to 1 November**
Breakdown \$199 General Fee:
 - Administration (staff, facilities, support) \$75
 - Handling (storage, posting,) \$100

- Services (software & IT) \$24

*EARLY BIRD ENTRY FEE WITH BOOKS PRINTED FROM 1 SEPTEMBER:

In the scenario where a publisher is expecting to print/receive a title after 31 August but wants to benefit from the Early-bird entry fee, the Awards Subcommittee will accept a PDF version of the book to “secure/hold” the entry until the physical books can be sent. The entry **will not be eligible** until the physical books are received. Entrants must inform the Awards team at awards@cbca.org.au to advise the submitted entry is not published yet and expected delivery date.

Regardless of print date, no further extensions of receipt of physical books will be granted beyond 14 November.

7.4.3. Copies of books entered

A book may be entered in more than one category. Each category entered incurs the entry fee and the requirement of 5 physical copies of the book for the consideration of separate category, and independent expert judging panels.

Where a book is entered in both the Picture Book (PB) category AND the New Illustrator (NI) Award, only 5 copies of the book are required, **in this instance only**. Books that are entered in both categories (PB + NI) will still incur 2 entry fees.

The books should be sent as soon as possible after completing the online entry form and finalising payment. Books should not be sent prior to submission of the entry form or before payment has been finalised. Books must be received at the CBCA National Office no later than November 14.

The CBCA National Office address is:

CBCA Awards Administrator
Children's Book Council of Australia
State Library of Queensland
Level 2, Stanley Place
South Brisbane 4101 QLD

The books will be distributed to the appropriate category judges and the Awards Convenor. Judges are to keep their copies of all entries until the CBCA Book of the Year Awards announcement. After the CBCA Book of the Year Awards announcement, judges may keep or distribute the books as they wish, always without profit or gain.

Shortlist books are distributed by the CBCA National Office for storage and archiving purposes. The remaining copies are given to designated recipients always without profit or gain.

Submitted copies of books, whether deemed eligible or not, shall become property of the CBCA and will not be returned to the entrant.

8. Award judging criteria

The Judges assess entries primarily for:

1. Literary merit – i.e. aesthetic qualities of language, language appropriate to the style of the work, plausible character development (where appropriate), etc.
2. Content and cohesiveness – plot, language, theme, style, etc.
3. Appeal to the implied readership
4. Quality – illustrations, format, production, editing
5. Craft and originality in the treatment of literary elements

See [Appendix 7 Award Force category criteria summary](#) for a table of category criteria summary.

8.1. Judging criteria for CBCA Book of the Year: Older Readers

Entries in this category are books for young people aged 13 to 18 years (secondary school level). Readers require a degree of maturity to appreciate the themes and scope of emotional involvement. Books in this category may be fiction, drama, illustrated text, poetry or graphic novels.

8.2. Judging criteria for CBCA Book of the Year: Younger Readers

Entries in this category are books published for children in the age range from 7 to 12 years (lower to upper primary school level). Books in the category may be fiction, drama, graphic novels, illustrated text or poetry.

8.3. Judging criteria for CBCA Book of the Year: Early Childhood

Entries in this category are books suitable in content and style for pre and beginning readers for children in the age range 0 to 6 years (pre-school and infant level). Books aim to introduce new concepts and vocabulary with particular attention on literacy development. This includes works of fiction, poetry, wordless, board and concept books. The illustrations reflect all the text on the page and often do not add extra meaning to the storyline.

8.4. Judging criteria for CBCA Picture Book of the Year

Entries in this category are books of the genre in which the text and illustrations achieve artistic and literary unity, and the story, theme or concept is enhanced and unified through the illustrations. A picture book can be written and illustrated by a sole creator or a collaborative effort between two or more creators. The text and illustrations work cohesively. The illustrations are an integral part of or extend the meaning on the page. The age range for this category is 0 to 18 years.

8.5. Judging criteria for Eve Pownall Award

Entries in this category are books which introduce or extend awareness and knowledge on a given topic. Consideration should be given to imaginative presentation and variation of style. This includes works of non-fiction, autobiographies, biographies and books described as information picture books or fictionalised nonfiction picture books. This category does not include activity books, text books or procedural texts. The age range for this category is 0 to 18 years.

8.6. Judging criteria for CBCA Award for New Illustrator

Illustrators are eligible to enter the CBCA Award for New Illustrator category in their first year of publishing children's books where their illustrations develop a narrative which significantly adds to the appreciation of the work as a whole. More than one entry per illustrator may be made if they have published more than one eligible title in that year. If multiple titles by one illustrator are entered in this category, only one may be chosen for the New Illustrator Shortlist. If the judges decide to award a New Illustrator Notables list, more than one title by the same illustrator may be on it. Prior publication of work-for-hire projects (where the illustrator was paid a flat fee to work to a tightly prescriptive brief) or children's books where the illustrations do not form a significant part of the work (e.g. spot illustrations in a children's novel) would not preclude entry in this category. Publishers may be asked to clarify previous work in some cases.

9. Judges

9.1 The Judging Panel

The Book of the Year judging panel adheres to the following guidelines:

- The CBCA Book of the Year Judging Panel shall consist of 15 judges.
- Three (3) judges shall comprise the panel for each category of the Awards, with the exception being the Picture Book Judges Panel, which will also judge the New Illustrator category.
- The judging panel comprises literary/visual literacy experts in children's or young adult literature.
- Judging panels are formed through application with merit-based processes applied.
- Consideration will be given to forming an inclusive and diverse judging panel.
- Judges must be a financial personal or institutional member of a CBCA Branch.
- The CBCA offers a tenure of 2 years for judges, with an optional 1-year roll-over term made available on application.
- Judges hold their positions voluntarily and will not expect any kind of remuneration for their tenures.

9.2. Responsibilities and duties of Judges

The Book of the Year judges undertake a variety of tasks and responsibilities that can be grouped into reading and reporting, communication and discussion, and confidentiality.

9.2.1. Reading and reporting requirements

Judges will be required to read **all** books entered in their category during the judging period.

Books will be sent to judges monthly, or more frequently..

Judges will be required to write a brief report, vote on and discuss each book online and/or face-to-face.

On a rotational basis as arranged by the Awards Convenor, judges in each category will submit a first draft critique on selected books.

The Awards Convenor and Co-convenor together with the Awards Subcommittee will be responsible for editing draft critiques for accuracy and criteria components.

Each judge will submit a contribution to the Awards Report meeting the requirements outlined by the Awards Convenor.

Judges will be required to vote on the Award Force platform, allowing decision anonymity in early long and short listing rounds, excluding the Convenor and Awards Administrator who are bound by non-disclosure agreements.

9.2.2. Judges' meetings, panel meetings, presentations and announcements

Judges work with their panel and will be required to participate in regular online meetings as determined by the Awards Convenor to facilitate discussion, reflection and reporting on entries.

Judges commit to:

- attendance at all meetings designated by the Awards Convenor
- participation in the annual Judges' Conference (in-person or online), attended by all judges, to confirm the Shortlist, Honour and Winner books
- work collaboratively with the panel to implement promotional/educational content in relation to the Notable or Shortlist books
- attendance, where possible, at the CBCA Book of the Year Award Announcement, or other such events organised by CBCA Branches
- always aim to create an inclusive culture in which individual differences are embraced and respected
- following the terms outlined in the Judges Deed of Agreement

Where the annual Judge's conference will be an in-person event, the CBCA will cover the costs related to the accommodation, flights and meals for Judges to attend. Attendance at any other events will be at the judges' expense.

9.2.3. Confidentiality and Deed of Agreement

All judges must maintain confidentiality throughout the judging process. All deliberations remain confidential and judges are responsible for destroying personal notes and any and all judging calculations, comments or correspondence that are not part of the official collection of judging correspondence at the close of deliberations.

Notes or comments documented by the judges within the Award Force platform will be kept by the CBCA Awards Subcommittee for training or reference purposes.

Judges are not authorised to provide information regarding the Awards, entries, prize winners, personal or other comments relating to individual books or categories. Any and all requests for information about the Awards should be directed to the Awards Administrator in the first instance.

All reports and/or announcements regarding the Awards are disseminated by the CBCA National Office in collaboration with the Awards Subcommittee and Communications Committee.

Successful applicants will be asked to sign a Deed of Agreement.

See [Appendix 5 Judge Deed of Agreement](#) to view the deed.

9.3. Eligibility for serving as a Judge

Judges are required to meet a number of eligibility requirements.

9.3.1. General requirements

All judges must be a financial member of a Branch of The Children's Book Council of Australia (this can be individual or institutional membership) and will provide evidence of a current Working With Children and Vulnerable People Check (or Police Check) as determined by regulations in their State or Territory.

9.3.2. Conflict of interest and Vested interest

It is important for perceptions of fairness in the Awards that judges have no conflict of interest in the outcome of the Awards during their term of office. Candidates should carefully consider CBCA's Conflict of Interest Policy before seeking nomination and must include with their nomination documents a completed Conflict of Interest Declaration form. If appointed, a judge's obligations to consider and disclose actual and potential conflicts of interest is ongoing.

See [Appendix 3 Judge Application Cover Sheet](#) for a nomination form and [Appendix 4 Conflict of Interest Declaration](#) for the declaration form.

A person with a vested interest in the Awards may not be a judge. For the purposes of these Awards a vested interest is taken to be any financial gain obtained from or other financial association with the actual publication process of a current entry in the Awards.

9.3.3. Associations with an Entry

A judge who has a non-financial association with a current entry (such as mentoring the author or editorial role) or a financial association that is subsequent to the publication of a current entry (such as a paid review, a bookselling position or preparing readers' notes) must declare that association to the other judges and National Board through the Conflict of Interest declaration.

Should the Awards Subcommittee consider a judge's association with a current entry as sufficient to influence a public perception of bias in the judging of the Awards, biases will be directed to the CBCA Board, and smaller conflicts may result in a judge's abstention.

9.4. Appointment of Judges

The appointment of panel judges follows as a process endorsed by the National Board.

9.4.1. General key information

The appointment of panel judges follows the following key information

- The applications opening and closing dates will be made public in the CBCA national website and these might vary year to year. The CBCA will aim to open the applications on 1 September of application year and close on 30 October of the application year.
- The CBCA will aim to announce Judge appointments by 31 January of the following year or the following most convenient date considering the Judge appointments must be endorsed at a CBCA National Board meeting. See [Appendix 3](#) Judge Application Cover Sheet and [Appendix 4](#) Conflict of Interest Declaration for the nomination form and declaration.
- Judging panels are formed through application with merit-based processes applied. Each Branch will receive the applications in their State or Territory and compile a ranked shortlist for each category which the Territory or State Branch returns to the CBCA Awards Committee (applicants that do not make the State/Territory Branch shortlist will be notified by the respective State/Territory branch of the unsuccessful application). Then, the Awards Convenor and Awards Committee will consider the applications and make a final selection. Interviews may or may not be conducted at the discretion of the Award Convenor and Committee.
- The appointment of judges is endorsed at the next National Board meeting following the selection process.

- Consideration will be given to forming an inclusive and diverse judging panel.
- Shortlisted applicants will be notified of their application success or otherwise by the Awards Convenor through the Awards Administrator once the panels have received National Board endorsement.
- Unsuccessful applicants may reapply in subsequent years.
- Upon appointment, the judges will forward to the Awards Administrator a brief biography and a current photograph that may be used by the CBCA National Office for awards marketing purposes, as well as their signed Deed of Agreement.

9.4.2. Selection of Judges

- The following selection requirements are enforced:
- No judge may serve on two panels simultaneously, with the exception of PB and NI panels.
- No judge can concurrently serve on any other Australian children's literature awards.
- The selection process will be according to the following criteria:
 - ☞ Demonstrated knowledge and understanding of the field of children's literature.
 - ☞ Recognised qualifications in the field of children's literature.
 - ☞ Awareness of illustration techniques and media, visual literacy, design, writing styles and editing as they relate to children's literature.
 - ☞ Demonstrated successful experience in using evidence to provide written assessments of children's literature.
 - ☞ Demonstrated commitment to promoting excellence in Australian children's literature.
 - ☞ High level skills in establishing sound, effective and collaborative working relationships.
 - ☞ Highly developed ability to communicate effectively, both orally and in writing.
 - ☞ Demonstrated ability to effectively prioritise and manage competing demands to meet deadlines.

9.4.3. Resignation of a judge during term of office

Should a judge resign after 31 October, no replacement will be chosen, and the remaining judges will use the reports and comments of the resigned judge when making their final considerations.

9. Judges – 10. Notables, Shortlist, Honour and Winner books

If a judge resigns prior to 31 October, where possible, the Awards Subcommittee will select a replacement from previous applications. Should no suitable candidate be available, the Awards Subcommittee will call for applications.

Books already issued to the resigning judge will be returned and access to Awards information terminated.

9.4.4. Discontinuation of a Judge during term of office

Should the CBCA Awards Subcommittee and CBCA National Board agree to discontinue a Judge of their appointment, the reasons should be explained and carefully documented in order to justify the decision. Some examples below:

The CBCA may discontinue a Judge of their appointment if they are found to breach their Deed of Agreement or the judging requirements specified in sections **9.2. Responsibilities and duties of Judges** and **9.3. Eligibility for serving as a Judge** of this document.

The CBCA will consider discontinuing a Judge that does not uphold the reputation of the CBCA.

The CBCA will discontinue a Judge if they are found to be in correspondence with an entrant that aims to influence their decisions or taking personal benefits from an entrant in order to influence the voting decisions.

10. Notables, Shortlist, Honour and Winner books

10.1 Notables

Judges may decide on a Notables list of up to 25 books entered in each category. It is made of the best 25 books entered in each category, as judged by the category judge panel.

Note: There is currently no Notables list for the New Illustrator Award due to the lower number of entries. However, a Notables list of up to 10 books may be awarded at the discretion of the category's judges based on the quality of entries in the given entry year.

10.2 Shortlist

Judges may decide on a Shortlist of up to 6 books in each category. These must be part of the Notables list.

10. Notables, Shortlist, Honour and Winner books – 11. Notification of Awards

10.3 Honour Books

Judges may select up to 2 Honour Books in each category, selected from the category's Shortlist. They have the option of selecting only one or none, if in their opinion, the standard has not been reached. There are no Honour Books in the CBCA Award for New Illustrator.

10.4 Winners

Judges may select one Winner for each category from the category's Shortlist. If, in the opinion of the Judges, none of the entries reach a sufficiently high standard, no award will be made.

11. Notification of Awards

Release of information related to the Notables, Shortlist and Awards is the responsibility of the Awards Subcommittee in conjunction with the National Office and Communications subcommittee.

The Awards presentation and Announcements will be the responsibility of the National Board, in consultation with the Awards Subcommittee. The CBCA Awards Subcommittee reserves the right to change the announcement dates if deemed necessary. Announcement dates will be confirmed in the year of the announcements on the Awards website, the CBCA website and associated social media platforms.

See **14.3. Presentation of material** for details.

11.1. Notables

The Notables list of Australian Children's Books will typically be celebrated by the CBCA on the last Tuesday in February and published on the CBCA website at 7.00 p.m. AEDT that night. The announcement is known as CBCA Night of the Notables.

All Branches holding official functions for this event will be given the list 5 working days prior to the announcement under strict embargo.

Recipients who have elected to receive a digital certificate from the Awards Subcommittee will be sent their certificates after the official announcement. Branches holding in-person celebration events can apply to the Awards Administrator for physical copies to present to attending recipients.

10. Notables, Shortlist, Honour and Winner books – 11. Notification of Awards

Early notification to creators is not permitted. However, publishers can be notified as early as the Notables are decided to ensure copies of their titles are available in bookshops and libraries at the time of the announcement.

11.2. Shortlist

The Shortlist will typically be released on the CBCA national website 12.00 noon AEDT. on the last Tuesday in March.

All Branches holding official functions for this event will be given the list 5 working days prior to the announcement under strict embargo.

The list of Shortlisted recipients will be provided under embargo to the media consultant and CBCA Communications subcommittee between 4 and 6 weeks prior to the announcement to enable adequate time for printing and media notice.

Early notification to creators is not permitted. However, publishers can be notified as early as the Shortlist is decided to ensure copies of their titles are available in bookshops and libraries at the time of the announcement.

Recipients will receive an online congratulatory letter from the Board Chair after the official announcement. Recipients and publishers may also be requested to provide information and content for publicity purposes for the CBCA Book of the Year Awards Announcement, the BRAVO! campaign and Shadow Judging project. Recipients who have elected to receive a digital or physical certificate will receive their certificate from the Awards Subcommittee.

11.3. Winner and Honour

The Winner and Honour recipients, as well as the Shadow Judging Winners, will typically be announced on the third Friday in August at 12:00 noon AEST., published on the CBCA website and socials.

All Branches will be given the list 5 weeks prior to the announcement under strict embargo.

The embargoed Winner and Honour list is released to the media consultant and the Communications subcommittee 6 weeks before the official announcement.

11. Notification of Awards

6 weeks prior to the announcement, recipients of Awards and Honour Books and their publishers will receive an online letter of congratulation signed by the Board Chair. Winner and Honour creators and their publishers may be notified earlier than 6 weeks to the announcement where filming of the annual announcement requires scheduling earlier than the 6 weeks' notice period.

Where possible, certificates and medallions will be sent via post to the awardees 2-3 business days before the announcement. Where the announcement is an in-person event, certificates and medals may be distributed to attending recipients or their representatives at the event. Monetary prizes will be deposited into the bank account of the recipient on the day of the announcement or as close to as possible. It is the responsibility of the recipient or their representative to ensure that the Awards Foundation is provided with accurate banking details, and that the Awards Administrator is provided with a current postal address. The Awards Subcommittee take no responsibility for physical or monetary prizes incorrectly mailed or dispatched.

12. Prizes

Notable listed creators will receive the right to have a CBCA Notable stamp physically applied to the winning title and digitally applied on payment of licence by their publisher. They are also entitled to receive a digital certificate.

From the 2026 Awards Year, the CBCA is introducing a new policy to reduce administrative costs for publishers. Upon entry, you agree to be invoiced \$100 for a lifetime digital license if your entry proceeds to the Notable Books long list. You have the option of accepting this license upon payment of the invoice.

Shortlisted creators will receive the right to have a CBCA Shortlist stamp physically applied to the winning title and digitally applied on application of licence by their publisher. They are also entitled to receive a digital or physical certificate.

Honour listed creators will receive the right to have a CBCA Honour stamp physically applied to the winning title and digitally applied on application of licence by their publisher. Honour creators also receive a monetary prize, and are entitled to receive a digital or physical certificate.

Winning creators will receive the right to have a CBCA Winner stamp physically applied to the winning title and digitally applied on application of licence by their publisher. Winners will also receive a gold-plated medallion, prize monies, and are entitled to receive a digital or physical certificate.

Shadow Judging winning creators will receive the right to have a CBCA Shadow Judging stamp physically applied to the winning title and digitally applied on application of licence by their publisher. Shadow Judging winners are also entitled to receive a digital or physical certificate.

It is the responsibility of the award entrant to ensure that all contact details of creators are supplied and updated throughout the duration of the awards year. The CBCA Administration team take no responsibility for incorrectly addressed digital and physically mailed prizes, or monies.

Note: Prize money is distributed evenly amongst the creators of a winning title unless an agreed upon alternative has been priorly arranged by the entrant on behalf of all creators. If a creator contests the distribution of prize money, it is up to the entrant and creators to privately negotiate the distribution of prize money. The CBCA Awards Foundation is entitled to proceed with an evenly split payout in the case of a dispute or in the absence of a priorly arranged alternative, and neither the CBCA nor the CBCA Awards Foundation are responsible for any disagreements that may arise surrounding the distribution of prize monies.

12.1. Order of announcement

Awards will be presented in the same order they are listed in.

1. CBCA Book of the Year: Older Readers
2. CBCA Book of the Year: Younger Readers
3. CBCA Book of the Year: Early Childhood
4. CBCA Book of the Year: Picture Book of the Year
5. CBCA Eve Pownall Award
6. CBCA Award for New Illustrator

CBCA Book of the Year: Older Readers

Honour Books are presented first and in alphabetical order by book title. Book title first, then author's name, then illustrator's name (if applicable), and finally the publisher.

The Winner is announced after the Honour/s. Book title first, then author's name, then illustrator's name (if applicable), and finally the publisher.

CBCA Book of the Year: Younger Readers

Honour Books are presented first and in alphabetical order by book title. Book title first, then author's name, then illustrator's name (if applicable), and finally the publisher.

The Winner is announced after the Honour/s. Book title first, then author's name, then illustrator's name (if applicable), and finally the publisher.

CBCA Book of the Year: Early Childhood

Honour Books are presented first and in alphabetical order by book title. Book title first, then author's name, then illustrator's name (if applicable), and finally the publisher.

The Winner is announced after the Honour/s. Book title first, then author's name, then illustrator's name (if applicable), and finally the publisher.

CBCA Picture Book of the Year

Honour Books are presented first and in alphabetical order by book title. Book title first, then illustrator's name, then author's name (if applicable), and finally the publisher.

The Winner is announced after the Honour/s. Book title first, then illustrator's name, then author's name (if applicable), and finally the publisher.

CBCA Eve Pownall Award

Honour Books are presented first and in alphabetical order by book title. Book title first, then author's name, then illustrator's name (if applicable), and finally the publisher.

The Winner is announced after the Honour/s. Book title first, then author's name, then illustrator's name (if applicable), and finally the publisher.

CBCA Award for New Illustrator

No Honour Books are presented in the CBCA Award for New Illustrator. The Winner is presented by book title first, then illustrator's name, then the publisher (note: NO Award is given to the author of the book).

Note: Where the book has more than 2 creators, the order that they are listed in the book shall be referred to.

12.2. Medallions

Medallions are presented to all recipient creators of the Winning titles in each category (with the exception of the Award for New Illustrator which is just the illustrator),

Where possible, medallions will be sent via post 2-3 business days before the announcement of the CBCA Book of the Year Awards or at the live event.

Entrants and publishers are responsible for providing the most up-to-date postal address in order to receive the medallions. The CBCA reserves the right to attempt posting only once. If parcels are returned, the CBCA might choose to not cover the costs of a second posting attempt.

IMPORTANT: If awardees receive the medallions prior to the CBCA Book of the Year Announcement, they are required to keep it under strict embargo until the announcement is made.

12.3. Award certificates

Certificates are created and distributed according to the preferences indicated on the title's entry form, except in the case where certificates may be required for distribution at an in-person event. These preferences may be changed up to two weeks after the winners announcement by contacting the Awards Administrator.

Notable creators and publishers have the option to receive a PDF copy of their certificate via email. Shortlisted, Honour, Winner and Shadow Judging Winner creators and publishers have the option to receive a physical or digital certificate. All certificates will be signed by the National CBCA Chair.

Where possible physical Shortlist certificates will be sent via post within 1 week following the announcement of the CBCA Book of the Year Awards Shortlist.

Where possible physical Honour and Winner certificates will be sent via post 2-3 days before the announcement of the CBCA Book of the Year Awards, or will be presented in person where an in-person announcement event is held.

Where possible Shadow Judging certificates will be distributed in the week following the Winners announcement, or in person where an in-person announcement event is held.

Entrants and publishers are responsible for providing the most up-to-date postal address in order to receive physical certificates. The CBCA reserves the right to attempt posting only once. If parcels are returned, the CBCA might choose to not cover the costs of a second posting attempt.

IMPORTANT: If awardees receive the certificates prior to the CBCA Book of the Year Announcement, they are required to keep it under strict embargo until the announcement is made.

12.4. Monetary prizes

Prize monies are provided by the Children's Book Council of Australia Awards Foundation. Amounts vary annually according to the available funds generated by the Foundation's capital.

The total prize money is distributed equally across each category (excluding the New Illustrator category which is half of that distributed to the Picture Book of the Year amount) and from within each category according to the number of awarded creators. In each category, 60% of the money goes to the Winner and 20% to each Honour Book, except in the case of the New Illustrator where 100% goes to the Winner.

Where a book has more than one creator whose creative contributions have been included in the judges' consideration of the final results, regardless of their listed inclusion on the originating entry form, the money is divided equally between them. An exception may be made in the case that the creators have priorly agreed upon and arranged an alternative distribution. In any case of doubt or contest, the CBCA Awards Foundation reserves the right to proceed with an evenly split payout, and it is the responsibility of the recipients to negotiate the distribution of funds amongst themselves.

Winner and Honour recipients must be able to provide details for a valid Australian Bank Account.

The Awards Administrator will directly apply to the creative or their nominated publisher/agent for Australian bank details of all awardees. This information is shared with the Awards Foundation, who will deposit the monetary award into the nominated bank account.

12.5. Contract to be Featured Artist in CBCA Merchandise

The CBCA will appoint at their discretion, the featured artist for the following commission of artwork for the CBCA annual Children's Book Week feature theme and branded merchandise.

Candidates to be considered will be selected from creators whose illustrations contributed to the works of any of Winner or Honour titles.

Consideration will be given to the artists' suitability to selected theme, availability and capacity to commit.

The chosen artist will be required to sign a contract that states the CBCA has exclusive and open market rights of the use of the commissioned artwork.

13. Publications

All printed and electronic publications for the CBCA Book of the Year Awards must follow the **14.3. Presentation of material** section of this policy.

13.1. Awards Report

The Awards Report is the responsibility of the Awards Subcommittee in collaboration with the National Office. It is produced for the media, publishers and others as a statement of quality Australian Children's Literature. It will include the Shortlist books and critiques.

The report includes:

- appropriate statistics from all entries, creators, publishers,
- report from each panel on entries,
- themes, trends.

The publication must be a professional document, abiding by the CBCA publications standards, for electronic upload.

The full Awards Report is available electronically to media as embargoed information 6 weeks prior to the Awards Announcement.

Electronic copies will be made available on the CBCA website to all other stakeholders after the final Book of the Year Awards Announcement:

- publishers of Shortlisted books,
- judges,
- the CBCA Board,
- the Awards Foundation Committee of Responsible Persons,
- all Branches, and
- the public domain.

13.2. Other organisations endorsed publications

From time to time partnership arrangements with other organisations and companies may be entered into for collaboration of CBCA Book of the Year promotion. Embargoed information may be shared with these organisations with a written contract (non-disclosure agreement) signed by the Chair of CBCA and a senior representative of the other organisations. This information may be issued to accepted partners prior to release of announcements.

See section **14.3. Presentation of material** for further details

14. Awards Administration

14.1. Awards Convenor and Awards Administrator

The Awards Convenor is responsible for managing and convening the awards process and program, and chairing the CBCA Awards Subcommittee. This role may be shared between the Awards Convenor and an Awards Co-Convenor.

The Awards Administrator reports to the Awards Convenor. They are responsible for undertaking entry eligibility checks, acting as contact between entrants and the Awards Subcommittee and providing administrative support to the Awards Convenor as needed.

Any awards related questions should first be directed to the Awards Administrator by email to awards@cbca.org.au.

14.2 Awards funding

The CBCA Book of the Year Awards are one of only a few independently funded annual literature awards. As such, it does not currently receive government funding or direct industry sponsorship. The annual awards are supported by the entry fees, licence and sticker sales. This income helps cover the Awards Administrator, database management, judges' conferences, postage to judges and administrative necessities required by the Awards program to run successfully.

Each year in accordance with the CBCA Finance Policy the Awards Subcommittee will submit a budget for inclusion with the broader CBCA National Budget. All expenses and reimbursements to judges or Award subcommittee members are to be in accordance with the CBCA National Finance Policy.

All funding of the prize money, medallions and certificates is to be made by the CBCA Awards Foundation in accordance with their Deed of Trust and procedures.

14.3. Presentation of material

This section of the policy outlines the presentation and consistent publication of the award brand and the organisation portrayal.

14.3.1. Consistency

Consistency in presentation of publications and stationery should be maintained by adhering to the following.

- The company's name is The Children's Book Council of Australia. The abbreviation is CBCA.
- The Awards are known as the CBCA Book of the Year Awards
- Book Week is registered and is officially known as Children's Book Week ®
- The Notables announcement is officially known as CBCA Night of the Notables
- Key words which should also be consistent:
 - ☞ Shortlist: one word, with a capital for the first letter
 - ☞ Shortlisted: one word, with a capital for the first letter
 - ☞ Notable: first letter capitalised
 - ☞ Winner: first letter capitalised
 - ☞ Honour: first letter capitalised
 - ☞ Awards: when referring to the CBCA Awards – capital for the first letter

Key abbreviations which should also be consistent when mentioning categories:

- **OR:** Older Readers category
- **YR:** Younger Readers category
- **EC:** Early Childhood category
- **PB:** Picture Book of the Year category
- **EP:** Eve Pownall Award category
- **NI:** Award for New Illustrator category

14.3.2. Guidelines for the use of CBCA logo

The logo used by The Children's Book Council of Australia is a registered trademark and as such, official guidelines for use must be adhered to. Prior permission is required, or a formal licence agreement should be entered into with the National Board. Material using the CBCA logo must clearly acknowledge the CBCA. The colour of the logo is Blue PMS 288 C, but it may be printed black or reversed out white on a dark background. Other specifications are

CMYK: C 100, M 67, Y 0, K 23

RGB: 0, 75, 141

Hex: 004b8d

The CBCA uses Dax or sans serif as the preferred fonts for artistic or graphic elements, and Arial as document text.

14.3.3 Acknowledgement of the CBCA Awards Foundation

Every document and publication that relates to the CBCA Book of the Year Awards, be it printed or electronic must include an acknowledgement of benefactors and major donors of the Children's Book Council of Australia Awards Foundation (exclusion is permitted for policy documents).

14.3.4 Appendix use

When using appendices from this document, appropriate page numbering and footers should be added.

15. Appendices

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Appendix 1 Glossary of Terminology

This is a supporting document for use by the judges and further reference of publishers. This contains a common language for judges and publishers.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY Rather than being written by somebody else, an autobiography comes through the person's own pen, in their own words. These usually sit within the Eve Pownall category. First person recounts that are written in the form of an autobiographical novel or bildungsroman, fictional tale or pictorial recounts, but are still based on stories that closely mirror events from the author's real life, would sit within the relevant age category.

BIOGRAPHY A biography is an account or detailed description about the life of a person. It entails basic facts, such as childhood, education, career, relationships, family, and death. It could be in any format—novel, picture book or graphic novel. These usually sit within the Eve Pownall category.

BOARD BOOK is a term used for thick covered and paged books usually for pre-reading age and usually sits within Early Childhood, or Eve Pownall categories (the latter if information related).

CHARACTERISATION The techniques an author uses to create major and minor characters and how they relate to each other either directly or indirectly.

CIP REFERENCE This information will be used to help determine the category in which a book may be placed. It is usually used to determine the extent of the information for the Eve Pownall category.

CONVENTIONS OF WRITING Editing and use of spelling, grammar and punctuation.

DESIGN Quality of construction and production of binding, endpapers, printing, type, font size and style.

EDITING Consideration will be given to professionalism of editing with relation to typographic errors and poor sentence construction.

ENDPAPERS are the pages in a book that consist of a double-size sheet folded, with one half pasted against an inside cover and the other serving as the first free page. Thus, the front endpapers precede the title page and the text, whereas the back endpapers follow the text.

FACTION is a form of writing that treats real people or events as if they were fictional or uses them as an integral part of a fictional account. These usually sit within Younger Readers or Older Readers.

FORM is a type of literature characterised by a specific genre, content and style. There are five main types of forms in literature: poetry, drama, fiction, non-fiction and prose.

GLOSSARY A list of terms in a specialised subject, field, or area of usage, with accompanying definitions. This may be at the back or front of a book, explaining or defining difficult or unusual words and expressions used in the text.

GRAPHIC NOVEL is a term that goes beyond fictional narrative—there are plenty of factual and autobiographical examples (these would sit within Eve Pownall). A fictional graphic novel, for the purpose of judging, should be a narrative told mainly through pictures but with the conventions of a comic book through framing and design.

HISTORICAL FICTION narrates events that take place in the past and are characterised chiefly by an imaginative reconstruction of historical events and personages. These books are placed in Early Childhood, Younger Reader, Picture Book or Older Reader.

ILLUSTRATED TEXT is a term used for books where there is often a large amount of text on the page in relation to the illustration/s. The illustration/s reflects a small amount of the text, but not the entire text on the page. These books sit within the categories Eve Pownall, Older Reader and Younger Reader rather than Early Childhood or Picture Book.

ILLUSTRATIONS The images used within the book considering medium and technique, layout, style and relationship with text.

INDEX An alphabetical list of names, subjects and other information with reference to the pages on which they are mentioned.

LITERARY MERIT A term that describes the literary value in relation to the quality of writing and its suitability for the age of the intended readership.

MOOD Emotional quality or atmosphere of the work.

PLOT Clear indication of the problem and solution in the story, with a detailed description of events in rising action, a climax and final solution.

PROTAGONIST is the central character or leading figure.

READERS A book that has a limited vocabulary and is intended for a specific age group. It does not mean that the book automatically has no literary merit. The book should be judged as would any other in the Early Childhood or Younger Reader category.

SETTING The description of time and place in a story and its effect on the storyline.

STANDALONES/SERIES Books written as part of a series or published in serial form. These will be judged as separate entities and must be able to stand alone as a complete work in their own right. Each must have an independent structure and not be reliant on other parts of the series.

STYLE OF WRITING The choice of words and sentences made by the author to reveal purpose and attitude.

VERSE NOVEL A term for a novel written in verse form, whether free-flowing or structured. This usually sits in Younger Reader or Older Reader but can be Early Childhood if the text is age appropriate.

Appendix 2 Stages of the Judging Process

This is a supporting document for use by the judges as a reference for the process of judging. The full procedures, templates and forms are maintained on the Awards restricted electronic site as well as Microsoft Teams.

7. Packages of books are sent monthly or as deemed appropriate from the National Office
8. The Awards Convenor will notify judges when to expect a package.
9. Initial review of books against criteria (individual judges)
Reading
Commenting on Panel site – this is closed discussion amongst panel judges only under the supervision of the Awards Convenor.
10. Voting
Initial vote of Pass or Archive for Notables list – This needs to be done within 3 weeks of books being dispatched.
11. Panel review of books (Phone/online conference of panel judges – repeated throughout the year)
12. Phone/online conference to discuss books
Repeated throughout the process as each panel gets five or more books requiring further consideration.
 - a. Voting
Determination by the panel (2/3 majority) of books to be listed as Potential Notable.
13. Judge Book Critique
Allocated on rotation for books that are agreed to be Potential Notable.
Critiques need to be positive and address the criteria, taking into consideration all panellists' comments.
There is a 1-week turnaround for writing these critiques.
14. Notable confirmation
15. Final Phone/online conference (by end of December)
Confirm the Notables list from list of Potential Notables.
Confirm all books on Notables list meet criteria for category.
Notables list is then shortened to 10 for further Shortlisting discussions.
16. Determination of Shortlist, Honour and Winner

17. Conference to confirm Shortlist, Honour and Winner

Determination by the panel with consensus to be reached of books to be listed as the Shortlist (maximum 6 books) in presence of all 15 panel judges.

Confirm the Shortlist as selected.

Confirm the Honour and Winner books as selected.

- a. Allocation of books to each judge for in-depth critique of 150 words (2 per judge)
- b. This process is repeated for each panel.

Appendix 3 Judge Application Cover Sheet



2026-27 Book of the Year Judge Application Cover page

Personal Details

Name:

Address:

Email:

Phone: Mobile:

Branch Membership No: Branch:

Working with Children Clearance Certificate/Card approved (copy attached)

Category Preference based on your qualifications and experience (1-Most, 5-Least):

- Book of the Year: Older Readers (OR)
- Book of the Year: Younger Readers (YR)
- Book of the Year: Early Childhood (EC)
- Picture Book of the Year (PB) also CBCA Award for New Illustrator (NI)
- Eve Pownall Award (EP)

Have you been a judge for the CBCA Book of Year Awards? YES / NO Year:

Have you been a judge for any other awards? YES / NO. If yes, please give details.

.....

Appendix 4 Conflict of Interest Declaration



2026-27 Book of the Year Judge Conflict of Interest Declaration

To: National Chair, The Children's Book Council of Australia Board

I declare that as a Judge of The Children's Book Council of Australia:

I have a conflict of interest in the following matter: *(creator, editor or associated with entry in Awards)*

I declare that I have a direct or indirect interest in the following advice or report that is to be considered at the following meeting:

(State the subject of the advice/report and meeting details)

Further, I declare that the type of interest that has given rise to the conflict is either *(place an X in the circle next to the interest/s):*

- A direct interest (See Definitions in Policy Statement)
- An indirect interest due to a close association (e.g. author, illustrator, publisher)
- An indirect interest due to a financial interest (e.g. author, illustrator, publisher)
- An indirect interest because of conflicting duties (e.g. reviewer)
- An indirect interest because of receipt of an applicable gift
- Other: *(Specify Nature of Interest)*

Alternatively, I declare that:

- I have no conflict of interest in relation to my duties but that I will lodge a new declaration in the event that I become aware of the conflict of interest during the course of my duties as a member of the Board or if/when a conflict of interest arises during consideration of Board matters.

Further, I declare that I have no conflict of interest that would breach the provisions of the Board's Code of Conduct.

Name:

Signature: Date:

Appendix 5 Judge Deed of Agreement



2026-27 Book of the Year Judge Deed of Agreement

Deed made the _____ day of _____, 202

Parties

1. The Children's Book Council of Australia Ltd ACN 009 580 956 of Level 2, State Library of Queensland, Stanley Place, South Brisbane in Queensland (CBCA)
2. [Insert judge's name in full] of [insert judge's home address] (Judge)

Recitals

- A. The CBCA owns and administers the Awards.
- B. The CBCA wishes to appoint the Judge, and the Judge wishes to accept appointment, as a judge for the [insert relevant years] Awards subject to the terms of this deed.

Operative Part

1. Definitions

In this deed, unless the context requires otherwise:

Awards means the CBCA's Book of the Year Awards; and

Category/ies means [insert Awards category that the Judge will judge];

IP means all protected rights (present or future) attaching to inventions, patents, designs, trademarks, brand names, logos, copyright, circuit layouts and confidential information created, discovered or coming into existence as a result of, for the purposes of, or in connection with the Appointment, the Awards or this deed (including without limitation all such rights developed by you in acting as a Judge and any such rights in the materials provided by us to you); and

Policy means the "CBCA Book of the Year Awards Policy – Judges" as published on the CBCA's website.

2. Appointment

2.1 The CBCA appoints the Judge as a judge in respect of the Category/ies for the [insert relevant years] Awards, and the Judge accepts this appointment (**Appointment**), subject to the terms of this deed.

2.2 The Appointment is a voluntary role, and the Judge will receive no remuneration or compensation for it or for any work carried out or time spent by the Judge for or in relation to the Appointment and/or the Awards.

3. What the Judge must do

In carrying out their role as a judge, the Judge must:

- (a) comply with all elements of the Policy without any unreasonable delay. If there is any contradiction or dispute between the provisions of the policy and this deed, the contradiction or dispute will be resolved on the basis that the provisions of this deed take precedence;
- (b) comply with the CBCA's conflict of interest policy as published on the CBCA's website from time to time; and
- (c) provide to the CBCA as soon as possible the Judge's biography (comprising about 200 words) and a photograph (in digital form) of them.

4. Intellectual property

4.1 The Judge agrees and acknowledges that all IP will vest in and be owned by the CBCA on creation, and covenants to take all steps necessary to vest the IP in the CBCA.

4.2 The Judge irrevocably agrees and consents to the CBCA in its absolute discretion reproducing, publishing, copying and adapting (with due credit to the primary source):

- (a) the IP (or any part or adaptation of it); and/or
- (b) the Judge's biography and photograph,

in any way the CBCA sees fit in any medium and in any context and with or without other text, data or images.

5. Removal and resignation

- 5.1 The CBCA may in its absolute discretion immediately terminate or suspend the Appointment and/or remove or suspend the Judge as a judge of the [insert relevant year] Awards or of any specific Category or Categories.
- 5.2 The Judge may resign as a judge or in respect of any Category by giving written notice to the CBCA.
- 5.3 On termination of the Appointment or this deed, or the removal/resignation of the Judge as a judge or in respect of any Category:
- (a) the Judge must deliver up to the CBCA all the IP relating to the Appointment or Category as the case may be; and
 - (b) the confidentiality obligations on the Judge mentioned in the Policy and arising through clauses 3(a) and 6.3 of this deed, and the obligations arising through clause 6.2 of this deed, continue in perpetuity and survive the termination or removal/resignation as the case may be.

6. Miscellaneous

6.1 Counterparts

This deed may be executed in any number of counterparts and all of those counterparts taken together constitute one and the same instrument.

6.2 No disparagement

Except when compelled by law or to directors of the CBCA (which, for the avoidance of any doubt, does not include anyone representing CBCA state or territory entities), the Judge must not disparage or denigrate the CBCA, the Awards, any other judge or judges involved in the Awards, or the judging and Awards process or results of the Awards.

6.3 Confidentiality

In addition to complying with the confidentiality obligations in the Policy, the Judge must treat all aspects of the judging and awards process (including without limitation all written and oral communications in any form between judges, and/or Awards Administrators, and/or the CBCA) as confidential. The final Awards Report represents the judges' consensus and the Judge must not express a view contrary to it.

Executed and delivered as a deed.

EXECUTED by **THE CHILDREN'S BOOK COUNCIL OF AUSTRALIA LTD** pursuant to section 127(1) of the Corporations Act 2001 by being signed by:

Signature of Director

Signature of Director/Secretary

Print name in BLOCK LETTERS

Print name in BLOCK LETTERS

EXECUTED by [insert Judge's name in full] in the presence of:)

)

[Judge's name in full and signature]

Witness signature _____

Full name (print) _____

Witness occupation _____

Witness address _____

Appendix 6 Judge Position Description



The CBCA Book of the Year Awards Judge position description

Position Title: CBCA Book of the Year Judge

Period of Employment: From DD/MM/YYYY to DD/MM/YYYY

Context of the Position:

The annual CBCA Book of the Year Awards affirm the quality of the work of some of Australia's most creative people and provide a boost to their capacity to devote time to their craft.

Established with the first awards in 1946, the annual CBCA Book of the Year Awards aim to:

- promote quality literature for young Australians;
- support and encourage a wide range of Australian writers and illustrators of children's books and;
- celebrate contributions to Australian children's literature.

The Children's Book Council of Australia receives hundreds of entries for the Book of the Year Awards. Volunteer judges demonstrate in-depth knowledge and expertise to select the very best of Australian children's literature.

Role Description:

Summary of Key Responsibilities

Requirements

- Read and report on all books entered in each category for which the judge is responsible.
- Work with their panel to be available for teleconferences, online meetings and face-to-face meetings as determined to facilitate discussion, reflection and reporting on entries. During these panel meetings the Notable, Shortlisted, Honour and Winner books will be discussed, recommended and selected.

- Be responsible to the CBCA Board.

Reporting Requirements

- Provide reports and recommendations in line with the requirements as outlined in the CBCA Book of the Year Awards Policy.
- Provide a report on selected Notable and Shortlisted books as required.
- Submit a contribution to the Awards Report.

Specific Requirements

- Attendance at a minimum of one in-person or online meeting, attended by all judges, to confirm the Honour and Winner books, the Shortlist and the Notables.
- Participate in all briefings.
- Work collaboratively with the panel to implement any promotional content in relation to the Notables or Shortlisted books; negotiable attendance at a CBCA Short List announcement event and the CBCA Book of the Year Awards Announcement, or other such events, as deemed appropriate by the CBCA Board or Branches.
- Maintain confidentiality throughout the judging process.

Person Specification

Minimum requirements include:

- No vested interest in the Awards.
- Freedom from conflict of interest or association with a current entry or Awards Subcommittee member.
- Current membership (individual or institution) of a Branch of The Children's Book Council of Australia.
- Current Working With Children Check (or Police Check) as determined by regulations in their State or Territory.

Selection Criteria:

Judges will be selected using the following criteria:

Personal Skills and Abilities

- High level skills in establishing sound, effective and collaborative working relationships.
- Highly developed ability to communicate effectively, both orally and in writing.
- Demonstrated ability to effectively prioritise and manage competing demands to meet deadlines.

Knowledge

- Demonstrated knowledge and understanding of the field of children's literature.
- Recognised qualifications in the field of children's literature.
- Awareness of illustration techniques and media, visual literacy, design, writing styles and editing as they relate to children's literature.

Experience

Demonstrated successful experience in using evidence to provide written assessments of children's literature.

- Demonstrated commitment to promoting excellence in Australian children's literature.

Application:

The length of the written application and CV should not exceed 1,500 words.

The application should include the names and contact details of two referees, a photocopy of a current Working with Children Clearance Certificate/Card and a signed Cover Page and Conflict of Interest Statement.

Applications should be submitted to their affiliate Branch: by 30 October in the year of applications.

Appendix 7 Awards category criteria summary

Judging criteria		Categories					
		Older Readers	Younger Readers	Early Childhood	Picture Book	Eve Pownall	New Illustrator
Literary elements	Language	The aesthetic qualities of the written language where appropriate are evocative of place, character, and mood. The language exhibits breadth and variety of vocabulary and precision. Sentence construction is used in a natural and creative manner appropriate to the work. Where rhythm and rhyme are used it is accomplished and effective.	The aesthetic qualities of the language are appropriate and evocative of place, character, and mood. The language exhibits breadth and variety of vocabulary and precision. Sentence construction is used in a natural and creative manner to reveal purpose and attitude. Where rhythm and rhyme are used it is accomplished and effective.	Language is well crafted and appropriate to the subject matter, themes, and characters. If used, rhythm and rhyme are used effectively.	The aesthetic qualities of the written language where appropriate are evocative of place, character, and mood. The language exhibits breadth and variety of vocabulary and precision. Sentence construction is used in a natural and creative manner appropriate to the work. Where rhythm and rhyme are used it is accomplished and effective.	The aesthetic qualities of the written language where appropriate are evocative of place, character and mood. The language exhibits breadth and variety of vocabulary and precision. Sentence construction is used in a natural and creative manner appropriate to the work. Where rhythm and rhyme are used it is accomplished and effective.	Language is not assessed in this category but is used to initiate the visual interpretation of the story.
	Illustration	Where relevant, design, graphics or illustrations should be integrated and support and extend the narrative or topic. The medium should be appropriate to the subject and style of the work. There is a consistent quality of graphic elements that can provide a stimulating and satisfying visual experience.	Where relevant, design, graphics or illustrations should be integrated and support and extend the narrative or topic. The medium should be appropriate to the subject and style of the work. There is a consistent quality of graphic elements that can provide a stimulating and satisfying visual experience.	The quality of the chosen medium for visuals is high and is appropriate for the subject matter. The artistic style, media and artistic elements of colour, line, shape and texture match the written.	The quality of medium for visuals high. The artistic style, media and artistic elements of colour, line, shape and texture match the written text in its whole (characters, themes and setting). There is a consistent quality of illustration throughout the book. The visual storytelling is original, engaging, and stimulates exploration of sub text within the whole work's narrative.	Illustrations should be integrated and enhance understanding of the topic. Graphics should be high quality, relevant and appealing.	The quality of medium for visuals is high. The artistic style, media and artistic elements of colour, line, shape and texture match the written text in its whole (characters, themes and setting). There is a consistent quality of illustration throughout the book. (Reminder: consider the illustrations only)

Judging criteria		Categories					
		Older Readers	Younger Readers	Early Childhood	Picture Book	Eve Pownall	New Illustrator
Characterisation	There are strong main and minor characters, who interact with each other convincingly. The author creates authentic and engaging characters who advance the narrative through appropriate dialogue and/or action.	There are strong main and minor characters, who interact with each other convincingly. The author creates authentic and engaging characters who advance the narrative through appropriate dialogue and/or action.	Where appropriate, consideration will be given to the main and minor characters. The author creates plausible characters appropriate to the style and/or content of the work. The written character/s and the illustrated character/s work meaningfully together.	There are strong main and/or minor characters. The creators present convincing characters where the voice and illustrative style complement and work meaningfully together. The characters are effectively revealed through the illustrations.	Where appropriate, consideration will be given to the main and minor characters. The characters are related to the topic. The book fully engages the readers who can identify with the characters. Each chosen character is explored appropriately and is relevant and meaningful to the rest of the elements presented.	Where appropriate, there are strong main and/or minor identifiable characters depicted. The illustrator creates convincing characters and represents the written character skilfully. (Reminder: consider the illustrations only)	
	Setting	The setting effectively contributes to the storyline. The sense of place and time is very strong and maintained throughout the story. Where appropriate there is a synergy between text and visual elements in the creation of setting.	The setting effectively contributes to the storyline. The sense of place and time is very strong and maintained throughout the story. Where appropriate there is a synergy between text and visual elements in the creation of setting.	The setting effectively contributes to the storyline. The sense of place and time is very strong and maintained throughout the story. Where appropriate there is a synergy between text and visual elements in the creation of setting.	The setting effectively contributes to the storyline. The sense of place and time is very strong and maintained throughout the story. There is a synergy between text and visual elements in the creation of setting.	Where appropriate, the setting effectively contributes to the storyline. The sense of place and time is very strong and maintained throughout the story. There is a synergy between text and visual elements in the creation of setting.	The visual and artistic elements of the setting and sense of place and time are well realised. (Reminder: consider the illustrations only)
	Plot	The plot is well constructed. The main events are presented effectively and are consistent with the story. The resolution is credible.	The plot is well constructed. The main events are presented effectively and are consistent with the story. The resolution is credible.	Where appropriate, the plot is well constructed using both illustration and text. There is a clear and meaningful sense of direction through the narrative. The main events are presented effectively and are consistent with the story. The resolution is credible.	The main events are presented effectively and are consistent with the story. The illustrations both support and extend the written text.	Where appropriate, the plot is well constructed.	The illustrations both support and extend the written text. (Reminder: consider the illustrations only)

Judging criteria		Categories					
		Older Readers	Younger Readers	Early Childhood	Picture Book	Eve Pownall	New Illustrator
Theme	<p>Ideas and messages are skilfully presented within the narrative and crafted in such a way that they encourage thought, curiosity and/or challenge perspective.</p>	<p>Ideas and messages within the narrative are skilfully presented and crafted. The reader can recognise the themes or develop a fresh perspective</p>	<p>Ideas and messages within the narrative are skilfully presented and crafted appropriate to the target audience.</p>	<p>Ideas and messages within the narrative are skilfully presented and crafted.</p>	<p>Themes create awareness on a given topic and invite further exploration.</p>	<p>The illustrations reflect the themes effectively. (Reminder: consider the illustrations only)</p>	
	<p>The writer and/or illustrator have created an atmosphere/mood that enhances the narrative.</p>	<p>The writer and/or illustrator have created an atmosphere/mood that enhances the narrative.</p>	<p>The writer and/or illustrator have created an atmosphere/mood that enhances the narrative. The illustrator's work and colour palette augment the mood of the book accurately reflecting the text narrative.</p>	<p>The writer and/or illustrator have created an atmosphere/mood that enhances the narrative. The illustrator's work and colour palette augment the mood of the book accurately reflecting the text narrative.</p>	<p>Where appropriate, the writer and/or illustrator have created an atmosphere/mood that enhances the narrative.</p>	<p>The illustrator's work and colour palette augment the mood of the book further enhancing and elevating the text narrative. (Reminder: consider the illustrations only)</p>	
	<p>N/A</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>The information in the book is considered accurate and reliable given the current state of knowledge.</p>	<p>N/A</p>	
	<p>Where applicable, if source material is used, these are accurate to the current state of knowledge and are appropriate in their use of cultural material.</p>	<p>Where applicable, if source material used, these are accurate to the current state of knowledge and are appropriate in their use of cultural material.</p>	<p>Where applicable, if source material is used, these are accurate to the current state of knowledge and are appropriate in their use of cultural material.</p>	<p>Where applicable, if source material is used, these are accurate to the current state of knowledge and are appropriate in their use of cultural material.</p>	<p>The book should include references to source material and consideration given to the peritext or 'back matter' which can include a section on the writer's research or notes and decision making.</p>	<p>Where applicable, if source material is used, these are accurate to the current state of knowledge and are appropriate in their use of cultural material. (Reminder: consider the illustrations only)</p>	

Judging criteria	Categories					
	Older Readers	Younger Readers	Early Childhood	Picture Book	Eve Pownall	New Illustrator
Design elements	<p>The elements of design are cohesive and add to the overall sense of quality and age appropriateness in regard to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Font/text • Colour palette • Paper stock • Format • Consistency of internal design • Cover design is appealing and relevant to the story 	<p>The elements of design are cohesive and add to the overall sense of quality and age appropriateness in regard to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Font/text • Colour palette • Paper stock • Format • Consistency of internal design • Cover design is appealing and relevant to the story 	<p>The elements of design are cohesive and add to the overall sense of quality and age appropriateness in regard to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Font/text • Colour palette • Paper stock • Format • Consistency of internal design • Cover design is appealing and relevant to the story 	<p>The elements of design are cohesive and add to the overall sense of quality and age appropriateness in regard to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Font/text • Colour palette • Paper stock • Format • Consistency of internal design • Cover design is appealing and relevant to the story 	<p>The elements of design are cohesive and add to the overall sense of quality and age appropriateness in regard to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Font/text • Colour palette • Paper stock • Format • Consistency of internal design • Cover design is appealing and relevant to the story 	<p>The elements of design are cohesive and add to the overall sense of quality and age appropriateness in regard to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Font/text • Colour palette • Paper stock • Format • Consistency of internal design • Cover design is appealing and relevant to the story
Age-appropriateness	<p>The story is written in a way that would engage 13–18-year-olds (or a sub-age group within). Mature topics are explored and give the readers the opportunity to be challenged with alternative points of view or perspectives. The writing extends the reader’s experience and may help the reader understand more about themselves and the world.</p>	<p>The story is written in a way that would engage 7–12-year-olds. (or a sub-age group within) Light introduction of mature topics might be explored and may give the readers the opportunity to be challenged. The writing is engaging, stimulating and extends the reader’s experience and/or imagination. It also may help the reader understand more about themselves and the world.</p>	<p>The story is written in a way that would engage 0–6-year-olds. Books may introduce new concepts and vocabulary with particular attention on literacy development. Stories are simple, engaging, and can be enjoyed both independently and through shared oral storytelling.</p>	<p>Genre Award: 0-18-year-olds. The partnership between text and illustration, relevant to the target audience (which may be a sub-set within the category age range), is engaging, stimulating creates a realistic world within which the narrative unfolds offering the reader/s a wholistic experience.</p>	<p>Genre Award: 0-18-year-olds. Presentation of information matches and reflects comprehension levels of the target readers age group (this may be a sub-set within the category age range). Consideration is given to how the reader obtains the information from the page.</p>	<p>Genre Award: 0-18-year-olds. The illustrations are relevant to the target audience. (Reminder: consider the illustrations only)</p>

Judging criteria		Categories					
		Older Readers	Younger Readers	Early Childhood	Picture Book	Eve Pownall	New Illustrator
Production value	Editing	The editing is professional, with conventions of spelling and grammar upheld. Typography is integral and not intrusive. If included, tables, diagrams and graphs are clear.	The editing is professional, with conventions of spelling and grammar upheld. Typography is integral and not intrusive. If included, tables, diagrams and graphs are clear.	The editing is professional, with conventions of spelling and grammar upheld. Typography is integral and not intrusive. If included, tables, diagrams and graphs are clear.	The editing is professional, with conventions of spelling and grammar upheld. Typography is integral and not intrusive. If included, tables, diagrams and graphs are clear.	The editing is professional, with conventions of spelling and grammar upheld. Typography is integral and not intrusive. If included, tables, diagrams and graphs are clear.	N/A