



WOMEN'S PRIZE FOR FICTION 2026

Terms and conditions of entry

KEY DATES AND DEADLINES

JULY

7

Monday 7 July 2025

- **Submissions open.** Entry forms are online at: <https://womensprize.com/submissions-fiction-2026/>

AUGUST

29

DEADLINE: Friday 29 August 2025

- Complete **online entry forms** for submissions in all categories including call-in suggestions.

AUGUST

29

DEADLINE: Friday 29 August 2025

- Supply digital text files and **3 x (three) bound proofs and/or 6 (six) finished copies** of titles published between *1 April 2025 and 30 September 2025*.

OCTOBER

31

DEADLINE: Friday 31 October 2025

- Supply digital text files and **3 x (three) bound proofs and/or 6 (six) finished copies** of titles published between *1 October 2025 and 30 November 2025*.

NOVEMBER

28

DEADLINE: Friday 28 November 2025

- Supply digital text files and **3 x (three) bound proofs and/or 6 (six) finished copies** of titles published between *1 December 2025 and 31 March 2026*.



SUBMISSIONS

Publishers should send bound proofs in the first instance if finished copies are not yet available, but all finished copies should be delivered as soon as possible (before the applicable deadline).



ADDRESS FOR SUBMISSIONS

- Women's Prize for Fiction 2026
Big Yellow Hanger Lane Storage Units
Quill Street, Alperton
London W5 1DN



NEED HELP?

- If you have any queries, please email us at: fiction@womensprize.com

Announcement dates

2025 ANNOUNCEMENTS

OCTOBER 8	Wednesday 8 October 2025 > WOMEN'S PRIZE FOR FICTION 2026 JUDGES' ANNOUNCEMENT
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2026 ANNOUNCEMENTS & EVENTS



SCHEDULING

The exact time of each announcement will be shared closer to the date.

MARCH 4	Wednesday 4 March 2026 > WOMEN'S PRIZE FOR FICTION 2026 LONGLIST ANNOUNCEMENT
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APRIL 22	Wednesday 22 April 2026 > WOMEN'S PRIZE FOR FICTION 2026 SHORTLIST ANNOUNCEMENT
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JUNE 10	Wednesday 10 June 2026 > WOMEN'S PRIZE LIVE & SHORTLIST READINGS
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JUNE 11	Thursday 11 June 2026 > SUMMER PARTY & WINNERS' ANNOUNCEMENTS
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Please refer to section 3.17 (page 6) regarding the winning author's publicity commitments following the announcement.

1 THE PRIZE



The Bessie is awarded annually to the winner of the Women's Prize for Fiction.

- 1.1 The 2026 Women's Prize for Fiction (the Prize) is worth £30,000 (anonymously endowed). The prize money, together with a sculpture named 'the Bessie', will be awarded to the woman who, in the opinion of the judges, has written the best full-length novel that is eligible for the Prize and fulfils the criteria set out in section 1.4. The Prize may not be divided or withheld. The decision of the judges will be final.
- 1.2 The judges will be responsible for compiling a shortlist of no more nor fewer than six of the books submitted for the Prize. For inclusion in this shortlist, a title should have the full support of at least one judge in whose opinion it is a valid contender for the Prize itself.
- 1.3 The judges will be responsible for compiling a longlist of no more nor fewer than sixteen of the books submitted for the Prize. For inclusion in this longlist, a title should have the full support of at least one judge in whose opinion it is a valid contender for the shortlist.
- 1.4 The judges consider the titles submitted using the guiding tenets of excellence, originality and accessibility. For the purposes of judging, 'excellence' means excellence in quality of writing; 'originality' in perspective and craft; and 'accessibility' means titles that look outwards to a cross-section of readers.

2 ELIGIBILITY

- 2.1 Any full-length novel written in English by a woman of any nationality is eligible.
- 2.2 Books from all genres across commercial to literary fiction are encouraged. All books must be unified and substantial works. Neither a collection of short stories nor a novella is eligible (for the purposes of the 2026 Women's Prize for Fiction, a novella is defined as a story between 12,000 and 30,000 words).
- 2.3 All books must be written by a single human author. Books that include text written using AI technology are not eligible.
- 2.4 Books written by one author on behalf of another are not eligible. This includes books with named or un-credited ghost writers or editorial mentors. The only exception is where a work has been transcribed by an amanuensis. Books written by two or more authors are not eligible.
- 2.5 Translations of books originally written in languages other than English are not eligible.
- 2.6 All entries (bar suggested call-in titles) must be submitted in print form (six finished copies or three proofs with finished copies to follow), as well as digitally, as a typeset or print-ready PDF and ePub file when available.
- 2.7 Audio files may also be requested for submissions; publishers will be contacted by email if audio files (or discount codes providing free access) of individual titles are required.



QUESTIONS?

If you have any queries about eligibility, please email us at: fiction@womensprize.com



The Women's Prize for Fiction is run by the Women's Prize Trust. The Trust is a registered charity (no. 1181253)



- 2.8 All entries must be first published as a print or e-book edition in the United Kingdom between 1 April 2025 and 31 March 2026, although they may have been previously published outside the UK. Titles with simultaneous UK and US publications, or UK and Republic of Ireland publications, within this timeframe are eligible.
- 2.9 All entries must be produced by an established publishing house for adult titles based in the UK. 'Established' is here defined as a house which publishes a list of at least three novels by different authors and with ISBNs every year, and distributes its books nationally through established retail and/or online outlets. For the avoidance of doubt, 'established' publishing house does not include print-on-demand services or companies who publish titles via a commercial arrangement through which they are paid by the author. The publishing house must have a registered UK address and company number, visible in the Companies House online directory. Any book submitted must have a UK ISBN, have the price printed in pounds sterling and be distributed in the UK through established retail and/or online outlets.
- 2.10 Self-published books are not eligible for the Prize, where the author is the publisher. If the publisher is a company which has been specifically set up to publish the novel in question, and/or the author is the person who owns the majority shareholding or otherwise controls the company, the novel is ineligible for the Prize.
- 2.11 It is the responsibility of the publisher to ensure that any title they submit for the Prize is eligible.
- 2.12 It is the responsibility of the publisher to ascertain that the author of any title they submit for the Prize gives their consent to entry prior to submission and that the author will abide by the terms and conditions throughout the prize process.
- 2.13 It is the responsibility of the publisher to ensure that all team members interacting with the Prize and the author abides by the Women's Prize Trust's **code of conduct** throughout the prize process.
- 2.14 The author of any title submitted must be alive at the date of submissions opening.
- 2.15 The decision of the Women's Prize Trust on eligibility is final, and no correspondence will be entered into on the subject.

3 CONDITIONS OF PRIZE

Any eligible book that is entered for the Prize shall not qualify unless its publisher agrees:

- 3.1 that the author will be available for and cooperate with publicity and promotional requests throughout the prize process, particularly around key announcements. If there is any issue around the author's availability, it is the responsibility of the publisher to notify and discuss this with the Women's Prize Trust immediately. The winner in particular is required to undertake interviews immediately after the announcement and in the following days.
- 3.2 to collaborate with the Women's Prize Trust to publicise the title and facilitate recorded interviews/readings with the author to be used by the Women's Prize Trust, media and partners.
- 3.3 to obtain permission from the copyright holder and agree to broadcast, record and/or make available a downloadable audio and/or audio visual and/or text file extract, to be used for publicity or promotional purposes on the website, podcast, any other partner websites or platforms, and/or the Women's Prize Trust's merchandise. The publisher agrees to inform the Women's Prize Trust of the copyright credit to be used, and to obtain the required permission to supply the epub, cover and metadata for sale on the website, podcast and any other partner websites or platforms.
- 3.4 to ensure that print runs of the book refer to the longlisting/shortlisting/win as appropriate on the front or back cover, using the relevant Prize branding, as shared and approved by the Women's Prize Trust; the submitting publisher must bring this requirement to the attention of the literary agent and to its global counterpart(s) elsewhere.
- 3.5 to connect the Women's Prize Trust team with its international counterparts, particularly English-language publishers, to support at each subsequent stage of the Prize announcement and promotion relevant to your title.

AT LONGLIST STAGE

- 3.6 to contribute £1,250 (plus VAT) for promotional activity. This payment is to be made promptly within seven days by BACS on receipt of an invoice. This stipulation is subject to appeal by a publisher for whom such expenditure would prove prohibitive and may be adjusted or waived at the discretion of the Women's Prize Trust.
- 3.7 to provide 25 copies for promotional and administrative purposes, and agree to sell further copies to the Women's Prize Trust at a minimum of 70% discount for promotional use or outreach activities in perpetuity.
- 3.8 to provide within two weeks of the longlist announcement an electronic text and audio version to the Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB) (or, if requested by the Women's Prize Trust, to any other approved body), for the purposes of producing and distributing on a not-for-profit basis accessible copies to visually impaired persons. It is the publisher's responsibility to inform rights owners that accessible copies are being produced and distributed.



- 3.9 to ensure that their title is available as physical and digital editions, and use their best endeavours to produce an audio edition for national distribution if it is not already available.
- 3.10 to use best endeavours to ensure authors participate in public events (live and virtual). Publishers will be responsible for covering any travel costs and relevant expenses for authors.

AT SHORTLIST STAGE

- 3.11 to contribute £6,000 (plus VAT) for promotional activity. This payment is to be made promptly within seven days by BACS on receipt of an invoice.
- 3.12 to provide a further 75 copies for promotional and administrative purposes.
- 3.13 to ensure that their title is available as paperback and audio editions within an agreed timetable, if it is not already available.
- 3.14 to ensure authors attend and participate in public events (live and virtual) as requested, and the Women's Prize Trust summer party where the winner is announced in London. Publishers will be responsible for covering any travel costs and relevant expenses for authors.

AT WINNER STAGE

- 3.15 to contribute a further £6,000 (plus VAT) for promotional activity. This payment is to be made promptly within seven days by BACS on receipt of an invoice.
- 3.16 to provide a further 50 copies for promotional and administrative purposes.
- 3.17 to ensure the author's availability and understanding of publicity commitments following the announcement, and work with the Trust in promoting the Prize.



4 ENTRY OF BOOKS

- 4.1 Titles will be accepted for submission for the 2026 Women's Prize for Fiction from Monday 7 July 2025.
- 4.2 Imprints with a list of 15 or more fiction titles per year between 1 April 2025 and 31 March 2026 may submit as general submissions up to **two** full-length novels with first publication dates between 1 April 2025 and 31 March 2026. Books that make up the threshold of 15 must be titles published for the first time in the UK in the eligibility window (ie. hardbacks or paperback originals and not second-edition paperbacks).

Imprints with a list of 14 or fewer fiction titles per year between 1 April 2025 and 31 March 2026 may submit as a general submission **one** full-length novel with first publication dates between 1 April 2025 and 31 March 2026.

FREE PASSES

Publishers may enter as 'free passes' in addition to the allocation of **one/two novels per imprint** any titles with first publication dates between 1 April 2025 and 31 March 2026 **by authors who have been shortlisted in the last ten years** (for the 2016 – 2025 prizes) **or previously won any year of the prize since inception** (the Orange Prize for Fiction 1996 – 2012; the Women's Prize for Fiction in 2013 and 2018 – 2025; and the Baileys Women's Prize for Fiction in 2014 – 2017). **There is no time limit on free passes for former winners of the prize.**

Please note that books by authors who have previously won or been shortlisted for the Women's Prize for Non-Fiction, the Orange Award for New Writers, Discoveries or any other project of the Women's Prize Trust are not eligible for this free pass.

CALL-IN TITLES

Imprints may submit **one** additional title as a suggested 'call-in'. Publishers suggesting a 'call-in' title must include a pitch for the submission of not more than 250 words in the **online entry form**.

Call-in titles are not compulsory and how many, if any, the judges wish to call in, is at their discretion. Coercion of judges will not be tolerated.

Publishers will be contacted if judges wish to call in any titles, and print / digital books will be requested at that stage; please **do not send books for suggested call-in titles**.



AUTHORS ELIGIBLE FOR A 'FREE PASS'

Authors shortlisted between 2016 – 2025. See the full list on pages 11–12.

Previous winners of the Prize. See the full list on page 13.

GENERAL SUBMISSIONS

The following steps (4.3, 4.4 and 4.5) should be taken for **all titles** being submitted:

DEADLINE

AUGUST

29

4.3 By 5pm BST Friday 29 August 2025

➤ Publishers should complete the **online entry form** for each title they are submitting (general submissions and free passes) and for their suggested call-ins.

FOR TITLES PUBLISHED BETWEEN 1 APRIL 2025 AND 30 SEPTEMBER 2025

➤ Send a PDF and ePub file where available to:
fiction@womensprize.com

Please name the file as the **book title + author name**.

➤ Publishers should also send **six finished copies or three proofs*** for each submitted title published between 1 April 2025 and 30 September 2025, to:

Women's Prize for Fiction 2026

Big Yellow Hanger Lane, Quill Street, Alperton, London, W5 1DN

**If a publisher is sending proof copies in the first instance, they should ensure they are the latest version available, bound and accompanied by a rough cover. Publishers should send finished copies to the above address as soon as they become available (before the applicable deadline).*

DEADLINE

OCTOBER

31

4.4 By 5pm GMT Friday 31 October 2025

FOR TITLES PUBLISHED BETWEEN 1 OCTOBER 2025 AND 30 NOVEMBER 2025

➤ Send a PDF and ePub file where available to:
fiction@womensprize.com

Please name the file as the **book title + author name**.

➤ Send **six finished copies or three proofs*** for each submitted title published between 1 October 2025 and 30 November 2025, to:

Women's Prize for Fiction 2026

Big Yellow Hanger Lane, Quill Street, Alperton, London, W5 1DN

**If a publisher is sending proof copies in the first instance, they should ensure they are the latest version available, bound and accompanied by a rough cover. Publishers should send finished copies to the above address as soon as they become available (before the applicable deadline).*



REMINDER!

Please **do not send** any digital files or physical copies of suggested call-in titles unless requested.

DEADLINE

NOVEMBER

28

4.5 By 5pm GMT Friday 28 November 2025

FOR TITLES PUBLISHED BETWEEN 1 DECEMBER 2025 AND 31 MARCH 2026

➤ Send a PDF and ePub file where available to:
fiction@womensprize.com

Please name the file as the **book title + author name**, and send the files at the same time as the hard copies (see below).

➤ Send **six finished copies or three proofs*** for each submitted title published between 1 December 2025 and 31 March 2026, to:

Women's Prize for Fiction 2026

Big Yellow Hanger Lane, Quill Street, Alperton, London, W5 1DN

**If a publisher is sending proof copies in the first instance, they should ensure they are the latest version available, bound and accompanied by a rough cover. Publishers should send finished copies to the above address as soon as they become available before the applicable deadline.*

DEADLINE

If you know finished copies will not be available in time for this deadline, please inform us as soon as possible at:
fiction@womensprize.com

We will discuss alternative arrangements with you regarding a final text and a dummy copy with the final jacket and spine, in lieu of a finished copy as required.

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS AND INFORMATION

- 4.6 Each publisher agrees to provide access to an audio file for judging purposes upon request.
- 4.7 The judges may request to call in additional titles not submitted by publishers, with publication dates between 1 April 2025 and 31 March 2026. If the publishers agrees that the works are to be considered, the publishers will be asked to complete the **online entry form**, submit six finished copies **or** three proofs of the book and a PDF and ePub file as soon as possible, and agree to abide by the terms and conditions of entry to the Prize.
- 4.8 The Women's Prize Trust will not acknowledge receipt of submissions and does not accept any responsibility for late, lost or damaged entries. Proof of sending is not proof of receipt.
- 4.9 Successful submissions made via the **online entry form** will result in an automated acknowledgement message on-screen upon completion; entrants will not receive a message to the email address provided.
- 4.10 No book entered by publishers or called in by the judges will be returned to publishers.

5 ADMINISTRATION AND COMMUNICATION

- 5.1 All entries for the Women's Prize for Fiction are strictly confidential and may not be used to publicise an author in the future, unless they have been longlisted, shortlisted or won.
- 5.2 All data and personal information shared with the Women's Prize Trust shall be handled in the strictest confidence and in accordance with the Women's Prize Trust's **privacy policy**.
- 5.3 In entering works to the Women's Prize for Fiction, the publisher agrees to allow the Women's Prize Trust to raise funds from any unused stock, in order to support its charitable mission, or donate them.
- 5.4 Any copies of books sent without request or without an official submission must be collected at the publishers' expense and arrangement, or the Women's Prize Trust reserves the right to donate them or sell them as per clause 5.3.
- 5.5 The publisher acknowledges and agrees that to the extent permitted by law, the Women's Prize Trust and any other person(s) in connection with the Prize will not be liable for any loss or damage (whether such damage or losses were foreseen, foreseeable, known or otherwise) including financially and/or to reputation and/or disappointment, suffered by any entrant, or publisher or agent on behalf of an author, entering the Prize or as a result of accepting any Prize.
- 5.6 These rules and the entry submitted in accordance with them shall constitute a contract governed by the exclusive laws and the exclusive jurisdiction of the courts of England and Wales.
- 5.7 For any eligibility queries for the Women's Prize for Fiction, please email: **fiction@womensprize.com**

Free pass eligibility (shortlisted authors)

YEAR	TITLE	AUTHOR	PUBLISHER
Shortlist 2025	Good Girl	Aria Aber	Bloomsbury
	All Fours	Miranda July	Canongate Books
	The Persians	Sanam Mahloudji	4th Estate
	Tell Me Everything	Elizabeth Strout	Viking
	★ The Safekeep	Yael van der Wouden	Viking
	Fundamentally	Nussaibah Younis	Weidenfeld & Nicolson
Shortlist 2024	The Wren, The Wren	Anne Enright	Jonathan Cape
	★ Brotherless Night	V. V. Ganeshanathan	Viking
	Restless Dolly Maunder	Kate Grenville	Canongate
	Enter Ghost	Isabella Hammad	Jonathon Cape
	Soldier, Sailor	Claire Kilroy	Faber & Faber
	River East, River West	Aube Rey Lescure	Duckworth
Shortlist 2023	Fire Rush	Jacqueline Crooks	Vintage
	Trespases	Louise Kennedy	Bloomsbury
	★ Demon Copperhead	Barbara Kingsolver	Faber & Faber
	Black Butterflies	Priscilla Morris	Duckworth
	The Marriage Portrait	Maggie O'Farrell	Headline
	Pod	Laline Paull	Corsair
Shortlist 2022	The Bread the Devil Knead	Lisa Allen-Agostini	Myriad Editions
	The Sentence	Louise Erdrich	Little, Brown
	Sorrow and Bliss	Meg Mason	Orion
	★ The Book of Form and Emptiness	Ruth Ozeki	Canongate
	The Island of Missing Trees	Elif Şhafak	Viking
	Great Circle	Maggie Shipstead	Transworld

YEAR	TITLE	AUTHOR	PUBLISHER
Shortlist 2021	The Vanishing Half	Brit Bennett	Dialogue
	★ Piranesi	Susanna Clarke	Bloomsbury
	Unsettled Ground	Claire Fuller	Fig Tree
	Transcendent Kingdom	Yaa Gyasi	Viking
	How the One-Armed Sister Sweeps Her House	Cherie Jones	Tinder Press
	No One is Talking about This	Patricia Lockwood	Bloomsbury Circus
Shortlist 2020	Dominicana	Angie Cruz	John Murray
	Girl, Woman, Other	Bernardine Evaristo	Hamish Hamilton
	A Thousand Ships	Natalie Haynes	Pan Macmillan
	The Mirror and the Light	Hilary Mantel	HarperCollins
	★ Hamnet	Maggie O'Farrell	Tinder Press
	Weather	Jenny Offill	Granta
Shortlist 2019	The Silence of the Girls	Pat Barker	Hamish Hamilton
	My Sister, the Serial Killer	Oyinkan Braithwaite	Atlantic Books
	Milkman	Anna Burns	Faber & Faber
	Ordinary People	Diana Evans	Vintage
	★ An American Marriage	Tayari Jones	Oneworld
	Circe	Madeline Miller	Bloomsbury
Shortlist 2018	The Idiot	Elif Batuman	Vintage
	Sight	Jessie Greengrass	John Murray
	The Mermaid and Mrs Hancock	Imogen Hermes Gowar	Vintage
	When I Hit You: Or, A Portrait of the Writer as a Young Wife	Meena Kandasamy	Atlantic
	★ Home Fire	Kamila Shamsie	Bloomsbury
	Sing, Unburied, Sing	Jesmyn Ward	Bloomsbury
Shortlist 2017	Stay With Me	Ayòbámi Adébáyò	Canongate
	★ The Power	Naomi Alderman	Viking
	The Dark Circle	Linda Grant	Little, Brown
	The Sport of Kings	C. E. Morgan	HarperCollins
	First Love	Gwendoline Riley	Granta
	Do Not Say We Have Nothing	Madeleine Thien	Granta
Shortlist 2016	Ruby	Cynthia Bond	Two Roads
	The Green Road	Anne Enright	Vintage
	★ The Glorious Heresies	Lisa McInerney	John Murray
	The Portable Veblen	Elizabeth McKenzie	4th Estate
	The Improbability of Love	Hannah Rothschild	Bloomsbury
	A Little Life	Hanya Yanagihara	Picador

Free pass eligibility (winning authors)

YEAR	TITLE	AUTHOR	PUBLISHER
Winner 2025	The Safekeep	Yael van der Wouden	Viking
Winner 2024	Brotherless Night	V. V. Ganeshanathan	Viking
Winner 2023	Demon Copperhead	Barbara Kingsolver	Faber & Faber
Winner 2022	The Book of Form and Emptiness	Ruth Ozeki	Canongate
Winner 2021	Piranesi	Susanna Clarke	Bloomsbury
Winner 2020	Hamnet	Maggie O'Farrell	Tinder Press
Winner 2019	An American Marriage	Tayari Jones	Oneworld
Winner 2018	Home Fire	Kamila Shamsie	Bloomsbury
Winner 2017	The Power	Naomi Alderman	Viking
Winner 2016	The Glorious Heresies	Lisa McLnerney	John Murray
Winner 2015	How to be Both	Ali Smith	Hamish Hamilton
Winner 2014	A Girl is a Half-Formed Thing	Eimear McBride	Faber & Faber
Winner 2013	May We Be Forgiven	A.M. Homes	Granta
Winner 2012	The Song of Achilles	Madeline Miller	Bloomsbury
Winner 2011	The Tiger's Wife	Téa Obreht	Orion
Winner 2010	The Lacuna	Barbara Kingsolver	Faber & Faber
Winner 2009	Home	Marilynne Robinson	Little, Brown
Winner 2008	The Road Home	Rose Tremain	Vintage
Winner 2007	Half of a Yellow Sun	Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie	HarperCollins
Winner 2006	On Beauty	Zadie Smith	Penguin
Winner 2005	We Need to Talk About Kevin	Lionel Shriver	Serpent's Tail
Winner 2004	Small Island	Andrea Levy	Headline
Winner 2003	Property	Valerie Martin	Little, Brown
Winner 2002	Bel Canto	Ann Patchett	HarperCollins
Winner 2001	The Idea of Perfection	Kate Grenville	Picador
Winner 2000	When I Lived in Modern Times	Linda Grant	Granta Books
Winner 1999	A Crime in the Neighbourhood	Suzanne Berne	Penguin General
Winner 1998	Larry's Party	Carol Shields	HarperCollins
Winner 1997	Fugitive Pieces	Anne Michaels	Bloomsbury
Winner 1996	A Spell of Winter	Helen Dunmore	Viking