

*Romance Writers of Australia Inc
is proud to announce...*



Publishing Basics 2021

- Opening date:** 5:00 PM Sydney time 5 October 2020. **Online entries only.**
- Closing date:** 5:00 PM Sydney time 26 October 2020
- Eligibility:** RWAust members only. All membership categories are eligible (Aspiring, Emerging and Established). Novel or novella manuscript (10K+).
- Entry fee:** AU\$33 for each entry (GST incl.)
- Judging:** Judging is by a mix of reader and writer judges.
- Entry specifications:** The entry comprises
- (a) a 15 word (max) tagline;
 - (b) a 200 word (max) blurb;
 - (c) the first two chapters; and
 - (d) a 150 word (max) anonymised author bio.
- Please check formatting guidelines below.**
- No. of entries:** Maximum of TWO entries per person
- How to enter:** Go to the RWA website and click on the link to enter online:
<http://romanceaustralia.com/publishingbasics>
- Queries:** **Contest Coordinator Fiona Marsden:**
publishingbasics@romanceaustralia.com

INSTRUCTIONS FOR ENTRANTS:

Entries

Please complete your **contest registration and payment** via the online form. No postal entries are accepted.

The form will ask you to enter your details and upload your entry file.

Each entry should comprise the following: one file in .doc format (not .docx) with the manuscript title in the filename. Include your title page, then the entry, as follows:

- **Title page**, including the following: manuscript title, subgenre/targeted line, projected word count of complete manuscript from which synopsis is taken.
- **Tagline**, beginning on a new page. Maximum 15 words.
- **Blurb**, beginning on a new page. Maximum 200 words.
- **First Two Chapters**, beginning on a new page.
- **Author Bio**, beginning on a new page. Maximum 150 words. Use 'Great Author' instead of your name.

Word counts are exact. Any extra lines or words will be trimmed, so ensure your entry does not exceed the limit.

Once your entry/payment is completed, you will receive an automatic acknowledgement email. If you do not receive this within 24 hours of submitting your entry, please email the contest coordinator at publishingbasics@romanceaustralia.com to check that your entry has been received. Your coordinator is a volunteer, so response times may be variable.

The coordinator will also contact you if there are any problems with your manuscript formatting.

The contest coordinator is here to help you.

There are no stupid questions.

If you are unsure of anything, contact publishingbasics@romanceaustralia.com BEFORE you submit

Download a formatting sample and example scoresheet:

<http://romanceaustralia.com/contests-overview/publishingbasics>

Formatting your manuscript:

- Page is A4 size, portrait orientation
- Include a title page containing **manuscript title; sub-genre** (e.g. Regency, Sci-fi with romantic elements, paranormal, rural romance etc.); and **projected word count** of complete manuscript from which the entry is taken
- The first 2 chapters, blurb, tagline, and author bio should each begin on a new page: Use blank lines between paragraphs; no indents; no heading or blank space at the top of the first page is required
- RWA address is on the top of the author bio to keep the entry anonymous. Author bio should be signed The Best Author Ever
- Margins set to 2.5 cm all around
- All text is aligned left (not fully justified)
- All text is 12-pt Courier New or Times New Roman font
- Include a document header, containing:
 - a. Page number in upper right corner. Start page numbers at page 1 on the first page of the first chapter. Do not number your title page.
 - b. Your manuscript title
 - c. Sub-genre as applicable

e.g. The Hot Greek Billionaire/Harlequin Desire
A Wild Romance/Regency
Sexy Space Pirates/Sci-fi with romantic elements

This information is to enable us to properly allocate your entry to judges. **Do not include your name anywhere on the entry.**

To ensure fairness to all entrants, and consistency and ease for judges, **all the above formatting conditions are compulsory.**

If any condition is not met, at the contest coordinator's discretion, the entrant will be given reasonable opportunity to fix any formatting issues and resubmit a correctly formatted entry before the closing date/time. If your entry is not received with correct formatting by that time, it will be entered in the contest, but a 5-mark deduction (total, not per error) will be made from your score, and your entry will be ranked below equivalently-scored entries that do not have formatting errors. This will disadvantage you if there is a tie for a finalist placing.

The purpose of this system is to teach entrants the proper formatting – so you are encouraged to submit your entries in advance closing date, to ensure you have time to correct any errors.

If in doubt about how to achieve any of the formatting, please ask the contest coordinator for advice. Check your entry against the formatting sample on the website and ask yourself: *does my entry look like this?* If the answer is no, then ask for help.

ENTRY CONDITIONS

RWA Inc. reserves the right not to accept entries that do not comply with the entry conditions. The contest coordinator's decision in this regard is final.

1. The Publishing Basics Contest is for first two chapters, blurb, tagline, and author bio from a romance (or romantic elements) novel or novella (10K+).
2. The projected word length of the completed manuscript of which your entry is made must be 10,000 words or over (novella or novel length) for your entry to be eligible.
3. All RWA members (Aspiring, Emerging or Established categories) are eligible to enter. Entries from a manuscript that has won a previous Ruby, Valerie Parv, Emma Darcy, Sapphire or Emerald Award are not eligible.
4. All entrants must be financial members of RWA. If membership lapses at any time during the judging process, the entry will be removed from the contest.
5. Members are not allowed to judge for contests they have entered. Contest Coordinators may not enter or judge a contest they are managing but may enter or judge for another contest.
6. The definition of 'romance' implies the romantic development of a relationship between the protagonists, and includes all romantic novel and novella markets, heat levels and sub-genres, i.e. category romance, single title contemporary, historical, Regency, futuristic, fantasy, paranormal, time travel, romantic suspense, erotic romance, chick lit, young adult, new adult, gay/lesbian, rural/outback, inspirational, science fiction. Entries from novels/novellas with romantic elements (where romantic development between the protagonists is a subplot) are also eligible. Judges will judge your entry based on the information you give, so **contact the contest coordinator in advance if you are unsure of the correct sub-genre**. If your entry includes explicit sex, mark the applicable box on the entry form. This is merely to help us allocate your entry to judges familiar with those elements.
7. The entrant must be the original author of every entry they submit. Entries by joint authors are permitted. Fanfiction (stories using characters, settings, worlds, or other elements that belong to someone else) is not eligible. Entries must be text only, no images.
8. RWA reserves the right, at any time during the contest, to reject entries that in the contest coordinator's opinion contain any of the following presented in a positive light or as titillation: rape, pedophilia, incest, or any other conduct that is degrading or promotes hate.
9. Up to two (2) entries per person are permitted. Copyright in the manuscript and entry remains with the entrant.
10. Entry fees are non-refundable once your entry is accepted. Credit card payment only, via the online system. No cash or cheques.
11. Thank you notes to judges are welcome. Please email any thank you to the contest coordinator, including the judge numbers, and they will be forwarded. No gifts, please.

ENTRY AND FORMATTING

12. Online entries only (no snail mail). Fill in your entry form and pay your entry fee online.
13. Your **entry** includes: a single spaced first two chapters, a 200 word (max) blurb, max 15 word tagline a 150 word (max) author bio. Word count is exact and any lines/words exceeding the limit will be trimmed. Put the title page first, followed by, first 2 chapters, blurb, tagline and the author bio in a single .doc document (not.docx).
14. The **title page must include**: manuscript title, sub-genre (e.g. Regency, paranormal romance, contemporary, romantic elements) and projected word count of complete manuscript from which the entry is taken. The **header must include**: manuscript title, sub-genre, and page number, starting at page 1 on the first page of the first chapter (don't number the title page). **Author's name must not appear on entries**. RWA contests strive to preserve anonymity between judges and entrants.
15. **Formatting**: A4 page, portrait orientation. Font: 12 pt Courier New or Times New Roman. 2.5 cm margins all round. Text is aligned left (not fully justified). Text for the entry is single-spaced, with a blank line between paragraphs, and no indents. Remember, this is a digital contest, and entries will not be printed. Formatting will be assessed on having your margins, indents etc. set to the specified sizes, not by the appearance of your manuscript on a printed page.
16. To ensure fairness to all entrants, and consistency and ease for judges, **all the above formatting conditions are compulsory**. If any condition is not met, and time allows, you will be given the opportunity to fix the problem and submit a correctly formatted entry before the closing date/time. If your entry is not received with correct formatting by that time, it will be entered in the contest, but a 5-mark deduction (total, not per error) will be made from your raw score, and your entry will be ranked below equivalently-scored entries that do not have formatting

errors. The purpose of this system is to teach entrants the proper formatting, so you are encouraged to submit your entries well in advance of the closing date, to ensure you have time to correct any errors.

Tips from the contest coordinators:

- A sample scoresheet is available from the contest website: <http://romanceaustralia.com/contests-overview/publishingbasics>. Check it out to see what the judges will be looking for—perhaps there are some improvements you can make before entering.
- Run a spell-checker over your entry—but then ask a friend to read it, too, to check for any typos or errors you have missed. There are 15 easy marks available for spelling, grammar, and punctuation, so make sure you get them all.

Tips on formatting your entry:

- Download the formatting sample form the contest website to see what your entry should look like, and for more hints: <http://romanceaustralia.com/contests-overview/publishingbasics/>
- Make sure your entry does not exceed the word count. To ensure fairness to all entrants, we cannot accept even one word or line over.
- To make the page numbers start at 1 on the first chapter, and not on your title page: have the page numbers start at zero, and then untick 'Show number on first page'.
- Finally: *please* do not spend hours stressing over the formatting. The rules are simple and easy to achieve—if in doubt, ask for help.