

The Romantic Book of the Year Awards 2021

RULES and CONDITIONS

RWA Inc. reserves the right at any time to reject entries that do not comply with these conditions. The contest coordinator's decision in this regard is final.

1. The Ruby Award is for commercially available romance or romantic elements books of 10,000 words or more, first published between 1 January 2020 and 31 December 2020 inclusive.
2. For the purposes of this contest, RWA deems 'commercially available' to mean: any work of fiction (*or part of*) that is (*or has been at any time*) available for purchase or download in any format for any price including free:
 - a. in any marketplace where books are available (*this shall include physical or digital bookstores, a publisher's website or store, and any other retailer or distribution outlet for books in any format*);
 - b. at any other venue where the work includes (*or is followed by*) links to non-free content, or otherwise appears with the intent of selling or encouraging purchase of any of the author's works (*this shall include story-sharing or file-sharing sites, blogs, social media sites and other author websites.*)
3. Entries must be written in the English language by a citizen, or permanent or temporary resident of Australia or New Zealand.
4. Only the author of a book can enter it in the Ruby. A book may be entered into the Ruby only once. The author must choose whether to enter the book in the year it is published overseas or the year it is released in Australia. Repeat entries will be disqualified. A book cannot be entered in more than one Ruby section.
5. The definition of 'romance' implies the romantic development of a relationship between the protagonists, and includes all romantic book markets, heat levels and subgenres, i.e. long, short, contemporary, historical, Regency, futuristic/science fiction, fantasy, gay/lesbian, paranormal, time travel, romantic suspense, erotic romance, chick lit, young adult, new adult, rural/outback, romantic comedy, inspirational. Books with romantic elements (where romantic development between the protagonists is a subplot, or other elements take the book beyond the traditional romance boundaries) are also eligible.
6. **Each person may enter up to three (3) entries** (per human being, not per pseudonym) across all sections.
7. Entry numbers will be capped at the first three hundred (300) eligible entries, in order of receipt of entry form and payment. Once three hundred (300) eligible entries are admitted, the contest will close to further entries. Any entries received after closing will be notified of non-acceptance, and any payment refunded.
8. Each section (see condition 20) must receive a minimum of fifteen (15) eligible entries in order to be viable. If fewer than fifteen (15) entries are received in a section, that section will not be judged and there will be no finalists or Ruby Award for that section. Affected authors will be given the chance to move their book to a different section if eligible; otherwise, their entry fee will be refunded and any print copies returned.
9. The entrant must be the original author of every entry they submit. Entries by joint eligible authors are permitted. Fan-fiction (a story using characters, settings, worlds or other elements that belong to someone else without the owner's authorisation) is not eligible. Copyright remains with the entrant/s.
10. Entry fees are non-refundable once your entry is accepted. Payment via online entry system only. No cash or cheques.
11. The Ruby Coordinator, in conjunction with the RWA Executive Committee, reserves the right, at any time during the contest, to withdraw or exclude any entry from the contest. RWA reserves the right to withdraw or exclude entries that in the Ruby 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.

12. Publishers give permission for RWA Inc to reproduce the covers of finalists and/or winning books in material relating to the promotion of the award.
13. **Prizes.** There shall be a Ruby winner for each section. If no books are eligible, RWA reserves the right not to award any Ruby.
14. **Judging.** The Ruby is judged in one round. It is judged by readers and writers (see condition 15). The number of finalists depends on the number of entries in the section as follows. Between fifteen (15) and twenty-five (25) entries will have **three (3)** finalists, between twenty-six (26) and fifty (50) will have **four (4)** finalists and above fifty (50) will have **five (5)** (with the proviso that a book must score above 85% to be eligible for the final). The top-scoring book in the first round shall be the section Ruby winner. In the case of a tie for the last finalist place, additional finalists may be allowed. In the case of a tie for any Ruby winner, more than one Ruby may be presented. The winners will be announced at the 2020 RWA Conference.
15. Each entrant MAY be required to judge up to two (2) books. Instructions and materials for judging will be provided after submitting your entry. As part of the entry process, entrants can opt out of up to two (2) subgenres they do not wish to judge. Books to be judged will be digital or print, from a Ruby section the entrant did not enter. If an entrant does not complete their judging, their entry/ies can be disqualified.

HOW TO ENTER

16. **All entry forms and payments** are to be submitted via the online entry system, which will become available once the contest opens. The contest will be open from 14 December 2020, and will close on 18 January 2021, or when the contest fills, whichever is the earlier. Your entry is not complete until you have submitted your entry AND your payment. Once your entry is submitted, you should receive an automatic confirmation email. If you do not receive this email, please contact the contest coordinators on ruby@romanceaustralia.com.
17. **Ebooks:** if a DRM-free ebook edition of your book is available, you must submit ebook copies. Do not submit print copies. You will upload your files on the online system when you enter. Judges undertake not to share or copy digital entries. **Accepted formats are: .pdf, .epub, .mobi (Kindle). Please submit all these formats, or as many as you have available, for each book.** We are unable to accept coupon codes or books gifted via e-tailers.
18. **Print books:** if your book has ONLY a print edition, OR if you cannot get a readable, DRM-free ebook edition, you may submit, via post, four (4) print copies. **No print entries can be accepted for books that have a usable digital edition of the final published version.** Your print books must be postmarked 18 January 2021 or earlier to be accepted. You will receive instructions on where to post once you have entered. Your publisher can mail the books for you if you wish. If you would like to autograph your books, please do—our judges appreciate it.
19. Any print copies supplied become the property of RWA Inc. and any leftover copies may be used for promotional purposes, giveaways or donations. Judges do not have permission to share or copy digital entries. Digital copies on file with RWA will be shared only with judges and will be deleted at contest conclusion.
20. **Enter your book/s in the section most applicable to your book.** The word length of the book must adhere to the section description. The Ruby sections are:

Contemporary Romance: Where the love story is the main focus of the novel, and the end of the book is emotionally satisfying and optimistic. Novels must be set post 1950. Love scenes may contain any level of sensuality.

Romantic Suspense: Romance novels which contains a suspense, mystery or thriller element as an integral part of the plot

Romantic Elements: Novels over 40,000 words, of any tone or style, set in any place or time, in which a romance plays a significant part in the story, but is not the central plot; OR, a romantic book where other themes or elements take the plot beyond the traditional romance boundaries.

e.g. women's fiction, saga, some romantic suspense titles, urban fantasy, books from a series where the romance is a multi-book arc, books where the romance is a subplot or does not end optimistically. Love scenes may contain any level of sensuality.

Historical: Romance novel set prior to 1950.

Speculative fiction: A romance novel which is set in a fantasy world and which contains paranormal, fantasy, science-fiction as an integral part of the plot. This section includes novels classified as science-fiction, paranormal and fantasy.

Novella: Works of fiction between 10,000 and 40,000 words which fit into any of the section descriptions above. Condition 8 above will apply to entries in the novella section.

21. Opens: 14 December 2020

Closes: 18 January 2021.

22. Entry fees. Pay your entry fee online when you enter.

Member of RWA: AUS\$55.00 per entry

Non-member: AUS\$165.00 per entry

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