



Crime Writers of Canada
Awards of
Excellence

Crime Writers of Canada Awards of Excellence

Call for Judges

Every year, volunteers with a passion for reading support CWC in its quest to identify meritorious writing. The judging phase begins in November and ends with the selection of the finalists and winners in the April.

We are seeking judges who are:

- knowledgeable about the mystery and crime fiction and/or nonfiction depending on category (more about that below)
- willing to spend the time required to read the entries in their category
- prepared to provide 1-3 sentence assessments of the material they read,
- are proficient in the language of the award category they will be judging (English or French), and
- are willing to read ebook submissions

We welcome past and present CWC Professional and Associate Members who wish to volunteer; however, judges are not required to be CWC members. They can be librarians, editors, booksellers, teachers, writers, members of the justice system, genre aficionados, etc.

Although judges are usually Canadian, they do not have to be.

To ensure the integrity of the judging process, we do not announce which category a judge will be judging, but we will recognize each judge in the following ways:

- A certificate of appreciation
- Their names listed as a group in the CWC awards gala program
- Discounted membership (50%) for one year.
- Individual recognition on the CWC website and social media. (Judges can opt out if desired.)

About Us

Crime Writers of Canada (CWC) is a national non-profit organization for Canadian mystery and crime writers, associated professionals, and others with a serious interest in Canadian crime writing. Our mission is to promote Canadian crime writing and to raise the profile of Canadian crime writers with readers, reviewers, librarians, booksellers, and media.

Values Statement

Crime Writers of Canada is committed to fostering and promoting diversity, inclusivity, accessibility, and equity within its membership and the larger Canadian crime publishing community.

We define diversity to include people of different backgrounds, ages, abilities, body shapes, racialized identities, cultures, nationalities, gender identities and expressions, sexual orientations, beliefs, religions, socio-economic statuses, and more.

We firmly believe that our strength and success is built on promoting a wide range of voices and experiences within the scope of our mandate as a professional organization.

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Award Categories with expected numbers and special considerations

- Best Crime Novel (Min. 50,000 words) 40-60 books
Largest category but most likely to contain books that the judges have already read.
- Best Crime First Novel (Min. 50,000 words AND author's 1st novel in any genre.) 20-30 books
- The Whodunit Award for Best Traditional Mystery (Min. 50,000 words) 20-25 books
- Best Crime Novel Set in Canada (Min. 50,000 words) 20-30 books.
- Best Crime Novella (8,001 - 49,999 words) 10-20 books
Some of these are written for adult learners. If identified as a "Rapid" or "Easy" read, they need to meet that expectation.
- Best Crime Short Story (Max. 8,000 words) 25-40 stories.
Entries are in PDF.
- Best French Crime Book (Fiction and Nonfiction) 6-20 books
Must read French fluently.
- Best Juvenile or YA Crime Book (Fiction and Nonfiction) 20-35 books
Should know something about the guidelines for middle-grade and young adult books, and what is appropriate for the intended audience.
- Best Nonfiction Crime Book 10-20 books
This category ranges from true crime to academic works. This is a good category for people with a background in journalism, academia, law or history.
- Best Unpublished Manuscript – Round 1: 40-60 entries with first 5000 words and synopsis.
Round 2: 10 manuscripts of 50,000 -80,000 words
This category will be rated by each judge independently. The combine scores for each submission will determine the longlist of ten manuscripts the judges will read. The second round of scoring will determine the finalists and winner.

The next step is up to you

Feel like you need more information? We can send you the Judging Guidelines which goes into more detail. Or you can check them out on the website here: [Judging Guidelines](#)

Ready to commit? Contact Ludvica at awards@crimewriterscanada.com and let her know what categories you're interested in judging. She will send you:

- a registration form asking you for the necessary information to contact you and send you books
- a voluntary identification form. Filling it out will help us create diverse juries but whether you answer any, all or some of the questions is up to you.

You will be notified by Ludvica once the Jury Section Committee has made their 2023 list of judges.

Personal data collected will only be viewed by the CWC Jury Selection Committee

Deadline to volunteer: 20 October 2023