2024 WRITING CONTEST GUIDELINES

The National Federation of the Blind invites you to participate in the 2024 Writers’ Division writing contest. The contest is open. Below, you will find our requirements and deadlines. This year we have added a short novel category along with our other traditional categories. We look forward to seeing your work in the contest this year.

The annual youth and adult writing contests sponsored by the NFB Writers’ Division will open January 1, 2024 and close April 30 2024. This contest is open to all blind aspiring writers. The term blind refers to all forms of vision loss.

* Adult contest categories are:
* short Fiction
* nonfiction, including personal essay and memoir
* novel excerpts and
* poetry.

Youth contest categories are short fiction and poetry.

The youth contest is divided into three groups, determined by grade level;

* elementary, 1st through 4th grade,
* middle, 5th through 8th grade, and
* high school 9th through 12th grade.

In both adult and youth contests, there may be up to three prize winners (1st, 2nd, 3rd), In addition, one or more entries may receive honorable mention. Prize winning entries may be published in the Writers’ Division’s magazine, Slate & Style.

All contest winners will be announced during the 2024 national convention in Orlando, Florida at the annual Writers' Division business meeting.

PRIZES

Youth contest winners will receive cash prizes equal to

* $30 for 1st place,
* $20 for 2nd place, and
* $10 for 3rd place.

Adult contest winners will receive cash prizes equal to

* $75 for 1st place,
* $50 for 2nd place, and
* $25 for 3rd place.

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

YOUTH CONTESTS

If you are 18 years old, or older, you must enter the adult contest.

The youth contest is a contest for students who use Braille. Entries must be submitted in hand embossed Braille, either with a slate and stylus or Perkins Braille writer; there are no exceptions. Submissions must be Brailled by the entrant. All submissions, no matter the grade level, must be in contracted Braille. Let us know if you “know” or are “learning” contracted Braille. Additionally, let us know if you have chosen to use UEB, or not. Send your hardcopy Braille and cover letter to:

* Barbara Hammel
* 7408 Bryn Mawr Drive

Urbandale IA50322

Each entrant must provide an identical electronic copy of the cover letter and contest entry as a Microsoft Word file [doc or docx] or as a Rich Text Format [rtf] file). Construct each contest entry as a separate electronic file. Construct your cover letter as a separate electronic file. Attach each separate electronic file to one (1) email and send it to Shelley Alongi, Queenofbells@outlook.com.

Include your name and title entries in the cover letter only. Each contest entry must contain the title and text only. So if you are entering three poems and one story into the contest, attach five files to your email. No entries will be considered unless submitted in the formats listed above. Electronic files submitted in any other format will be immediately disqualified, no questions asked.

COVER LETTER—Your cover letter must contain the following information:

* Your name
* mailing address
* phone number,
* e-mail address.
* List the titles of all submissions, including the category in which they are being entered, school and grade level.

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

* We will consider only unpublished original entries. Please do not submit entries that have been previously submitted on a web site or blog.
* Youth short fiction stories submissions cannot be more than 1,000 words
* poetry of no more than 50 lines.

Authors of either poetry or fiction are encouraged to submit multiple pieces.

Youth ENTRY FEES – None

Are you the best Brailler in the contest? Be sure to double check your work for spelling and grammatical errors. Remember to use Braille paper so the Braille is easy to read. Good luck!

ADULT CONTEST

This contest is for blind writers 18 years old, or older.

* We will consider only unpublished original entries. Please do not submit entries that have been published on a website or blog.
* Fiction and nonfiction categories can be of any main stream genre, and cannot exceed 3,000 words.

Novel excerpts must be no longer than five thousand words and can be partial or complete chapters as long as they fall within the word limit.

Poetry: We will accept poetry of any length

Adults are required to submit all poetry, fiction and nonfiction as attachments to an E-mail message. Each entrant must provide an identical electronic copy of the cover letter and contest entry as a Microsoft Word file [doc or docx] or as a Rich Text Format [rtf] file). Construct each contest entry as a separate electronic file. Construct your cover letter as a separate electronic file. Attach each separate electronic file to one (1) email and send it to Shelley Alongi, Queenofbells@outlook.com. Note: Only include the title and text of each entry in each contest entry. So, if you are entering three poems and one story into the contest you must attach five electronic files to your email. No entries will be considered unless submitted in the formats listed above. Electronic copies submitted in any other format will be immediately disqualified, no questions asked.

* Each separate attachment must be in either Microsoft Word (doc or docx) or a Rich Text Format (rtf).

Authors are encouraged to submit multiple pieces.

Fiction and nonfiction should be written in a normal prose style, with paragraphs being left justified, lines being single spaced, and having a 14 point font of Aerial, regular. Be sure to double check your work for spelling and grammatical errors No hard copy submissions will be accepted.

COVER LETTER

Along with your entry or entries, include a cover letter providing the following information:

* Your name,
* mailing address,
* phone number,
* e-mail address.
* List the titles of all submissions, including the category in which they are being entered.
* method of payment for the entry fee (check or PayPal).

CONTEST ENTRY FEES PAYMENT AND METHODS

Adult Fees:

* The fee for each short fiction piece, memoir, essay and novel excerpt is $15.00 for members and $20.00 for non-members.
* The fee for each nonfiction entry is $15.00 for members and $20.00 for non-members.
* A member is considered to be one whose dues to the NFB Writers' Division are current for the contest year. A nonmember is one who is not a paid member of the NFB Writers' Division at the time of entry into the contest.
* The base fee for poetry will cover up to three poems, if the combined line-count of all three poems does not exceed 108 lines. Additional poems require a second fee, following the same fee payment scheme. Base fees are $15.00 for members and $20.00 for non-members.

PAYMENT

You may use PayPal from the Writers’ Division website, writers.nfb.org.

Alternatively, you may mail a check made out to NFB Writers’ Division, with a note in the memo line relating to the contest. Send to:

* Shawn Jacobson
* 19541 Olney Mill Rd.
* Olney, MD 20832.