The 25th Thurber Prize for American Humor
Submission Rules | FAQs | Terms and Conditions
Eligible Publication Time Frame: January 1, 2024 – December 31, 2024
Submission Deadline: May 31, 2025

The following submissions are eligible:

• For The 25th Thurber Prize for American Humor, Thurber House will accept original print/physical books, ebooks, and audiobooks published in the United States for the first time between January 1, 2024 and December 31, 2024.
• Books must be humorous in nature.
• Fiction, nonfiction, and collections of short stories and poetry are eligible.
• Collaborations by multiple authors/writing teams are acceptable.
• New for this award cycle: only books that are traditionally published and hybrid published (by legitimate, reputable hybrids) are eligible. All hybrid publishers will be vetted; they must be selective with the titles they publish and adhere to IBPA’s Hybrid Publisher Criteria.
• Books released in both the United States and non-U.S. markets are eligible IF they are published in the United States during the eligible time frame listed above AND all non-U.S. market publication dates occur during or after the time frame listed above. Example eligibility scenarios for multi-market books:
  • Eligible: A book published in the United States during the time frame listed above, followed by a UK publication date the following year, is eligible as long as the book was not published in any other markets prior to the time frame listed above.
  • Eligible: A book published in the UK and the United States during the time frame listed above is eligible, even if the UK publication date occurred first, as long as the book was not published in any other markets prior to the time frame listed above.
• Graphic novels are acceptable as long as they contain a significant amount of written text and the humor is primarily grounded in the written text.
• Book adaptations of authors’ video specials (such as stand-up specials) are eligible, provided that the book adaptation focuses on and contains the original work of the author(s).

The following submissions are NOT eligible:

• Books published outside of the time frame listed above are not eligible.
• Reprints/second editions of books that were first/originally published outside the time frame are not eligible.
• Books that are not humorous in nature are not eligible.
• Self-published books (Amazon KDP, etc.), books published by vanity presses, and books published by disreputable hybrids are not eligible.
• Books solely published outside of the United States or published in a non-U.S. market before the time frame listed above are ineligible. Example ineligibility scenarios for multi-market books:
  • Ineligible: A book published in the UK before the time frame listed above, followed by a United States publication date during the time frame listed above, is not eligible.
  • Ineligible: A book published in the United States before the time frame listed above, followed by a UK publication date during the time frame listed above, is not eligible.
• Books written primarily in a language other than English are ineligible.
• Picture books and graphic novels that contain minimal text are ineligible.
• Children’s books are ineligible.
• Books that contain “harmful hate”—hate speech, derogatory terms, and/or inappropriately violent, graphic, or threatening content or themes whose presence serves a hateful narrative or manifesto that actually harms or intends to harm real people or groups of people—are ineligible. Note that the presence of hateful content or themes is not an automatic disqualifier, and it is rare for a submission to violate our “harmful hate” policy.

Thurber House will make the final decision regarding all questions of eligibility. If you are not sure whether your work is eligible, contact us at thurberprize@thurberhouse.org.
Frequently Asked Questions

What do I need to submit for consideration?
1) The online entry form, including a PDF version of your book (to be used solely for judging purposes; PDFs may be watermarked). If you represent multiple authors, please submit one entry form per book.

2) $75 submission fee — if you are using a credit card, you will be asked for payment on the online entry form. If you are mailing a check, complete the online entry form, then mail your check to Thurber House at the address below. Submission fees are non-refundable.

3) Mail five printed copies of the book to:
Thurber House
Attn: Thurber Prize
77 Jefferson Avenue
Columbus, OH 43215

Please note:
• Advanced Reader Copies (ARCs) are not eligible for judging purposes. You must send the officially released book.
• If you represent multiple authors, you may enclose multiple submissions in the same box.
• If you are paying by check, please enclose your check with your books whenever possible.

What is the submission/judging/award timeline?
Here’s how the entire process works:

1) Submissions typically open in January or February for books being published that year (for example purposes, let’s say you have a book published in the year 2050).

2) Submissions are due by May 31 of the following year for books published in the previous calendar year (in our example, your book published in the year 2050 is due by May 31, 2051).

3) Thurber Prize judging begins shortly after the May 31 submission deadline and all books are received. There are two rounds of judging.

4) Semi-finalists are typically notified in October (in our example, this would be October 2051).

5) Finalists are typically notified in January or February (in our example, this would be January or February 2052).

6) The award is presented in April or May (in our example, this would be April or May 2052).

Still have questions?
Please contact us at thurberprize@thurberhouse.org, and we’ll be happy to help.
Terms and Conditions

By submitting a book for consideration, the author(s) and/or author(s)’ representative(s) agree to the following terms and conditions of The Thurber Prize for American Humor:

- A submission cannot proceed to the judging stage if Thurber House does not receive physical copies of the book. Thurber House will reach out to the listed contact(s) if the book copies have not arrived in a timely manner, but it is ultimately the submitter’s responsibility to ensure that the books are shipped promptly to Thurber House. ARCs are not eligible for judging purposes; you must send the officially released book.
- Authors whose books are selected as finalists must attend the award ceremony in Columbus, Ohio to participate in the ceremony and read from the nominated book. If the book is a collaboration by a writing team, at least one author must attend the event.
- The author(s) or representative(s) of the author(s) agree(s) to pay for the author(s)’ transportation to and from Columbus, Ohio and expenses while there.
- Applicants agree that the decisions of Thurber House and its chosen judges are final regarding all matters, including eligibility, timeliness of the submission, and compliance with the rules of The Thurber Prize.
- Author(s) must be available for media interviews.
- Thurber House has the permanent right in any form of media worldwide to use all online, radio, television, merchandising, promotional, and publicity rights that publisher and author may have in connection with their participation in the competition for The Thurber Prize for American Humor. Both publisher and author release any claim they have by virtue of their participation in the Thurber Prize competition, for use of their photographs, names, likenesses, voice, or appearances in connection with The Thurber Prize, and each consents to the permanent right to tape and/or broadcast the author’s acceptance speech without further consent or payment.
- Author(s) and author(s’) representative(s) forever release Thurber House, its employees, its chosen panel of judges, and other Thurber House authorized representatives from any claim or liability that may arise out of the selection, judging, and awards process for The Thurber Prize.