

NATIONAL BOOK AWARDS 2015 NOMINATION/SELECTION CRITERIA

General Guidelines and Definitions

1. **Book:** A printed and bound volume or book-length publication in digital or electronic form. Textbooks or books with exercises meant for classroom use are not considered books for purposes of the awards.

2. **Eligible Book:** A book published in the Philippines in the calendar year immediately preceding the year of the award is eligible. Except for books authored by members of the MCC, the BOJ, and the NBDB Governing Board and Secretariat, there are no restrictions as regard authorship; authors may be Filipinos or non-Filipinos, individuals or groups, dead or alive. Books published earlier or in the same year outside the country but published independently by a Philippine publisher in the calendar year preceding the year of the award are also eligible. The book must have an ISBN.

3. **Ineligible Book:** A reprint of a book already considered during a previous award year, a second or later edition (even if revised or enlarged), a book with plagiarized passages, a book that infringes on copyright, a book by a publisher not duly registered with the NBDB, a book without an international standard book number (ISBN), a book authored by an NBDB-appointed judge in the category s/he is judging, a book written by a National Artist for Literature, and any title authored by any member of the MCC and the NBDB Governing Board and Secretariat are automatically disqualified from competing for the awards.

4. **Nominated Book:** A book may be nominated if it is better written and more significant than other books in its category. Writing includes mechanics or grammar, typographical errors, copy editing, structure of thought and ideas, and style. Significance includes original contribution to its field of study or interest, accuracy of data, and reader impact. The reputation of the publisher, distribution, and actual sales figures are irrelevant to the awards.

5. **Design:** Except for the award for Best Design, the design of a book is secondary to content in the selection of the finalists and winners, unless the design seriously hampers the delivery of the content.

6. **Divisions:** There shall be two divisions: Literary and Non-Literary, with specific categories within each division further described in these rules. In the Literary Division, there are some categories that are open to books in four languages: English, Filipino, Ilonggo/Hiligaynon, and Kinaray-a.

7. **Publisher:** A registered NBDB publisher, author, foundation, association, or ongoing business engaged in publishing, developing and distributing printed material, or entity that published a book for a special purpose may nominate a book.

Professional organizations and ongoing businesses that submit titles for consideration must also submit a copy of their SEC registration to the NBDB.

I. LITERARY DIVISION

1. Literary Categories

Literary Awards are given to books that include or are about creative writing. These include the following genres: Fiction (Novel and Short Stories), Nonfiction, Essays, Anthology, Literary Criticism/Literary History, Poetry, and Graphic Literature in the following languages:

- a) English;
- b) Filipino;
- c) Ilonggo/Hiligaynon/Kinaray-a

Books published in Ilonggo/Hiligaynon/Kinaray-a within the last three calendar years (2012-2014) will be accepted for this year's awards.

1.1 **Fiction** - a book that contains either of the following:

- a) Novel - a full-length story or narrative of at least 50,000 words; or
- b) Short Stories - a collection of two or more short stories, or stories not long enough to be novels.

A nominated book offers a novel or a collection of stories that follow the conventions of the writing of literary fiction, such as plurisignification, logical structure, consistency of characterization, and precision in the use of language and literary devices. The book may deliberately challenge these conventions, but there should be clear evidence that the writer has done so not out of ignorance but out of deep knowledge of the tradition of the genre.

A winning book both delights and instructs, offering breadth and depth comparable to the Philippine works of fiction earlier given National Book Awards. If two or more books are tied for the award, the one that is better written in terms of literary quality is declared the winner.

1.2 Nonfiction - A full-length nonfictional work or collection of short nonfictional works, including autobiographies, biographies, memoirs, books about places, and other genres included in the broad category of nonfiction.

1.3 Essays - A book that contains a collection of familiar essays, including personal and critical essays.

1.4 Anthology - A book that contains a collection of literary works written by several writers chosen by a compiler/editor or compilers/editors. It may be a collection of poems, short stories, plays, short novels, or creative nonfiction pieces. It may also contain multiple genres written by a single author or multiple authors.

A nominated book contains literary pieces that are all of outstanding literary quality, that contribute to an overall theme or impression, and that are arranged in a clearly deliberate and purposeful order.

A winning book is consistently delightful and instructive, offering breadth and depth comparable to the Philippine anthologies earlier given National Book Awards. If two or more books are tied for the award, the one that is better written in terms of literary quality is declared the winner.

1.4 Literary Criticism/Literary History - a book that contains either a continuous work or several articles in the field of literary criticism, literary theory, or literary history.

A nominated book shows evidence of the author's having taken into account the latest books in literary theory, both local and foreign. The book must apply tools derived from contemporary theory to texts created by Philippine writers, though it could also contain analyses of works by non-Philippine writers.

A winning book is at the cutting-edge of literary theory, criticism, or history, exploring new areas of scholarship or reading that goes beyond what is already available in academic circles. If two or more books are tied for the award, the one that offers a new literary theory or a new component of an existing literary theory or presents a new reading of texts is declared the winner.

1.5 Poetry - a book that contains either a continuous poem or several poems.

A nominated book offers poems that follow the conventions of poetry, whether of traditional, modern, or avant-garde poetry, including but not limited to the interaction of sound and sense, profound sensibility, and awareness of poetic genres.

A winning book offers fresh insights into the human condition, particularly the condition of Filipinos inside or outside the country.

1.6 Graphic Literature - a book that contains autobiography, creative nonfiction, fiction, or other literary genre, but in graphic or illustrated, rather than purely verbal form.

A nominated book offers a narrative or anthology of narratives that follows the conventions of the writing of literary graphic fiction, such as congruence of verbal and illustrated content, logical structure, consistency of characterization, and precision in the use of visual and literary devices.

A nominated book can either constitute a complete story arc by itself, a collection of previously published serialized issues constituting a complete story arc or a compilation of cartoon strips, previously published or original material. Previous publication of a serialized story does not invalidate a published compilation of said pieces.

A winning book both delights and instructs, offering breadth and depth comparable to the Philippine graphic novels, graphic anthologies, or comic books earlier given National Book Awards. If the book is a collection of separate texts, there should be a unifying theme or motif among these texts. If two or more books are tied for the award, the one that is better written in terms of literary quality is declared the winner.

1.7 Translation - A book translated from one language into a Philippine language, English, or Spanish; or from one Philippine language to another Philippine language.

2. Nomination

Any publisher defined in the General Guidelines and Definitions registered with the National Book Development Board (NBDB) may nominate a literary title as defined above, published in the previous year (except for those books published in Ilonggo/Hiligaynon or Kinaray-a), by sending a letter of nomination and by submitting eight (8) initial copies of that title for consideration of a chosen literary organization in the above categories, in English, Filipino, or any other language. The publisher must clearly state in the letter of nomination that the author/s agreed to be nominated to the National Book Awards in the category the publisher has chosen for the work. Evidence of such agreement by the author can take the form of copies of conforme statements given by the publisher and signed by the author or notarized warranty/affidavits by a responsible officer of the publisher stating that permissions from the authors whose works are nominated have been obtained.

The 8 initial copies shall go to the following:

- a. Each member of the Prescreening Committee;
- b. The NBDB Chair
- c. The NBDB library; and
- d. The NBDB-chosen design outfit/book designer.

3. Prescreening Committee

There will be five (5) persons designated to prescreen the nominated books in the Literary Division, who shall be:

3.1 A nominee from a literary organization or a person considered an expert in the field - The NBDB shall select a literary organization, which shall be asked to nominate one (1) member to serve in the prescreening committee of the NBA, or a known expert in the field to prescreen the nominations. In the case of a literary organization, it shall be given five (5) days from receipt of the letter asking them to nominate a member, after which the NBDB reserves the right to select another literary organization;

3.2 A nominee of the NBDB - The NBDB shall nominate one (1) person of competent expertise, who shall also be the NBDB's permanent judge for this division; and

3.3 Three members of the MCC - The MCC shall elect three (3) members from its ranks to be part of the prescreening committee, who shall not necessarily be the same members of the prescreening committee in the other division but must be part of the BOJ.

Reclassification of books – If a publisher nominates a book in a wrong category, the Prescreening committee shall reclassify the nominated title under a category most appropriate for it. This would be done with consent of both the publisher and author of the misclassified book.

Prescreening of books in Ilonggo/Hiligaynon and Kinaray-a - The NBDB and the MCC shall nominate one (1) judge each, or a total of two (2) judges, who shall prescreen all the books in all the categories in Ilonggo/Hiligaynon and Kinaray-a for the Literary Division. These judges must necessarily also be part of the BOJ of the Literary Division.

All meetings by the Prescreening Committee shall be scheduled beforehand by the NBDB and shall be documented by a member of the NBDB Secretariat.

4. Finalists

The Prescreening Committee shall select no more than five (5) titles per category, which 5 titles shall automatically be considered finalists from which a winner for that particular category shall be chosen. The choice of finalists by the Prescreening Committee shall be by majority vote of the members of the Prescreening Committee, and all decisions of the Prescreening Committee shall be final.

5. Notice to Finalists

Publishers of titles chosen as finalists by the Prescreening Committee shall be informed in writing by the NBDB that their titles have been chosen as finalists in the specific categories indicated, and shall be required to submit an additional six (6) copies of the books to the NBDB. Non-submission of the required copies on the date specified in the notice will disqualify the title from consideration by the BOJ.

II. NON-LITERARY DIVISION

1. Non-Literary Categories

Non-Literary Awards are given to books that do not include nor are about creative writing, except that such creative writing techniques may be used occasionally to enhance the text.

1.1 Art - a book that focuses on any of the art forms (including photography, film, and television), except literature. A collection of essays on art by a single author or by several authors, provided the essays are not primarily literary or creative, is classified under this category. For purposes of the awards, photojournalism is considered an art form.

A nominated book offers fresh and original insights into the work/s of a visual, performing, electronic, or other type of artist/s. If the book is a collection of separate texts, each text must have the characteristic listed above. A book featuring mostly photographs of artworks may be nominated if the prose portion is substantial.

A winning book is itself a work of art, blending design with content, style with the style of the artist/s discussed. If two or more books are tied for the award, the one that offers a more comprehensive account of the body of work of an artist or artists is declared the winner.

1.2 Professions - a book that focuses on law, medicine, accounting, engineering, or other professions requiring licensure examinations, and the application of these professions to daily life.

A nominated book is meant primarily for the general reading public and not for other professionals (such as lawyers, law students, doctors, medical students, engineers, and so on). It must offer accurate and useful advice based on existing laws, medical knowledge, or other professional practice. It must be well-written in terms of style, with a readability level as high or lower than that of educated non-professionals. If the book is a collection of separate texts, each text must have the characteristics listed above.

A winning book is a full-length text that does not falter in places but keeps a consistent tone. If two or more books are tied for the award, the one that focuses on lesser known aspects of the profession is declared the winner.

1.3 Social Sciences - a book in the area of any of the social sciences, including religious studies and interdisciplinary studies.

A nominated book offers a fresh and original insight into its subject, in an expository style that displays correct and precise use of language, accuracy of data, extensiveness of research, and awareness of audience impact. If the book is a collection of separate texts, each text must have the characteristics listed above.

A winning book is a full-length text that does not falter in places but keeps a consistent tone. If two or more books are tied for the award, the one that focuses on less explored aspects of the social sciences is declared the winner.

1.4 History – A book that focuses on historical narratives.

1.5 Journalism – A book that focuses on current events, reportage, or is a documentary of a person or group of people, place, or event.

1.6 Leisure - A book about travel, tourism, sports, sports management, fashion, humor, wellness, and other such areas.

A nominated book offers a fresh and original insight into its subject, in an expository style that displays correct and precise use of language, accuracy of data, extensiveness of research, and awareness of audience impact. If the book is a collection of separate texts, each text must have the characteristics listed above. A book featuring mostly photographs may be nominated if the prose portion is substantial.

A winning book is a full-length text that does not falter in places but keeps a consistent tone. If two or more books are tied for the award, the one that inspires more readers to

take up a leisure activity or that offers newer or more information on leisure activity matters is declared the winner.

1.7 Food – A book that highlights culinary arts, culinary history, and other related areas.

1.8 Science - A book in the area of any of the natural or physical sciences.

A nominated book is meant primarily for the general reading public and not for scientists or science students. It must be well-written in terms of style, with a readability level as high or lower than that of educated adults without science degrees. If the book is a collection of separate texts, each text must have the characteristics listed above.

A winning book is a full-length text that does not falter in places but keeps a consistent tone. If two or more books are tied for the award, the one that focuses on lesser known aspects of science is declared the winner.

2. Nomination

Any publisher as defined in the Guidelines and Definitions may nominate a title published in the previous year, by submitting a letter of nomination for the above categories. A publisher who nominates a title must also submit eight (8) initial copies of that title for consideration of the judges. The publisher must clearly state in the letter of nomination that the author/s agreed to be nominated to the National Book Awards in the category the publisher has chosen for the work. Evidence of such agreement by the author can take the form of copies of conforme statements given by the publisher and signed by the author or notarized warranty/affidavits by a responsible officer of the publisher stating that permissions from the authors where works are nominated have been obtained.

Submissions by university departments must contain the signature of the head of the department, or an authorized department representative as designated by the dean of the college or the university president.

The 8 copies shall go to the following:

- a. Each member of the Prescreening Committee;
- b. The NBDB Chair
- c. The NBDB library; and
- d. The NBDB-chosen design outfit/book designer.

3. Prescreening Committee

There will be five (5) persons designated to prescreen the nominated books in the whole Non-Literary Division, who shall be:

3.1 A nominee from a non-literary organization selected by the NBDB - The NBDB shall select a professional organization, university department, or an expert from the specific field to be part of the prescreening committee. In case of a professional organization or university department, it shall be asked to nominate one (1) member to serve in the prescreening committee of the NBA. The chosen professional organization or university department shall be given five (5) days from receipt of the letter asking them to nominate a member, after which the NBDB reserves the right to select another professional organization, university department, or an individual who is a known expert in the field;

3.2 A nominee of the NBDB - The NBDB shall nominate one (1) person of competent expertise, who shall also be the NBDB's permanent judge for this division; and

3.3. Three members of the MCC - The MCC shall elect three (3) members from its ranks to be part of the prescreening committee, who shall not necessarily be the same members of the prescreening committee in the other division.

The Prescreening Committee shall choose no more than five (5) nominees by a majority vote to become finalists, which titles shall be elevated to the BOJ for consideration.

All meetings by the Prescreening Committee shall be scheduled beforehand by the NBDB and shall be documented by a member of the NBDB Secretariat.

III. Design

1. **Design** - the overall design of a book, including but not limited to the cover design, the choice of typefaces, the dimensions of the page, the lay-out, the type of paper, the binding, and the printing.

1.1. The award for Best Design is not intended to be limited to coffee table books; an inexpensive book without pictures or illustrations can be better designed than an expensive one with pictures or illustrations.

1.2. A nominated book combines all the elements of design into a coherent whole, supplementing but not supplanting the content of the book.

1.3. A winning book entices the reader to read the contents carefully while admiring the way the book looks. If two or more books are tied for the award, the one that offers a more innovative way to use the elements of design is declared the winner.

2. Prescreening Committee

There will be four (4) persons designated to prescreen all the nominated books in the Design category, who shall be:

2.1 An NBDB-chosen design outfit/book designer - The NBDB shall nominate one (1) person of competent expertise, who shall also be the NBDB's permanent judge for this category; and

2.2 Three members of the MCC – The MCC shall elect three (3) members from its ranks to be part of the prescreening committee, who shall be the same members of the prescreening committee in the other divisions.

The Prescreening Committee shall choose no more than five (5) nominees by a majority vote to become finalists, which titles shall be elevated to the BOJ for consideration.

IV. Publisher of the Year

The Publisher of the Year is a special award given to the publisher who has the highest number of winning nominations in the National Book Awards.

The Board of Judges

1. Composition

Every year, each Division of the National Book Awards shall be composed of a Board of Judges (BOJ). They are as follows:

Six (6) members of the Manila Critics Circle (MCC) to be designated by the MCC, three of whom shall be members of the Prescreening Committee of each division and in the design category; and

Five (5) judges nominated by the National Book Development Board (NBDB), three (3) of whom shall be the NBDB-nominated members of the Prescreening Committee for each language in the Literary division, who shall also be designated as the NBDB's permanent judge for the Literary division. There is also one (1) designated Prescreening Committee member and NBDB's permanent judge for the Non-Literary division. The fifth judge shall be the NBDB's category judge for the categories of each division, who shall be the designated expert in each category.

The BOJ shall be chaired by the Chair of the NBDB, who shall vote only in case of a tie. In case the Chair of the NBDB is not available, the Chair of the MCC shall act as Chair of the BOJ and shall likewise vote only in case of a tie, even if s/he is a member of either the Prescreening Committee or the BOJ or both.

The MCC may designate among themselves the MCC member of the BOJ for each category of both the literary and non-literary divisions; however, the MCC-designated members of the Prescreening Committee shall always be part of the BOJ for the particular divisions they screened.

The NBDB reserves the right to nominate a different judge for each category within any division, depending on the expertise of the chosen judge, who may or may not be the same judge nominated by the NBDB-chosen prescreening organization.

2. Voting

Each member of the BOJ, except for the Chair when there is no tie, is entitled to one vote. A vote must be explained verbally during the voting process, taking into consideration factors that determine the quality of the title. A title in all categories of both divisions must be voted upon by the majority of the BOJ to win. All decisions of the BOJ are final.

3. Meetings

Meetings of the BOJ shall be held at the NBDB Conference Room or at any designated place agreed upon beforehand by the members of the BOJ with the agreement of the NBDB.

Minutes of every meeting by the BOJ shall be taken by a member of the NBDB Secretariat, who shall keep the minutes in a confidential file within the premises of the NBDB.

4. Prizes

The winner of each category, except Publisher of the Year, will receive a cash prize of Fifteen Thousand Pesos (P15,000.00), which will be awarded to the author or book designer, as the case may be, and not to the publisher. Citations, including the Special Critics' Prize, do not win cash prizes. The Special Critics' Prize will be given by the Manila Critics Circle to books either not nominated by their publishers or books published by publishers not registered with the NBDB. In no case may the Special Critics' Prize be given to books that were nominated but were not chosen by either the Prescreening Committee or the BOJ or both.

There will be Special Awards; such as Juan C. Laya Prize, Alfonso T. Ongpin Prize, Iñigo Ed. Regalado Prize, Cirilo F. Bautista Prize, Philippine Literary Arts Council Prize, Elfren S. Cruz Prize, and Komisyon sa Wika ng Filipino Prize, which will be chosen from among the winners of the National Book Awards.

Please address submissions to:

The Executive Director
c/o the Accreditation and Incentives Division
National Book Development Board
Unit 2401 24/F Prestige Tower
F. Ortigas Jr. (formerly Emerald Avenue)
Ortigas Center, Pasig City

The deadline for submissions is **May 30, 2015**. Books mailed from outside Manila will be accepted if **postmarked May 30, 2015**.