

# Short Story Competition 2026 Terms and Conditions

This competition is organised by

Calibre Audio

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Registered charity No: 286614 (England and Wales); SC051461 (Scotland).

## 1. Eligibility

1.1 Entry to this competition is open to people of all ages who are resident in the UK (including the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man) with the exception of Calibre Audio employees, trustees and related parties.

1.2 Entries will be judged in four age categories. Categories will be allocated based on age at the time of application. The four categories are:

- Under 11s
- 12-17
- 18-25
- 26 and over

## 2. How to Enter

2.1 The Competition opens at 9am on 4<sup>th</sup> June 2026

2.2 The Competition closes at midnight on 13<sup>th</sup> September 2026

2.3 Entries received outside of these stipulated times will not be valid.

2.4 There is no cost to enter the competition.

2.5 To be considered, all entries must comply with the following rules:

- Stories can be submitted as either narrative or verse
- Stories can be submitted in writing as a Word document or PDF; as a standard video file (MP4) or a standard audio file (MP3 or WAV). Any submissions in other formats will not be considered.
- Stories should not be longer than 550 words. (with a 10% discretion allowed above the word limit)

- Each story should contain an empathy boosting theme – a story or poem that explores life through someone else’s eyes and experiences. Calibre Audio’s resources page offers useful tips on creating an empathy-led story: <https://www.calibreaudio.org.uk/year-of-reading/short-story-competition-resources>
- All stories must be submitted in English.
- Stories must be wholly written by the entrant and should not infringe the rights of any other party
- No previously published stories will be considered.
- Stories written by more than one person will not be considered.
- Characters and events must be purely fictional, although they can be inspired by real life people and events.
- Stories should not include any personal details about the author as they may be published.
- Stories must not contain material that is offensive, obscene, defamatory or in any other way unsuitable and Calibre Audio reserves the right to disqualify any entries contravening this rule.
- **The use of AI tools is not permitted and any such entries will be disqualified.**

2.6 The entry form can be found on the Calibre Audio website here:

<https://www.calibreaudio.org.uk/news/inclusive-voices> . The online entry form enables entrants to upload their written, audio or video files. If you are unable to complete the online entry form, please contact us for help on [shortstory@calibre.org.uk](mailto:shortstory@calibre.org.uk) or by calling our Membership Services Team on 01296 432339. You can also submit your entry by post addressed to Inclusive Voices Short Story competition, Calibre Audio, Weston Turville, Aylesbury, Bucks. HP22 5XQ. Postal entries must be accompanied by an entry form – contact our Membership services team on the number above or email [shortstory@calibre.org.uk](mailto:shortstory@calibre.org.uk) for an entry form.

2.7 Entrants may make multiple submissions, provided a separate entry form is completed for each story submitted.

2.8 If the entry is for a young person aged 17 or under, the entry form must be completed by an adult, aged 18 or over, who is responsible for obtaining parental consent and providing a copy of the Terms and Conditions to the parent/carer to ensure compliance. If the adult completing the entry form is not a parent or carer, please be aware that in event of a complaint, we may ask for proof that parental consent was given in advance of the entry being submitted.

2.9 Entrants retain the copyright to their entries, but it is a condition of entry that Calibre Audio is granted a perpetual non-exclusive royalty-free licence to reproduce, publish, broadcast and post the entry, in whole or in part, online on all or any platforms. Only the story title, entrant's name and age will be published with an entry. Permission to use a photo will be requested but is not obligatory.

### 3. Prizes

**3.1 Prizes will be awarded to the top three entries in each category as follows:**

#### **Adult Age Categories**

The author of **first placed** entry in each adult age category will win:

- An Echo Dot.
- A Day in the Calibre Studio in Buckinghamshire with the opportunity to record their story/hear their story being recorded for inclusion in the Calibre Collection, meet the team and other winners, take part in a photoshoot and enjoy a celebratory lunch.
- The opportunity to attend a prize giving event in the Norman Bragg Studio at the Aylesbury Waterside Theatre in Buckinghamshire on Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> October 2026.

The author of the **second placed** entry in each adult age category will win:

- A £20 Book Token
- The opportunity to attend a prize giving event in the Norman Bragg Studio at the Aylesbury Waterside Theatre in Buckinghamshire on Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> October 2026.

The author of the **third placed** entry in each adult age category will win:

- The opportunity to attend a prize giving event in the Norman Bragg Studio at the Aylesbury Waterside Theatre in Buckinghamshire on Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> October 2026.
- Calibre Branded Merchandise

#### **Children's Age Categories**

The author of **first placed** entry in each children's age category will win:

- A Voxblock audiobook player, headphones, travel case, and a selection of age appropriate book blocks.

- 5 audio gift cards of Nosy Crow audiobooks to redeem via the xigxag audiobook platform.
- A Day in the Calibre Studio in Buckinghamshire with the opportunity to record their story/hear their story being recorded for inclusion in the Calibre Collection, meet the team and other winners, take part in a photoshoot and enjoy a celebratory lunch. (Under 18s should be accompanied by a parent/carer or another responsible adult over the age of 18).
- The opportunity to attend a prize giving event in the Norman Bragg Studio at the Aylesbury Waterside Theatre in Buckinghamshire on Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> October 2026. (Under 18s should be accompanied by a parent/carer or another responsible adult over the age of 18).

The author of the **second placed** entry in each children's age category will win:

- 3 audio gift cards of Nosy Crow audiobooks to redeem via the xigxag audiobook platform.
- The opportunity to attend a prize giving event in the Norman Bragg Studio at the Aylesbury Waterside Theatre in Buckinghamshire on Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> October 2026. (Under 18s should be accompanied by a parent/carer or another responsible adult over the age of 18).

The author of the **third placed** entry in each children's age category will win:

- Calibre Branded Merchandise
- 2 audio gift cards of Nosy Crow audiobooks to redeem via the xigxag audiobook platform.
- The opportunity to attend a prize giving event in the Norman Bragg Studio at the Aylesbury Waterside Theatre in Buckinghamshire on Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> October 2026. (Under 18s should be accompanied by a parent/carer or another responsible adult over the age of 18).

3.2 No element of the prize may be transferred by the winner and no alternative (cash or otherwise) will be available or offered.

3.3 Winners will be notified by the end of October.

## 4. Judging Criteria

4.1 Entries will be judged on the following criteria:

- Inclusion of an empathy boosting character or story line
- 550 words or less (with a 10% discretion allowed above the word limit)

- Authenticity
- Originality.
- Plot.
- Characterisation.
- Enjoyment.

4.2 The Judging Process will be as follows:

Initial screening of all entries by the Calibre Audio Editorial and Staff Team according to the criteria above.

The top entries will then be sent to the Judging Panel.

Each judge will score each story against the set criteria and the scores will be combined to determine the winner.

4.3 The names of the Judging Panel will be published on the Calibre Audio website.

4.4 The Judges decision is final, will not be subject to appeal and no correspondence will be entered into.

## **5. General**

5.1 Proof of age, identity and eligibility may be requested from prize winners.

5.2 Calibre Audio reserves the right to disqualify any entry which breaches these Terms and Conditions, brings Calibre Audio into disrepute or to withhold a prize if entries are not deemed to be of a required standard.

5.3 Calibre Audio reserves the right to:

5.3.1 amend these rules or cancel this competition at any stage, if deemed necessary in its opinion, or if circumstances arise outside of its control.

5.3.2 disqualify any entrant or winner who breaches these rules, has acted fraudulently in any way or brings Calibre Audio into disrepute (in its sole discretion).

5.4 Calibre Audio accepts no responsibility for any technical failure or malfunction of any digital system or otherwise which may result in an entry being lost or not properly registered or recorded or is corrupt or unreadable. Proof of sending is not proof of receipt.

5.5 Calibre Audio accepts no responsibility if entrants ignore these rules and each entrant, or their parent/carer/responsible adult submitting the entry, agrees to indemnify Calibre Audio against any claim made by any third party arising from a breach of these rules.

5.6 Entrants are deemed to have accepted these Terms and Conditions by submitting an entry.

5.7 If any of these clauses should be determined to be illegal, invalid, or otherwise unenforceable then it shall be severed and deleted from these rules and the remaining clauses shall survive, remain in full force and effect.

5.8 Calibre Audio reserves the right to terminate and revoke the prize if these rules are not adhered to.

5.9 The competition is run by Calibre Audio. These rules are governed by the laws of England and Wales.