



TIL literary contests now open with prizes totaling more than \$25,000!

The Texas Institute of Letters has named its distinguished judges for its literary contests, which are now open for submissions. Judges will select winners and honorees in thirteen categories for the best works published in 2025. Winners will be awarded at the TIL's annual meeting, to be held on May 1-2, 2026 in College Station, Texas. In addition, the TIL will award a lifetime achievement award (\$7,000) and the Jones Fellowship (\$9,000), for a total of \$41,000 in annual awards.

To submit works for award consideration:

1. Complete online contest entry form and pay entry fee (\$20 for book awards / \$10 for short story & short nonfiction awards):

[Online contest entry form](#)

2. Submissions of works must be mailed to the appropriate judging committee members. Addresses are listed below. Since there are three members for each committee, you will need to send a copy of the work to each judge. Include a brief note inside each copy of the book or clipped to the article that identifies the contest that you are entering.

3. Authors or their representatives should not have any contact with judges other than to submit work to each judge.

4. A book can only be entered in one category.

5. Submissions must be postmarked no later than Friday, January 9, 2026.

6. All works entered must be published in a print format during 2025, with four exceptions. Works for the *Cattarulla* and *Shrake* awards must be published in print OR digital format during 2025. Unpublished manuscripts and online publications will not be considered. Submissions for the two biennial awards, the *Soeurette Diehl Fraser* and the *Frederick Luis Aldama*, are for books published in 2024 or 2025.

7. To be considered, an entry must be the first published version of the work.

8. A person or publisher may enter only one work per author per contest category for the writing contests; a person or publisher may enter only one work per translator for the translation contest. In other words, a publisher may enter different works by different authors in one category but cannot submit more than one book by the same author or translator in one category.

- The only exception to the ‘one work per author per contest category’ rule is the *Shrake Award for Short Nonfiction*: “This prize is for the best article or essay appearing in newspapers, journals, or magazines. Multiple articles by a single author may be submitted — with a total not exceeding 10,000 words, as long as those articles are parts of a series or by a columnist.”

9. The *Cattarulla* and *Shrake* awards allow for the submission of works that have been published in print OR digital formats during 2025. Eligible digital publications should be: refereed and edited journals with an acceptance/rejection policy (not self-publishing); stand-alone digital publications (e.g. *Narrative Magazine*) or online publications of established print magazines or newspapers (e.g. *Atlantic Monthly*); and digital publications with a discernible publication date. The digital publication of the short story or short nonfiction should be the first published version of the work. Special submission instructions: print the digital entry, with URL at the top of the first page, and submit work to judges by regular mail.

CONTEST CATEGORIES AND JUDGES

Jesse H. Jones Award for Best Book of Fiction (\$5,000)

- **Bret Johnston** 804 Leonard St., Austin, TX 78705
- **Gilbert Hernández** % Búho, 1140 E Washington St, Brownsville, TX 78520
- **Thao Votang** P.O. Box 301449, Austin, TX 78703

Sergio Troncoso Award for Best First Book of Fiction (\$5,000)

- **Marcela Fuentes** 6708 Genoa Rd, Fort Worth, TX 76116
- **LaToya Watkins** 3526 Lakeview Pkwy. Set B#102, Rowlett TX 75088
- **Juan Ochoa** 720 S. Inspiration Rd. Mission, TX 78572

Carr P. Collins Award for Best Book of Nonfiction (\$4,000)

- **Jeffrey P. Forret** 5945 Crockett, Lumberton, TX 77657
- **Katy Vine** 1708 Valeria St., Austin, TX 78704
- **Jerry D. Thompson** % Dept. of Humanities, TAMIU, 5201 University Blvd., Laredo, TX 78041

Beverly Lowry Award for Best First Book of Nonfiction (\$1,000)

- **Bryan Burrough** 7204 West Rim Dr., Austin, TX 78731
- **Diana López** 4510 Grand Lake Dr., Corpus Christi TX 78413
- **Ken Esten Cooke** 608 Tanya St. Fredericksburg, TX 78624

Burdine Johnson Award for Best Book of Poetry (\$1,250)

- **Kevin Prufer** 1401 Allston St., Houston TX 77008
- **J. Bruce Fuller** % TRP: The University Press of SHSU, P.O. Box 2146, Huntsville, TX 77341-2146
- **Eduardo Martínez** 5316 1/2 Village Green, Los Angeles, CA 90016

Naomi Shihab Nye Award for Best First Book of Poetry (\$1,000)

- **Saúl Hernández** 423 Blue Star, Apt 5206, San Antonio, TX 78204
- **Alexandra van de Kamp** 206 E. Lullwood Avenue, Apt A, San Antonio, TX 78212
- **Laurence Musgrove** 2060 Lincoln Hwy #215, St. Charles, IL 60174

Texas Institute of Letters Award for Most Significant Scholarly Book (\$1,000)

- **David Ponton III** % Rollins College Department of Sociology, 1000 Holt Ave. #2761, Winter Park, FL 32789-4499
- **Frank de la Teja** 2405 Toulouse Dr., Austin, TX 78748
- **Jody Marin** 406 Beam Station Rd Alice, TX 78332

Soeurette Diehl Fraser Award for Best Translation (\$1,000)

(This is a biennial award for books published in 2024 and 2025.)

- **Philip Boehm** 2620 Barbara Lane, Houston, TX 77005
- **Elizabeth Gonzalez** James 18 Magnolia Rd, Sharon, MA 02067
- **Cyrus Cassells** 605 Pecan Grove Road, Austin, TX 78704

Frederick Luis Aldama Award for Best Graphic Novel (\$1,500)

(This is a biennial award for books published in 2024 and 2025.)

- **Frederick Luis Aldama** 4703 Avenue F, Austin, TX 78751
- **Guadalupe García McCall** 13723 Topaz Lake, Helotes TX 78023
- **Xavier Garza** 6310 Madeleine Dr., San Antonio, TX 78229

Jean Flynn Award for Best Young Adult Book (\$1,000)

- **e.E. Charlton-Trujillo** 504 E. Jackson St., Bloomington, IL 61701
- **Jay Brandon** 244 Hermine Blvd., San Antonio TX 78212
- **Manuel Ruiz** 1002 Aransas Cv., Round Rock, TX 78664

Deirdre Siobhan FlynnBass Award for Best Middle Grade Book (\$1,000)

- **Cynthia Leitich Smith** 1201 Oxford Lane, Denton, TX 76209
- **Meredith Davis** 3209 Winding Creek Dr., Austin, TX 78735
- **Rebecca Balcárcel** 3133 Meadow Wood Ln., Bedford, TX 76021

Brigid Erin Flynn Award for Best Picture Book (\$1,000)

- **Jamie Ofelia** % Texas Institute of Letters, PO Box 130294, Spring, TX 77393
- **Cathy Berner** 19423 Shawnway Lane, Houston, TX 77094
- **Shelley Armitage** 1139 Pueblo Gardens Ct., Las Cruces, NM 88007

Kay Cattarulla Award for Best Short Story (\$1,000)

- **Patrick Font** 9075 Gaylord Dr. Apt. 48, Houston, TX 77024
- **Helen Thompson** 223 N. Guadalupe St., #631, Santa Fe, NM 87501

- **Héctor González** 708 W 35th St, Austin, TX 78705

Edwin “Bud” Shrake Award for Best Short Nonfiction (\$1,000)

- **Ire’ne Iara Silva** 8401 N New Braunfels #112, San Antonio, TX 78209
- **Steven G. Kellman** 302 Fawn Drive, Shavano Park, Texas 78231
- **Robert Faires** 1708 Eva St., Austin, TX 78704

The Texas Institute of Letters is a non-profit established in 1936 to promote interest in Texas literature and to recognize literary achievement. The TIL’s elected membership consists of the state’s most recognized and serious writers of fiction, nonfiction, poetry, journalism, and scholarship. The membership includes winners of the MacArthur Fellowship, Man Booker Prize, Pulitzer Prizes in drama, fiction, and nonfiction, as well as prizes awarded by PEN, and dozens of other regional and national award and grant-giving institutions.

The concepts of diversity and affirmative action guide the policies and programs of the Texas Institute of Letters. Our goal is to provide equal opportunity and representation to all distinguished writers without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, marital status, veteran status, sexual orientation, genetic information or any other protected characteristic under applicable law. To truly reflect the population and the experience of all peoples living in Texas, we seek and value the benefits of diversity in membership, awardees, and administration.