

# Vocal Writing Awards: Official Rules and Guidelines

## 1. Overview

The Vocal Writing Awards (hereinafter referred to as "the Awards") is a writing contest hosted by Vocal, aimed at celebrating the diverse voices and extraordinary storytelling of our platform. Vocal ("Vocal") organizes the Awards subject to the following Rules and Guidelines ("Rules"). By participating in the Awards, you agree to comply with and accept these Rules. All applicable federal, state, local, and municipal laws and regulations apply.

## 2. Eligibility

The Awards are open to anyone with a Vocal account. Participants are required to submit their best story along with a \$20 entry fee. Vocal+ members receive 50% off one entry per category as a special benefit. Participants who are not subscribed to Vocal+ and attempt to submit using a Vocal+ discount code will be promptly disqualified, and no refunds will be provided.

The Awards are not open to employees and their families (including spouses, parents, children/siblings, and their respective spouses) of Vocal or Creatd Inc ("Creatd"), or their affiliates, advertising, or production agencies. By entering the Awards, participants consent to the use of their registration information in accordance with the Vocal Terms of Use and Privacy Policy. Entries must be original and not infringe upon any copyright, trademark, or proprietary rights of others. Vocal may disqualify any participants who tampers with the entry process, violates the rules, or acts in an unsportsmanlike or disruptive manner. Participants must have an active account on Vocal and meet any specific eligibility requirements stated in the Awards description. The Awards may be terminated without notice, and all prizes will be awarded according to the criteria determined by the judges. All applicable federal, state and local laws apply. Void where prohibited by law.

## 3. Entry Procedure

To enter the Awards, participants must first publish their story on Vocal. After publishing, they should select the appropriate category on the Awards page and submit their story's URL along with the \$20 entry fee. Vocal+ members will receive an email with a discount code for 50% off one entry per category.

Eligibility of individual entries will be at the sole discretion of Vocal, for any reason or for no reason, though specific reasons for disqualification may include use of inappropriate language or visuals. Vocal is not responsible for and will not consider incomplete or incorrect entries. Entries generated by automated means or subverting the entry process are void.

## 4. Categories

The Awards feature eight categories, including but not limited to:

- Fantasy Fiction
- Flash Fiction
- Horror Fiction
- Romance Fiction
- Science Fiction
- Young Adult Fiction
- Free Verse Poetry
- Haiku Poetry

## 5. Judging

The entries will be judged by a team of experts, led by former Times literary editor Erica Wagner. They will curate a shortlist for each category. The final winners will be chosen through community voting, allowing creators to choose the winners amongst their peers.

## 6. Multiple Submissions

Participants can submit different stories to each category, subject to any applicable fees associated with each entry. However, the same story cannot be submitted to more than one category.

## 7. Awards Period

The Awards begin on July 13, 2023, and end at 11:59 p.m ET on September 30, 2023. Winners will be announced on November 17, 2023. Winners will receive their payments via Stripe within a maximum period of 90 days following the announcement of the results. For more details, please view the Vocal Awards timeline on the Vocal Awards site.

## 8. Vocal Referral Program

Vocal also offers a referral program to incentivize participants to refer or nominate writers to enter the Vocal Writing Awards. Under this program, individuals who successfully refer or nominate a writer to enter the Awards will receive a \$5 reward. There is no cap on the number of people you can refer, allowing you to earn rewards for multiple referrals.

Please note that Vocal reserves the right to remove individuals from the referral program if there is evidence or belief that they are abusing the system. Abuse of the referral program includes, but is not limited to, fraudulent or dishonest practices aimed at gaining unfair advantages or exploiting the program's rewards. Any such abuse may result in disqualification from the referral program and potential loss of referral rewards.

## 9. Rights and Permissions

By entering the Awards, participants grant Vocal the right to publish, reproduce, distribute, and otherwise use the submitted stories in any manner, in whole or in part, throughout the world, in any media now known or hereafter devised, for any purpose, without additional compensation unless prohibited by law.

## 10. Disqualification

Vocal reserves the right to disqualify any participant who is found to be violating these rules, or who engages in any unlawful or inappropriate conduct. Participants who are not subscribed to Vocal+ and attempt to submit using a Vocal+ discount code will be promptly disqualified, and no refunds will be provided.

## 12. Changes to the Rules

Vocal reserves the right to modify these rules at any time without prior notice. Participants are advised to regularly check the Awards page for any updates.

## 13. Acceptance of Rules

Participation in the Awards constitutes the participant's full and unconditional agreement to and acceptance of these rules. The participant represents and warrants that they comply with all eligibility requirements and all decisions of Vocal and the judges are final and binding.

## 14. Limitation of Liability

By entering, participants agree to release Vocal and Creatd, and their respective subsidiaries, affiliates, advertising and promotion agencies, partners, representatives, agents, successors, assigns, employees, officers, and directors from any liability, illness, injury, death, loss, litigation, claim, or damage that may occur, directly or indirectly, whether caused by negligence or not, from: (i) your participation in the Awards and/or your acceptance, possession, use, or misuse of any prize or any portion thereof; (ii) technical failures of any kind, including but not limited to the malfunction of any computer, cable, network, hardware, or software, or other mechanical equipment; (iii) the unavailability or inaccessibility of any transmissions, telephone, or Internet service; (iv) unauthorized human intervention in any part of the entry process or the Awards; (v) electronic or human error in the administration of the Awards or the processing and selection of entries. Vocal reserves the right to terminate or modify the Awards if fraud or technical failures compromise the integrity of the Awards as determined by Vocal in its sole discretion. In such a case, Vocal may select the winner from all eligible entries received prior to and/or after (if appropriate) the action taken by Vocal. Vocal reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to disqualify any individual who tampers or attempts to tamper with the entry process or the operation of the Awards or website or violates the Awards Rules. EACH PRIZE IS AWARDED "AS IS" WITHOUT ANY REPRESENTATIONS OR WARRANTIES.

## 15. Prizes

Prizes for first place, second place, and third place in the Awards will be granted per category. The Awards first place winners will receive \$1,000 plus 20% of entry fees per category; the second place winners will receive \$500 + 10% of entry fees per category; the third place winners will receive \$250 plus 5% of entry fees per category. Values of the applicable entry fees per category will be determined based on the prize pool amounts at 11:59 p.m ET on September 30th, 2023. Prizes will be distributed to the winners' Vocal Wallets within 45 business days after the winners are announced.

No more than the stated number of prizes will be awarded. No transfer or substitution of prizes is permitted. Where permitted by law, by accepting a prize, each winner agrees to the printing, publication, broadcasting, distributing, and release of his/her name/pen name, likeness, photograph and city and state of residence for potential promotional purposes in any media worldwide, without further payment or consideration or, notice, review, or consent. Vocal reserves the right to substitute the prize with another prize of equal or greater value if the foregoing prize is not available. All federal, state, and local taxes are solely the responsibility of the winner.

## 16. Winners

Winners will be posted on Vocal's site and social channels as they are determined.