When does the competition close?

Submissions will be accepted until 11.59pm AEDT Monday 14 December 2026.

When will the winner be announced?

The winner will be announced on Thursday 10 June 2027.

Can I enter more than one manuscript?

Entrants may only enter this competition once.

Can I enter a manuscript that I entered last year?

Only manuscripts that have been substantially re-written are eligible.

Is there a word limit?

Manuscripts submitted must be no longer than 100,000 words.

Is there a minimum word limit?

There is no minimum number of words that constitute a novel. A short novel would be upwards of 50000 words.

Do I need to submit a complete manuscript?

Only complete manuscripts will be accepted.

Are YA manuscripts eligible?

The judges will be looking for a manuscript to sit on the Adult publishing literary list.

Can I submit non-fiction?

The Penguin Literary Prize is for a work of fiction.

Is commercial fiction eligible?

The judges will be looking for a manuscript to sit on the Adult publishing literary list.

Can I enter as an Australian citizen living overseas?

To be eligible for the prize, entrants need to be currently living in Australia.

Can I disclose my manuscript to other publishers?

To be eligible for the prize, manuscripts cannot be published or be currently submitted for publication. Including for other prizes that include publication in the terms of submission.

Can I enter my manuscript that I have self-published?

Self-published manuscripts are ineligible.

Can I use AI tools to help create my manuscript?

Manuscripts that are created, or derived from works, using AI tools are ineligible.

What are my IP rights to my manuscript?

You retain copyright in your manuscript. You would grant PRH a licence to share your manuscript within Penguin Random House Australia and to judges so that we can run the competition.

If your entry is shortlisted or is the winner, you would grant PRH the first option of publishing your work. If you are the winner, you would also grant PRH a licence to reproduce an extract of your work on the penguin website in connection with the competition.

Do I have to publish my manuscript with Penguin Random House Australia?

If you are the winner, you would grant us the first option of publishing your work. You would agree to negotiate with us in good faith a publishing agreement on fair and reasonable market terms. One of those terms is that the $20,000 prize would be treated as an advance against any royalties.

Can I keep the $20,000 if I ultimately do not agree to a publishing agreement?

Yes. The $20,000 would be treated as an advance only if the winner agrees to a publishing agreement with Penguin Random House Australia.

For any more questions, email prhliteraryprize@penguinrandomhouse.com.au