

Bram Stoker Award® Rules for 2014 – Summary of Major Changes

The Board of the Horror Writers Association voted unanimously on 17 December 2013 and 26 December 2013 to approve the Bram Stoker Award® Rules for 2014 as authorised by ByLaw X:2.

Note: These Rules apply to works published in the calendar year 2014, for the Awards year 2014. The Awards for 2014 will be presented in the first half of 2015. They also apply to subsequent years unless further amended by authority of the Board.

The following is a summary of the notable changes from the Rules that prevailed for the 2013 calendar year Awards season.

Juries may rule on genre eligibility - new Rule VIIIp:

“The Jury have the right to determine by majority vote if a work qualifies for their category as to genre as defined in Rule Ia: “Each year the Horror Writers Association presents Awards for outstanding writing in the dark fantasy/horror/occult genre.” If the Jury determines a work does not qualify as dark fantasy, horror or occult it has no impact on the eligibility of that work in the Member Recommendations section of the preliminary ballot (for avoidance of confusion this Rule explicitly supports the separate rights of the Jury and Members to be make their own assessment of whether a work qualifies as to genre). The author/editor and/or publisher have no right to appeal the Jury decision, as any such appeal would clearly be redundant.”

Juries must submit five works – new Rule VIIIi:

“The Jurors are required to submit five (5) works, which in their opinion, deserve to be listed on the Preliminary Ballot in their category.”

Previously, Juries could submit any number of works from zero to four. With the publication of works in each category being more than sufficient each year, Juries also have the benefit of the support of Publisher Liaisons and on-line Submissions to support their own research and reading/viewing. Therefore, there should be no situation in which a Jury cannot submit five works to the Preliminary Ballot.

Young Adult Novel Minimum Word Count increased to 40,000 – amended Rule IVh:

“Young Adult Novel: For purposes of this Award, young adult novels are defined as novels (see clause IVe) intended for the age group 14-21, with word length beginning at 40,000 words. Any Young Adult novel that is deemed to be a ‘First Novel’ according to Rule IVf does not qualify for consideration in the ‘Young Adult Novel’ category (see Rule IVr). Therefore Members may not Recommend such a ‘First Novel’ as a ‘Young Adult Novel’, nor may the Novel Jury submit such a work for the Preliminary Ballot in the Young Adult Novel category.”

Codification of Appeals Process – amended Rule IIk:

Expansion of Rule IIk to include an extensive, codified Appeals Process under one Rule (previously a number of Rules had to be read together)

“Eligibility Determinations: Appeals Process & Final Authority: All initial/preliminary determinations as to the eligibility of a work for these Awards shall, pursuant to Rule II(d) hereinabove, be made by the Verifier.

- (1) Initial Eligibility Determinations-Process: The Verifier shall notify, via email, if available, and if not via regular “snail” mail, the author of any work other than an anthology, and the editor for any anthology, and in the event that the author or editor is not readily available via email, then notify them via the work’s publisher of record, of any work for which any question as to its eligibility arises, of the existence of such question, that the work’s eligibility is being investigated, and requesting of them any and all evidence and other relevant facts and argument they might wish the Verifier to consider, to be delivered to the Verifier within no more than seven (7) days from the date of the Verifier’s request. The Verifier may also specifically request, within this notice to the author, editor, and/or publisher, any evidence and/or answers to specific questions that the Verifier deems appropriate in reaching such a determination. All such notices and requests by/from the Verifier shall include specific wording notifying the recipient that the party being so notified has seven (7) days from the date of the request via email or, if via snail mail, from the date of the recipient’s receipt of the request, via email, certified, return receipt, or delivery service mail/delivery to respond and deliver any and all documents and written argument that have either been specifically requested by the verifier, or which they seek the Verifier to consider, and that their failure to provide such requested documents and/or answers to the Verifier, and that failure to tender and deliver such to the Verifier within the time granted for such will be taken as indication that no such evidence or argument favorable to the interests of the person or persons from whom it is sought exists, when the Verifier is making his/her determination in the matter. The Verifier shall issue a determination and ruling in a case/matter within no more than one week from the earlier of the date that any such requested evidence and/or argument arrives or from the deadline date for such argument and evidence to arrive. The party or parties responding to a Verifier’s notice shall provide the Verifier with a working email address and/or address where real “snail” mail will be accepted on their behalf, and if possible a telephone number from which they can be reached. The Verifier’s Notice must also, in bold or otherwise highlighted wording, warn any party to the determination proceedings that any documentation and/or evidence that they seek to have considered in the matter, whether now, or in any subsequent potential appeal must be submitted to the Verifier for consideration as per these rules. Any and all evidence which a party *could* have presented to the Verifier for consideration in the cause/matter, but which they choose to not submit will be itself ineligible for submission upon any appeal in the matter. The Verifier shall make his/her determination and ruling based upon all the evidence and argument properly presented in a timely manner, and, again, any subsequent reviewing/appealing body shall not consider any evidence and/or documentation that the party could have presented to the Verifier, but, for whatever reason, chose not to provide for such consideration.

- (2) Initial Eligibility Determinations – Rulings: The Verifier shall issue a written determination/ruling within seven days from the earlier of date the last argument and/or evidence from the notified party or parties either was received or was required to have been received. The written determination shall be delivered by email, or if such isn't available, then via regular "snail" mail, to any and all parties the Verifier deems properly involved as parties to the matter and to the Chair or Co-Chairs of the Bram Stoker Awards Committee. The ruling shall inform the participants generally as to the identity of the work in question, the names of the relevant parties (author, editor, and/or publisher and any other parties appearing in the matter deemed proper by the Verifier), a brief history of the issues, any evidence and/or argument considered by the Verifier, and the basis for and actual decision in the matter. Additionally, every such ruling/determination will inform all parties that they have a right to appeal the Verifier's determination/ruling as provided by this rule, as follows:
- (3) Initial Appeal of Eligibility Determination—Process: Any party, ruled against by the Verifier in an eligibility determination/ruling, be it the author, editor, and/or publisher, shall have a limited right to appeal, pursuant to this Rule II(k) and Rule III(s), from the Verifier's determination/ruling. The Verifier's Ruling shall include notification of this fact, along with the information that the party seeking to appeal must send a written Notice Of Appeal via email to the Chair/Co-Chairs of the Awards Committee, providing both his/her/their official HWA email address(es) as well as any corresponding individual email addresses, and that all such notices must be sent to both the official HWA and individual email address(es). The person(s) appealing a verifier's determination/ruling will have the right to file a notice of appeal, as provided for previously within this subparagraph for seven days from the date that the Verifier publishes and emails their determination/ruling. The party seeking to appeal shall have waived all rights to any such appeal if the Awards Committee Chair(s) have not received the Notice of Appeal by 11.59PM US PST on the seventh (7th) day from the date of entry of the Verifier's determination/ruling. It shall be the sole responsibility of the party seeking to appeal to confirm receipt by the Awards Committee Chair(s) of his/her/their Notice of Appeal in a timely manner. The Notice Of Intent To Appeal shall contain the name(s) email address(es), phone number(s), and relation to the case/appeal of those seeking to appeal the Verifier's determination. Further, the Verifier's determination/ruling will also include informing any party seeking to appeal the ruling that they must, in addition to serving their Notice of Intent to Appeal upon the Awards Committee Chair(s) and Verifier within seven (7) days of the date of entry of the Ruling/Determination, that any and all information and/or argument, he/she/they wish the Awards Committee to consider in making their appellate determination/ruling must be delivered, in writing, via the same email addresses as for the Notice of Appeal within not more than fourteen (14) days from the date of entry of the Verifier's original determination. Any and all such written, information and/or argument that has not been received by the Awards committee Chairs by 11.59PM US PST on the fourteenth (14th) day from the date of entry of the Verifier's original determination/ruling in the matter shall not be considered by the Awards Committee in reaching their determination in the matter,

and it shall be the sole responsibility of the party seeking to appeal to confirm receipt by the Awards Committee Chair(s) of his/her/their information and/or argument in a timely manner. A copy of the Notice of Intent to Appeal shall also be sent via email to the Verifier, at both his/her official HWA and individual email addresses. The Verifier shall also have the same opportunity, deadline, and responsibility to confirm delivery, for any written information and/or argument that he/she/they wish the Awards Committee to consider in the appeal. The Awards Committee, on appeal, is limited to consideration of only that documentation and/or evidence that was presented by the parties in and during the original determination proceeding before the Verifier. Any such documentation and/or evidence which could have been presented to the Verifier, but was not so presented may not be considered upon any appeal, unless pursuant to a claim of fraud or concealment of evidence in the original proceeding before the Verifier – and if such argument is raised, the Appeals determining body shall examine all submissions and argument relating thereto and then make a determination as to allow the admission and consideration of such new evidence within their ultimate determination/ruling in the matter.

- (4) Initial Appeal of Eligibility Determination—Rulings: All appeals from the Verifier's determinations as to Awards eligibility shall be heard by the members of the Awards Committee, as such are defined by and within Rule II(a), hereinabove. It shall be the responsibility of the Awards Committee Chair/Co-Chairs to timely notify all other Committee members of any and all such eligibility appeals and to forward and provide copies of the Verifier's determination/ruling, the Notice of Intent to Appeal, and any other/further written evidence, documentation and/or argument properly received by the party(ies) seeking to appeal, and to set a date and time certain for an online discussion and vote upon the appeal. The Awards Committee shall, pursuant to Rule II(j), vote upon the appeal, with a majority vote of the members determining the decision, except in the event of a tie, where the Committee Chair(s) shall then make the final determination. The Award Committee's Appeals Determination/Ruling shall be issued in writing and delivered to all concerned parties and the HWA President no later than fourteen (14) days after the earlier of when the Committee Chair(s) receive the information and/or argument the appealing party(ies) seek to have the Awards Committee consider and the date upon which such information and/or argument was required to have been received by the Committee Chair(s). The Chair(s) of the Awards Committee shall submit the written Appeals Determination/Ruling within the time specified, which shall include a brief history of the matter, the parties and issues raised, any evidence, documents, and/or argument presented by the parties, and the Appeals (Appellate) determination/ruling.
- (5) Final Appeal From Eligibility Determination: The Appeals Determination/ruling shall also include notice to all parties that the party that has been ruled against upon the appeal has a final right, pursuant to Rule II(k)(5) to a final appeal to the HWA Board. Copies of this Appeals Determination/Ruling shall be emailed to all parties to the just concluded Appeals Determination and also to the HWA President, via his/her official HWA email address and his/her designated non-HWA email address. The

exact same timetable shall apply to both the required Notice of Intent to Appeal and any and all supplemental argument that either the prevailing and/or appealing party(ies) wish to present before the Board as is set forth in and for the appeal to the Awards Committee—7 days to deliver to the President and other parties the Notice of Intent to Appeal, and 14 days for delivery of any and all extra argument. There cannot and will not be any new evidence not previously considered by either the Verifier or the Awards Committee in their prior hearings allowed in or for consideration by the Board during this final appeal. The decision/determination of the Board in this final appeals review is final and cannot be further appealed. Should any member of the Board have either any potential direct conflict of interest, such as having a competing work to that being appealed, they must recuse themselves. Additionally, any Board member may choose to recuse themselves for any reason. The Board's written determination/ruling shall be published and released within fourteen (14) days of the earlier of the date when the President received the argument the appealing party(ies) seek to have the Board consider and the date upon which such argument was required to have been received by the President. This Final Determination/Ruling shall include a brief history of the matter, the parties and issues raised, any prior evidence that was felt compelling, and any arguments presented by the parties, and the Final determination/ruling, and which will be delivered via email to all parties to the final appeal.

- (6) Category Eligibility—Determination of Category: If any question arises of which category a work belongs in, the Verifier of Eligibility will, after reviewing the relevant rules and the character of the work in question, assign the work to the category he/she believes most appropriate. The author of the work in question, or any other interested party, may appeal this decision to the this decision to the Awards Committee, pursuant to Rule II(k)(3) & (4). The Committee will then rule on the dispute. This ruling may in turn be appealed to the HWA Board, pursuant to Rule II(k)(5), whereupon the Board, after hearing and considering the facts of the case, will make their decision. The Board's ruling is final. The requirements for and manner of submission of Notices of Intent To Appeal and for Written Argument and Evidence shall be the same/identical to those set forth for the Appeals Processes in the previous paragraphs II(k)(2) through II(k)(5), hereinabove.
- (7) Should any other Bram Stoker Awards Rule, or any portion thereof, conflict with or differ from this Rule, this Rule II(k) shall take precedence.”

Clarification of Non-Fiction definition – amended Rules IVo. and IVp.:

- o. Non-Fiction: Non-Fiction is hereby defined as a work of criticism, biography, autobiography, scholarly analysis, reference, commentary, opinion, or other factual material at least 40,000 words in aggregate length, in prose form and published as a physical print or electronic book. It may be a stand-alone work by a single author; or composed of shorter works (essays, etc.) by a single author; or be composed of shorter works by multiple authors. In the case it is composed of works by multiple authors the Award(s) in this category is

presented to the editor or editors named on the cover of the work; if no editor's name appears, the Award will be presented to the publisher. Such a book, must be published for the first time in the calendar year, and may contain shorter works regardless of when any of the shorter works were first published. See also Rule IVp.

- p. The following formats are not eligible for the Non-Fiction Award: Members and Jurors may not Recommend a website, an entire issue or an entire series of issues of a magazine, an entire issue or entire series of newsletters, a blog, a series of columns, articles, essays or reviews for this Award (past practice notwithstanding). As a result there are no circumstances under which the Non-Fiction Award may be given to websites, magazines, newsletters or blogs (prior practice notwithstanding).