

Please read these instructions carefully before casting your ballot for the 2026 Hugo Awards, the Lodestar Award for Best Young Adult Book, and the *Astounding* Award for Best New Writer.

Eligibility to Nominate

You may nominate for the 2026 Hugo Awards, the Lodestar Award for Best Young Adult Book, and the *Astounding* Award for Best New Writer, if, as of January 31, 2026, 11:59 p.m. Pacific Standard Time (PST) (UTC-8):

- You have a membership in LAcon V carrying WSFS rights, either a WSFS-only membership, virtual membership, or adult, young adult, or teen membership, OR
- You were a WSFS member of Seattle Worldcon 2025

Note: Other membership types offered by LAcon V not listed above, such as child memberships, do not carry WSFS rights and are not eligible to nominate.

Deadline

All ballots must be **received** by Saturday March 28, 2026, 12:00 noon Pacific Daylight Time (PDT) (UTC-7).

Please mail as early as possible to ensure your ballot will be counted. Paper ballots should be mailed to:

LAcon V Hugo Administration
c/o Warren Buff
12406 Kinship Turn
Bowie, MD 20715
USA

We recommend placing your ballot in a sealed envelope for mailing to help ensure proper delivery.

How to Nominate—Either by Mail or Online

If you are nominating by mail, please complete the eligibility section on the first page of the ballot. Remember to sign the ballot. We will not count unsigned ballots.

- You may nominate up to five persons or works in each category. However, if you are not familiar with the works that fall into that category, you are permitted (and encouraged) to make fewer nominations, or none at all. Your nominations are equally weighted—the order in which you list them has no effect on the outcome.
- “No Award” will appear automatically in every single category on the final ballot. There is no need to include that choice on the form.

- If you make nominations for Best Series, it will help us if you also list a volume in the series that was published in 2025.
- Please type or print clearly. We cannot count illegible ballots.
- You can also nominate online via the LAcon V website. Visit <https://www.lacon.org/hugos/> for detailed instructions.
- If you have any other questions about the process, or need assistance with nominating, please contact hugo-help@lacon.org.

The Hugo ballot containing the finalists in each category that qualify for the final ballot will be published by LAcon V in late spring 2026. Only members of LAcon V (including those who join after January 31, 2026) will be eligible to vote on the final ballot. Please contact hugo-help@lacon.org if you have questions.

Eligibility for Nominations

Works published in 2025 for the first time anywhere are eligible for the Hugo Awards being awarded in 2026. So are works published for the first time in English translation in 2025, or for the first time in the United States in 2025, unless they have already appeared on a Hugo Award final ballot.

Books are considered to have been published in the year of the publication date, which usually appears with the copyright information on the back of the title page. If there is no stated publication date, the copyright date will be used instead. A dated periodical is considered to have been published on the cover date, regardless of when it was placed on sale or copyrighted. Serialized stories or dramatic presentations are eligible in the year in which the last installment appears.

Nominations may be relocated to a different category by the Hugo administrator if they are within 20% of the category boundary (such as in the case of novel/novella, novella/novelette, novelette/short story, and dramatic presentation, long form/dramatic presentation, short form).

Extended Eligibility for Non-U.S. published works:

In past years, a potential Hugo Award nominee with extremely limited distribution in the year of its first publication or presentation has had its eligibility extended for an additional year by the WSFS business meeting. The 2025 WSFS business meeting did not pass any eligibility extensions for the 2026 Hugo Awards.

Other eligibility rules are included with the specific categories. The full rules for the Hugo Awards are contained in Article 3 of the WSFS Constitution available at <http://www.wsfs.org/rules-of-the-world-science-fiction-society/>.

Exclusions

The LAcon V committee has irrevocably delegated all Hugo Administration authority to a subcommittee. Therefore, Tammy Coxen, Warren Buff, Linda Deneroff, Emily January and Rosemary Parks are ineligible for 2026 Hugo Awards.

Reproduction

Reproduction and distribution of this ballot is permitted and encouraged, provided that it is reproduced verbatim (including voting instructions), with no additional materials other than the name of the person or publication responsible for the reproduction.

This ballot must be received by Saturday March 28, 2026, 12:00 noon PDT (UTC-7).

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Nominating Ballot for the 2026 Hugo Awards, Lodestar Award for Best Young Adult Book, and *Astounding* Award for Best New Writer

Eligibility to Nominate

Name _____

Address (email or other) _____

Signature _____

(Ballot is invalid without a signature and will not be counted.)

I am a member of LAcon V; my membership number (if known) is _____.

(OR)

I was a member of Seattle Worldcon 2025; my membership number (if known) was _____.

This ballot must be received Saturday March 28, 2026, 12:00 noon PDT (UTC-7).

**Nominating Ballot for the 2025 Hugo Awards, Lodestar Award for Best Young Adult Book,
and Astounding Award for Best New Writer**

Best Novel: A science fiction or fantasy story of 40,000 words or more, published for the first time in 2025.

Title & Author _____	Publisher _____
Title & Author _____	Publisher _____
Title & Author _____	Publisher _____
Title & Author _____	Publisher _____
Title & Author _____	Publisher _____

Best Novella: A science fiction or fantasy story between 17,500 and 40,000 words, which appeared for the first time in 2025.

Title & Author _____	Publisher _____
Title & Author _____	Publisher _____
Title & Author _____	Publisher _____
Title & Author _____	Publisher _____
Title & Author _____	Publisher _____

Best Novelette: A science fiction or fantasy story between 7,500 and 17,500 words, which appeared for the first time in 2025.

Title & Author _____	Publisher _____
Title & Author _____	Publisher _____
Title & Author _____	Publisher _____
Title & Author _____	Publisher _____
Title & Author _____	Publisher _____

Best Short Story: A science fiction or fantasy story of fewer than 7,500 words, which appeared for the first time in 2025.

Title & Author _____	Publisher _____
Title & Author _____	Publisher _____
Title & Author _____	Publisher _____
Title & Author _____	Publisher _____
Title & Author _____	Publisher _____

Best Series: A multi-installment science fiction or fantasy story, unified by elements such as plot, characters, setting, and presentation, appearing in at least three (3) installments consisting in total of at least 240,000 words by the close of the calendar year 2025, at least one (1) installment of which was published in 2025, and which has not previously won under §3.3.5 of the WSFS Constitution.

Previous losing finalists in the Best Series category shall be eligible only upon the publication of at least two (2) additional installments consisting in total of at least 240,000 words after they qualified for their last appearance on the final ballot and by the close of 2025. For finalists in the Best Series category that have previously appeared on the ballot for Best Series, any installments published in English in a year prior to that previous appearance, regardless of country of publication, shall be considered to be part of the series' previous eligibility, and will not count toward the re-eligibility requirements for the current year.

If any series and a subset series thereof both receive sufficient nominations to appear on the final ballot, only the version which received more nominations shall appear.

See the LAcon V web page for a note regarding 2026 Best Series eligibility for specific works which have previously won or been finalists for the Best Series Hugo Award: <https://www.lacon.org/hugos/#bestseries>

Series Name & Author _____	2025 Example from Series _____
Series Name & Author _____	2025 Example from Series _____
Series Name & Author _____	2025 Example from Series _____
Series Name & Author _____	2025 Example from Series _____
Series Name & Author _____	2025 Example from Series _____

Best Graphic Story or Comic: Any non-interactive science fiction or fantasy story told in graphic form, appearing for the first time in 2025.

Title & Author _____	Publisher _____
Title & Author _____	Publisher _____
Title & Author _____	Publisher _____
Title & Author _____	Publisher _____
Title & Author _____	Publisher _____

Best Related Work: Any work related to the field of science fiction, fantasy, or fandom, appearing for the first time in 2025, or which has been substantially modified during 2025, and which is either non-fiction or, if fictional, is noteworthy primarily for aspects other than the fictional text, and which is not eligible in any other category.

Title & Author/Editor _____	Publisher _____
Title & Author/Editor _____	Publisher _____
Title & Author/Editor _____	Publisher _____
Title & Author/Editor _____	Publisher _____
Title & Author/Editor _____	Publisher _____

Best Dramatic Presentation, Long Form: Any non-interactive theatrical feature or other production with a complete running time of more than 90 minutes, in any medium of dramatized science fiction, fantasy, or related subjects that has been publicly presented for the first time in its present dramatic form during 2025.

Title _____ Studio/Network _____

Title _____ Studio/Network _____

Title _____ Studio/Network _____

Title _____ Studio/Network _____

Title _____ Studio/Network _____

Best Dramatic Presentation, Short Form: Any non-interactive television program or other production with a complete running time of 90 minutes or less, in any medium of dramatized science fiction, fantasy, or related subjects that has been publicly presented for the first time in its present dramatic form during 2025.

Title _____ Studio/Network _____

Title _____ Studio/Network _____

Title _____ Studio/Network _____

Title _____ Studio/Network _____

Title _____ Studio/Network _____

Best Game or Interactive Work: Any interactive work or interactive substantial modification of a work in the fields of science fiction, fantasy, or related subjects, released to the public in 2025 and available for public participation in the interactive elements of the work in 2025. An interactive work is (1) a game, or (2) a narrative or presentation in which active input or interactive play is an integral component of the work itself or where it impacts the outcome, narrative, or order of elements of the work itself in a nontrivial fashion, and (3) is not ephemeral, in the sense that the interactive elements of the work are accessible to participants through published or shareable artifacts, and the work is not an event requiring the participation of specific named persons.

Title _____ Developer _____

Title _____ Developer _____

Title _____ Developer _____

Title _____ Developer _____

Title _____ Developer _____

Best Editor, Short Form: The editor of at least four (4) anthologies, collections, or magazine issues (or their equivalent in other media) primarily devoted to science fiction and/or fantasy, at least one of which was published in 2025.

Editor _____

Editor _____

Editor _____

Editor _____

Editor _____

Best Editor, Long Form: The editor of at least four (4) novel-length works primarily devoted to science fiction and/or fantasy, at least one of which was published in 2025, and that do not qualify as works under Best Editor, Short Form.

Editor _____

Editor _____

Editor _____

Editor _____

Editor _____

Best Professional Artist: An illustrator whose work has appeared in a professional publication* in the field of science fiction or fantasy during 2025. *If possible, please cite an example of the nominee's 2025 work in this category and a source where it may be found. This information makes it easier for us to assess eligibility. (Failure to provide such references will not invalidate a nomination.)*

* A professional publication is one that meets at least one (1) of the following criteria:

1. It provided at least a quarter of the income of any one person; or
2. It was owned or published by any entity which provided at least a quarter of the income of any of its staff and/or owner.

Artist/Illustrator _____ Example _____

Artist/Illustrator _____ Example _____

Artist/Illustrator _____ Example _____

Artist/Illustrator _____ Example _____

Artist/Illustrator _____ Example _____

Best Semiprozine: Any generally available non-professional periodical publication devoted to science fiction or fantasy, or related subjects which by the close of 2025 had published four (4) or more issues (or the equivalent in other media), at least one (1) of which appeared in 2025, which does not qualify as a fancast, and which in 2025 met at least one (1) of the following criteria:

1. Paid its contributors and/or staff in other than copies of the publication.
2. Was generally available only for paid purchase.

Title _____

Title _____

Title _____

Title _____

Title _____

Fanzine: Any generally available non-professional periodical publication devoted to science fiction, fantasy, or related subjects that, by the close of 2025, had published four (4) or more issues (or the equivalent in other media), at least one (1) of which appeared in 2025, that does not qualify as a semiprozine or a fancast, and which in 2025 met neither of the following criteria:

1. Paid its contributors or staff monetarily in other than copies of the publication.
2. Was generally available only for paid purchase.

Title _____

Title _____

Title _____

Title _____

Title _____

Best Fancast: Any generally available non-professional audio or video periodical devoted to science fiction, fantasy, or related subjects that by the close of 2025 had released four (4) or more episodes, at least one (1) of which appeared in 2025, and that does not qualify as a dramatic presentation.

Title _____

Title _____

Title _____

Title _____

Title _____

Best Fan Writer: A person whose writing has appeared in semiprozines or fanzines, or in generally available electronic media in 2025. *If possible, please cite an example of the nominee's 2025 work in this category and a source where it may be found. This information makes it easier for us to assess eligibility. (Failure to provide such references will not invalidate a nomination.)*

Author _____ Example _____

Author _____ Example _____

Author _____ Example _____

Author _____ Example _____

Author _____ Example _____

Best Fan Artist: An artist or cartoonist whose work has appeared through publication in semiprozines or fanzines, or through other public, non-professional, display (including at a convention or conventions, posting on the internet, in online or print-on-demand shops, or in another setting not requiring a fee to see the image in full-resolution) in 2025. *If possible, please cite an example of the nominee's 2025 work in this category and a source where it may be found. This information makes it easier for us to assess eligibility. (Failure to provide such references will not invalidate a nomination.)*

Artist _____ Example _____

Artist _____ Example _____

Artist _____ Example _____

Artist _____ Example _____

Artist _____ Example _____

Best Poem: A science fiction or fantasy poem of any line length or word count appearing for the first time in 2025.

Title & Author _____	Publisher _____
Title & Author _____	Publisher _____
Title & Author _____	Publisher _____
Title & Author _____	Publisher _____
Title & Author _____	Publisher _____

Lodestar Award for Best Young Adult Book (not a Hugo): A book published for young adult readers in the field of science fiction or fantasy appearing for the first time in 2025.

Title & Author _____	Publisher _____
Title & Author _____	Publisher _____
Title & Author _____	Publisher _____
Title & Author _____	Publisher _____
Title & Author _____	Publisher _____

***Astounding* Award for Best New Writer, sponsored by Must Read Magazines (not a Hugo):** A new writer is one whose first work of science fiction or fantasy appeared in 2024 or 2025 in a professional publication. For *Astounding* Award purposes, a professional publication is one for which more than a nominal amount was paid, any publication that had an average press run of at least 10,000 copies, or for which the author can demonstrate net income of at least \$3,000 within one year.

The following are not taken into account for *Astounding* Award eligibility: works in non-qualifying publications; poetry, even if it is SF/F and appears in a qualifying publication; nonfiction, even if it is SF/F and appears in a qualifying publication; fiction outside the SF/F genres; fan writing of any sort; letters to the editor; vanity press or self-published fiction for which the author is not paid, even if the print run is over 10,000; and writing for SF/F games.

The *Astounding* Award FAQ can be found here: <https://astoundingaward.info/#faq>

Author _____	Example _____
Author _____	Example _____
Author _____	Example _____
Author _____	Example _____
Author _____	Example _____