The Alligator's Mouth Award 2025 Submission Guidelines

The Alligator's Mouth Award is a children's book prize for highly illustrated early fiction, set up by The Alligator's Mouth bookshop and The Bright Agency. The award, returning for a seventh year, celebrates the best books for readers aged 6-8, and champions authors and illustrators.

Submission criteria

UK publishers are invited to submit highly illustrated early fiction that meets the following criteria:
• The book should be aimed at readers aged 6-8 and have illustrations on the majority of internal spreads. No picture books or graphic novels, please.
• The book should have been first published in the English language on a children's list by a UK publisher.
• The book should have been first published between 1st October 2023 and 31st December 2024.

Judging criteria

Entries will be judged against the following criteria:
• Readability
• Text and illustrations combined
• Quality of illustrations
• Overall enjoyment for children

How to enter

Please complete one entry form for each book you wish to submit. Send the form and a PDF of the book to award@thealligatorsmouth.co.uk. The PDFs must be finished copies with a double spread per page.
(Please note, for longlisted titles, publishers will also be required to send in seven hard copies of the book.)

Rules of entry

• Submissions open on Monday 14th October 2024 and close on Friday 22nd November 2024. Entries made outside of this will not be accepted.
• Publishers can submit up to three books per imprint.
• We do not accept books that are only available in e-format, have been self-published, or where the author or illustrator has contributed to or paid for the cost of publishing.
• All shortlisted publishers, authors and illustrators will be invited to participate in digital marketing, social media and (circumstances permitting) an award ceremony at a London venue in summer 2025, and should make all reasonable efforts to take part. Author and illustrator travel costs to the award ceremony should be covered by the publisher where possible.
• The winning author and illustrator will each receive a trophy. If the author and illustrator is the same person, only one prize will be awarded. The winner will be asked to be part of the judging panel the following year.

Key timings

• Submissions open Monday 14th October 2024
• Submissions close Friday 22nd November 2024
• Longlist announced March 2025
• Shortlisted announced May 2025
• Winner announced July 2025 at Award Ceremony in London

Past winners

• 2024 winner – Adventuremice: Otter Chaos by Philip Reeve & Sarah McIntyre
• A full list of previous winners and shortlists can be found by clicking here