

How do books get submitted for awards?

Q: Each month in the “People” section of the Bulletin I see that members have won awards I’ve never heard of, or been included on various lists. Does this happen without them doing anything, or do I or my publisher need to submit my book for consideration for these awards and lists? If so, how do I find out about the awards and their requirements?

The most comprehensive listing of children’s book awards I’ve seen is in a book put out by the Children’s Book Council (CBC), entitled *Children’s Book Awards and Prizes*. This book has four sections covering: 1) U.S. Awards Selected by Adults, 2) U.S. Awards Selected by Children, 3) English-Language Foreign Awards (ie. UK, Canada, Australia), and 4) International Awards.

Authors and illustrators will probably want to use this book more as a reference to learn about awards and prizes given for children’s books than as a listing of contacts for submitting books. According to Children’s Book Council President Paula Quint, “Most children’s book awards are chosen by a committee of adults knowledgeable about books in the field or by children selecting their favorites. The majority of awards do not provide a mechanism for authors and illustrators to nominate titles for consideration. Publishers are generally aware of, and responsive to, awards for which there are special submission processes. Authors and illustrators can certainly take the initiative in reminding their publishers of awards that require specific submissions if they feel their books are appropriate candidates.”

Children’s authors interested in learning more about awards and lists may want to ask their publisher to buy the CBC’s award book, purchase a copy on their own, or split the cost among members of a writer’s group.

According to Ms. Quint, “Authors and illustrators with special interest books can research associations that do special bibliographic projects and ask their publishers to submit their books. Or, when guidelines permit, they can submit books directly. As with awards, many bibliographies are prepared by professionals who see books in the regular course of their work. Others, such as those prepared the National Science Teachers Association and the National Council for the Social Studies, have a specific procedure for publishers, not individuals, to submit titles for consideration.”

There are, however, more specialized lists (such as the Shakespeare Databank and the Pediatric Projects Inc. list) that can be explored for topical books. Paula Quint recommends checking your local library for *The Encyclopedia of Associations*, a three-volume set of directories that lists organizations and their publications. Another source for book-related awards is *Literary Market Place* (Bowker). 12/95:1/96