

‘Chapter One’ The AAWP Publication Pathway for Emerging Writers 2026

This prize is offered in partnership by the Australasian Association of Writing Programs (AAWP) and the University of Western Australia Publishing (UWAP)

The Prize—Publication Pathway/Expert Mentoring

Have you written a poetry collection, literary novel, short story collection or a hybrid work that crosses genre boundaries? Enter the Australasian Association of Writing Programs’ (AAWP) ‘Chapter One’ competition for your chance to win.

If you win you will receive: a written commendation from AAWP and a letter of recommendation to the University of Western Australia Publishing (UWAP). This ‘tick of approval’ will see your manuscript assessed without delay. You will, effectively, leap to the top of the submissions pile. You will also receive a \$500.00 cash prize and fully subsidised conference fees to attend the annual conference of the AAWP (November 2026) where you will be invited to read from your work.

If your full manuscript is as robust as ‘Chapter One’ you may secure a publishing contract with UWAP: <http://uwap.uwa.edu.au>.

Take advantage of this stunning opportunity. Fast track your writing journey in a fiercely competitive market.

How to Enter

Entry is via: <https://meniscusliteraryjournal.submittable.com/submit>

For further information, please visit: <https://aawp.org.au/news/opportunities>

If you have queries or questions about the AAWP’s prizes, please write to: prizes@aawp.org.au

The submission fee per entry is \$20.00. Conditions of Entry and Terms and Conditions are below.

Conditions of Entry

1. This competition is open to emerging writers. Emerging writers will not have a full-length*, single-authored, commercially published, print publication in fiction, poetry, or creative nonfiction. Emerging writers who have published in electronic format only, or who have published work in collections showcasing multiple authors, are eligible.

*A full-length publication is considered > 40,000 words for prose and > 40 pages for poetry.

2. ‘Emerging Writers’ may include writing students, research higher degree students, and research higher degree graduates and may also include submissions from writers beyond their graduation. Submissions are welcome from emerging writers outside the university setting.

3. The Prize will be launched at the AAWP annual conference. Submissions close at midnight (local time) on June 30, 2026. Late submissions will not be accepted. The winner will be announced on the AAWP website and the UWRF website no later than September 30, 2026.

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4. Entries should not exceed 50 lines (poetry) or 5,000 words (prose). An extract from a subsequent chapter is permissible as long as the total submission adheres to the aforementioned guidelines.
5. When submitting your work (via Submittable), please use the section marked ‘Cover Letter’ to add your full name, your preferred contact details (email and phone) and a 100-word author bio (as you would like it to appear on any prize announcements).
6. You must submit a 500-word synopsis with your submission. The synopsis should precede your submission and the work should be submitted as one Word document. Suggested formatting for the entry is as follows—line spacing: 1.5, font size: 12-point, font: Times New Roman or Garamond.
7. The winner will be announced on the AAWP website no later than September 30, 2026. At this time the winner will submit a full manuscript together with a 500-word synopsis.
8. ‘Chapter One’ is open to current members of the AAWP; if membership is not active prior to the entry being submitted, the entry is invalidated.
9. You may enter as many times as you wish. Subsequent entries incur a separate fee.
10. The entry should be de-identified. The author’s name, or other identifying characteristics, should not appear on the submission. Judging is blind.
11. Entries may not be altered after they have been submitted.
12. The AAWP reserves the right to disqualify any entry that breaches the Conditions of Entry. The entrant will be provided with written notification of the disqualification.
13. The judges’ verdict is final. The judges will not enter into correspondence or discussion about the outcome.
14. The submission may include work that has been published previously providing such publication does not breach the Conditions of Entry and as long as the author owns the copyright.

Terms and Conditions

1. Copyright in the submitted work will remain with the entrant. The AAWP will not reproduce any entries or synopses without the express permission of the entrant. If needed, a copyright licence can be negotiated after the Prize has been awarded.
2. The letter of recommendation written to UWAP does not guarantee a publishing contract.
3. The overall winner will receive \$500.00 in prize money. This will be paid via bank transfer. The overall winner will also receive a written appraisal from an established literary author and a letter of recommendation to the UWAP.
4. AAWP conference fees (negotiated annually) are provided for the winner. This includes conference attendance (and all the benefits that entails). Extra fees (i.e. for the conference dinner, or for special activities such as workshops or tours) are the responsibility of the winner. Travel and accommodation are the responsibility of the winner.

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5. The winning entries will not be edited or altered by AAWP without the consent of the author.
6. If your work includes Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property (ICIP) and you inform us of this, AAWP will acknowledge the language group or Indigenous community with an appropriate notice of custodial interest, to be negotiated with you.