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The American Booksellers Association Announces the 2026 Indies Choice Book Awards Shortlist

The second year back, the Awards honor books from nine categories, all chosen by independent booksellers.

The American Booksellers Association (ABA) is proud to share the shortlist for the Indies Choice Book Awards literary prize.

Reflecting the spirit of independent bookstores and the IndieBound movement, the Indies Choice Book Awards are nominated and selected by booksellers from over 3,000 independent bookstores nationwide. They celebrate the best and brightest titles by authors and illustrators in the indie channel, showcasing the remarkable range of talent indie booksellers champion and share with readers every day.

The award categories include Adult Fiction, Adult Nonfiction, Picture Book, Middle Grade, Young Adult, Indie Press Fiction, Indie Press Nonfiction, Debut Adult, and Debut Children's. Indie Press Fiction and Indie Press Nonfiction are new this year. The shortlist features the top titles as voted on by independent booksellers. The winning title's author(s)/illustrator(s) in each category will receive $1,500.

The awards showcase the 487 titles that appeared on the ABA's Indie Next List, Kids' Indie Next List, and Indies Introduce list in 2026. The Indie Next List program features bookseller-recommended favorites for adults and kids from indie bookstores across the country. Indies Introduce is a twice a year list of 20 standout debuts — 10 adult titles and 10 titles for young readers.

"The Indies Choice Book Awards are a celebration of what makes independent bookstores so vital to the literary ecosystem," said Allison K Hill, CEO of American Booksellers Association. "These awards are voted on entirely by independent booksellers — people who read widely, recommend passionately, and engage with readers and authors every day. By drawing from titles featured on the ABA's Indie Next List, Kids' Indie Next List, and Indies Introduce book recommendations, these awards reflect a year of thoughtful curation, deep enthusiasm, and books we can't stop talking about. The Indies Choice Book Awards are a celebration and the best way for readers to find their next favorite book."

The 47 shortlisted titles and 9 winners are voted on by indie booksellers from ABA member independent bookstores. Voting opens today, Wednesday, November 4, and closes Wednesday, November 18. Winners will be announced on November 25, in time for Indies First, held on Small Business Saturday.

Inquiries about the Indies Choice Book Awards can be directed to icba@bookweb.org.

About the American Booksellers Association (www.BookWeb.org)

American Booksellers Association is a national trade association that supports and advocates for the success of independent bookstores. We provide members with education, networking opportunities, advocacy, resources, and technology. In turn our members support local schools through book fairs, donations and author visits; promote literacy; provide inclusive community centers; connect readers and books; add character to neighborhoods; champion and center diverse and new voices; and contribute to the local economy. We feel honored to support over 3,200 independent bookstores in their work.