COLUMBUS BOOK FESTIVAL

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APPLICATION GUIDELINES FOR AUTHORS

COLUMBUS BOOK FESTIVAL JULY 10-11, 2027

This packet contains eligibility requirements and guidelines for the three ways authors can participate in the Columbus Book Festival. Review the eligibility requirements and guidelines, then select the application that best fits your goals.

	FEATURED AUTHOR	INDIE AUTHOR ALLEY	AUTHOR EXHIBIT BOOTH
PRIMARY GOAL	Nationally touring authors promoting a recent book release	Sell books and/or merchandise and connect directly with readers in a shared pavilion	Sell books and/or merchandise and connect directly with readers in a larger, individually tented space
ELIGIBILITY	New popular fiction and non-fiction with a publication date between July 2026 and June 2027.	Must have newly published titles in the three years prior to the 2027 festival (July 2024-July 2027)	Must have newly published titles in the three years prior to the 2027 festival (July 2024-July 2027)
PUBLISHING TYPE	Open to traditionally published, self-published, and indie press authors.	Reserved for self-published, hybrid-published, and indie press authors.	Open to traditionally published, self-published, and indie press authors.
SPEAKING OPPORTUNITIES	One or two 60-minute panel discussions, author talks or children's programs	Not included	Not included
BOOK SALES	Stock is managed and sold through the Official Festival Bookstore. The festival's bookstore partners retain the proceeds.	Authors bring stock and sell books directly to customers. Authors keep the proceeds.	Authors bring stock and sell books directly to customers. Authors keep the proceeds.
LENGTH OF FESTIVAL PARTICIPATION	Assigned programming time is typically one-to-three hours on either festival day.	Two days during the full festival exhibit hours	One or two-day option during the full festival exhibit hours
SPACE PROVIDED	No table or booth included	3' or 6' table space in Indie Author Alley pavilion	Individual 10'x10' or 10'x20' exhibit booth in the Festival Marketplace
FEES	Selected authors receive a modest travel honorarium.	$155 half table exhibit fee $255 full table exhibit fee	$550-$1,400 standard tent exhibit fee $250-500 DIY tent exhibit fee
APPLICATION DEADLINE	**Friday, Jan. 8**	**Friday, Jan. 8**	**Friday, Jan. 8 (may be extended if space allows)**

REVIEW AND SELECTION INFORMATION

Columbus Book Festival is committed to celebrating a broad range of cultures and ideas and providing space for merchants, booksellers, and community organizations with a variety of viewpoints.

Books and authors are selected through panel review. Selectors seek authors who represent a balance of voices, genres, perspectives, and talent from the application pool.



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SELECTIONS ARE MADE BASED ON THE FOLLOWING FACTORS:

- Professionally presented and thoroughly edited material
- Relevance to the vision, purpose and goals of the festival
- Timeliness and importance for contemporary society
- Relevancy of content to the community
- Suitability of subject and method of presentation for intended audience
- Relationship to other applications in the same subject field
- Legal definition of obscene materials
- Accuracy of the content
- Provides added value to the overall selection of festival titles
- Competence, popularity, local interest and reputation of author, illustrator, creator, producer and/or publisher

INELIGIBLE BOOKS INCLUDE:

- Books published outside of the eligibility window
- Books that are only available in digital or audio format
- Text or illustrations within the book that are generated by artificial intelligence (A.I.)

General Artificial Intelligence are applications or software used to create (generate) text, image, and other content typically through user prompting or instruction. Common products include, but are not limited to ChatGPT, Claude, Gemini, Copilot, Midjourney, Figma and Canva AI.

Interested authors must complete an application and provide a website and/or relevant social media channel for reviewers to evaluate. With the information provided on the application and relevant digital channels, a selection committee will evaluate applications.

- Selection is not first come, first served.
- Prior participation does not guarantee future participation.
- All applications will not be accepted.
- Physical books should not be sent to the library.

TIMELINE

Now – Jan. 8, 2027: Author applications accepted

Rolling through March 2027: Notification and selected author contracts sent

April-June 2027: Rolling contact of waitlist candidates

April 2027: Featured Author, Indie Author & Exhibitor lineup announced to the public

June 2027: Featured Author programming schedule announced

July 10-11, 2027: Columbus Book Festival






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FEATURED AUTHOR

Authors from around the country will present their newest titles to attendees through panel discussions, author talks, programming and book signings.

GUIDELINES & ELIGIBILITY

Eligible authors will have a book published between July 1, 2026 and June 30, 2027.

Books from a variety of viewpoints and topics will be considered based on how they fit into existing panels and themes featured in our festival.

SUBJECTS AND GENRES ACCEPTED FOR FEATURED BOOKS:

- **Adult & Young Adult - Popular Fiction & Non-Fiction**

  Sci-fi, historical and contemporary fiction, romance, thriller, mystery, humor, etc. Narrative nonfiction, biographies with broad appeal, historical nonfiction, journalistic nonfiction, current affairs, etc.

- **Middle Grade and Children's Literature**

  A limited number of children's titles are selected from broad genres that appeal to children and families.

INELIGIBLE BOOKS INCLUDE:

- Books first published outside of the 2027 festival eligibility window, including reprints, re-releases and paperback editions
- Topics with an exceedingly narrow audience, such as textbooks, instructional books, coffee table books, journals, business texts, and self-help books
- Anthologies and edited compilations
- Books available only in digital or audio format
- Text or illustrations within the book that are generated by artificial intelligence (A.I.). Generated cover art is accepted.
- Books that do not adhere to the library's book buying criteria and policy for material selection

SELF-PUBLISHED AND HYBRID PUBLISHED WORKS MAY BE CONSIDERED IF THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA ARE MET:

- Established retailer or distributor from which wholesale copies can be purchased
- Books that adhere to the library's book buying criteria and policy for material selection
- Book must be professionally edited and presented
- ISBN and barcode are required
- Author must have a press kit and website

PARTICIPATION

- A completed appearance contract is required.
- Featured authors are scheduled for one or two 60-minute panel discussions with a 30-minute book signing immediately following each session.
- Picture book authors participate in readings and interactive family-focused programs.
- Festival titles are stocked and sold by the Official Festival Bookstore, not directly by participating authors.
- Featured authors do not receive tabling space during the festival

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INDIE AUTHOR ALLEY

Indie creators, small press authors, hybrid-published authors, and self-published authors can sell and sign books directly to readers in the Indie Author Alley pavilion at Topiary Park.

GUIDELINES & ELIGIBILITY

- Book(s) published in the past three years (July 2024-July 2027).
- Participants must be self-published or published through a hybrid or indie press.
- High-interest fiction, nonfiction, children's books, and niche genres are welcome.
- Materials must be professionally presented.
- Original work must be professionally presented and thoroughly edited.
- Text or illustrations within the book that are generated by artificial intelligence (A.I.). Generated cover art is accepted.
- Applicant must be the author, co-author or creator of all titles sold at the table.

PARTICIPATION:

- Authors bring and manage their own stock and sell books directly to customers.
- Purchase exhibit table. Participation during both festival days is required.
- Payment and completed exhibitor contract are required to guarantee space.

EXHBITOR FEES & SPACE OPTIONS:

Payment is due with contract confirmation, sent separately after application review and selection. Rental fees cover both days at the festival.

ALL INDIE AUTHOR ALLEY TABLE SPACES INCLUDE:

- Tabletop identification sign
- Vendor description on the festival website
- Vendor listing in the printed program
- Reserved garage parking pass

HALF TABLE: $155

- ½ of a shared 6' table with linen; one chair
- One vendor badge

FULL 6' TABLE: $255

- One 6' table with linen; two chairs
- Two vendor badges

Do not request a half table if you plan to have more than one person working your table for the duration of the event. Three feet is not enough space for two people plus your shared table partner.






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AUTHOR EXHIBITOR BOOTHS

Authors and booksellers are a vibrant part of our Festival Marketplace! Bookshops, used and antique book dealers, authors and publishers are invited to sell titles directly to readers.

GUIDELINES & ELIGIBILITY

To reserve an exhibit booth or to vend at the Columbus Book Festival, you must either sell or promote books or book related products/ services, promote reading, or perform a literary or education-based activity.

- Eligible titles published in the past three years (July 2024-July 2027).
- Traditionally or self-published authors from publishers of all sizes selling new or backlist titles
- High interest fiction & nonfiction, children's books and niche genres are welcome.
- Original work must be professionally presented and thoroughly edited.
- Text or illustrations within the book that are generated by artificial intelligence (A.I.). Generated cover art is accepted.

PARTICIPATION:

- Authors at exhibit booths bring and manage their own stock and sell books directly to customers.
- Purchase exhibit booth. One- or two-day vending options are available.
- Payment and completed exhibitor contract are required to guarantee space.

EXHBITOR FEES & SPACE OPTIONS:

Payment is due with contract confirmation, sent separately after application review and selection.

ALL EXHIBIT BOOTHS INCLUDE:

- Booth identification sign
- Vendor description on the festival website
- Vendor listing in the printed program
- Reserved garage parking pass

TOPIARY PARK

Rental fee includes a durable weather-safe tent.

Standard Booth 10'x10': $550
Double Booth 10'x20': $1,400

- 10'×10' or 10'x20' frame tent with side walls
- Two 6' tables; two chairs per 10'
- Two vendor badges per 10'

CARNEGIE PLAZA

Lower cost DIY option for smaller vendors. Bring your own tent and exhibit supplies.

BYO Tent 10'x10': $250 (per day)

- 10'×10' space
- No tent, tables or chairs provided
- Two vendor badges