

EPIC's Competition Guide

Everything you **need** to know but thought you didn't

This guide will make sure you know everything you need to about entering this competition--from when to where, how to and how to not, right down to the best spot for your entry. Nevertheless, before you get to where you *want* to go, let's walk through what you *need* to know. The Committee has worked hard to make a number of radical changes, updating and revamping the rules and FAQs.

- The competition is all-inclusive for GLBT works. Every category in this competition (yes, even Children Non-Fiction and/or Fiction) is open for GLBT works.
- Some familiar categories have been split, forming new and exciting selections. Check the **CODES** and **DIVISIONS** to understand how categories have been divided and defined

Competition Schedule

Entry submissions will be accepted from July 15 through August 15, 2009

Finalist will be announced in November 2009

Awards will be presented at EPIC's 2010 conference in New Orleans, March 4-7, 2010

Your contest entry will be smooth and pain-free if you **READ THIS GUIDE!** Here is a checklist that might help:

- Confirm entry's eligibility (publication date, word count, format, etc.)
- Confirm the category you will enter your work (see below)
- Rename your PDF file to fit our naming conventions (this step is *extremely* important) and send it to epic.competition.entries@gmail.com
- Send in your payment (via PayPal or check/money order)
- Please visit www.epicauthors.com and look for the link for COMPETITION UPDATES to verify entry information, PDF file, and payments that have been processed. If you don't see your information, please allow a minimum of ten (10) days processing time before contacting epic.competition.entries@gmail.com. If you do not see your information, and it is two (2) days before the contest deadline, contact epic.competition.chair@gmail.com immediately.

Do not wait until the August 16th, midnight CST deadline.

Entry Form Link

<http://spreadsheets.google.com/viewform?hl=en&formkey=cnpmbTZUTHGxOEVHRm5mYjRrUWtnSIE6MA...>

Eligibility and Rules

1. E-books published in English, released for sale between **October 1, 2008 and May 31, 2009**. This includes self- and subsidy-published books
 - **Re-released books** are eligible provided they have no prior history with the competition, regardless of changes made to characterization, re-publication, or format; this includes annual books (yearbooks, guides, etc.)
 - Books previously published in paper formats may enter **ONLY** if there an e-book version is available, meeting the above stated requirements
2. Books will be entered either as a **Single Title** or an **Anthology**:
 - **Single Title** is a single work written by one author (or by two, in the case of co-authors), with no discernable break in storyline, and entered by the author.
 - **Anthology** is defined as a work containing more than one storyline and/or title, written and entered by an author (*author defined as ONE contributor who has written EVERY piece in the entry*) OR containing more than one contributor, entered by a PUBLISHER or an EDITOR (*Publisher is defined as the person/company who PUBLISHED the entry; Editor is defined as the PRIMARY CONTACT EDITOR responsible for the entry*)
3. **Word Count:** With the exception of Children Non-Fiction/Fiction and Poetry, all works will have a minimum count of 10,000 words. **There are no exceptions.**
4. There are no limits on the number of titles entered by an entrant, however, *the same work may NOT be entered in more than one category*
 - If you wish to enter more than one book, please feel free to do so. But realize you are competing against yourself. It is up to you to decide if this action will increase or decrease your potential win.
5. Works containing pedophilia, bestiality (not in respect to Paranormal shape shifters), necrophilia, and/or snuff and/or scat as acceptable sexual practices are not permitted and will be disqualified.
6. The age of sexual consent may vary from state to state, country to country, or world to world; works containing sexual situations involving **human** protagonists under the acceptable American legal age of eighteen (18) years must be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.
 - All inquires must be directed to the competition Chair (epic.competition.chair@gmail.com)
7. A separate entry form and entry fee is required for each title. Your entry is invalid until your payment processes.
8. Entries and fees must be received **before midnight** CST (Central Standard Time), **August 16th, 2009**.
 - If you are paying by check versus PayPal, please allow ample time for your payment to process.
9. Late entries, entries that do not conform to contest guidelines, and/or entries sent anywhere other than the designated contest addresses, will be disqualified.
10. The competition Chair and the competition Committee will not be held responsible for any issues regarding payments and/or entry submissions.
11. **There will be no refunds!**
12. **Electronic PDF** (non-DRM) files are the **only permitted format** for entry submissions. Incorrect entry formats will be returned to SENDER.
 - Entries may be resubmitted a limit of **two** (2) times.
13. Each entry submission must be "as the product sells", including COVER ART and copyright *date*. Copyright date must be within the first five (5) pages or last five (5) pages of the work.
 - *Notice MUST be on the entry form when the copyright date is NOT within the first five (5) pages.*
14. Excessive formatting errors may result in a lower score.
15. Work(s) legally forbidden for sale to minors due to sexual content must be entered in either the appropriate *Erotic Romance* category or *Erotica Fiction*. If you have a work that would be considered Erotic/a in nature, but falls within Non-Fiction guidelines, please consult the competition Chair before submitting your entry.
16. All e-mail correspondence to the competition Committee must include reason (*entry, format, naming, payment, award, etc.*), the name of entrant, and submission title in the *SUBJECT LINE*. All other correspondence will be returned to sender.
17. Entry file names must conform to the competition **naming conventions**. All entries must contain two (2) initials, regardless if entered by author, publisher, or editor.
 - There must be NO spaces, NO periods, NO slashes, NO underscore, and NO other fancy little doohickey symbol or letter you might find on your keyboard - only **ONE** hyphen between modifiers

Submission Naming Convention:

CODE-title-author initials.pdf

Example: *James Big* is entering a work in *Fantasy Fiction Category* (CODE is F3) with *Flight*.

File name would be **F3-Flight-JB.pdf**

Entrance Fee

EPIC MEMBER		NON-EPIC MEMBER	
Single Title	\$25.00 per entry	Single Title	\$35.00 per entry
Complete Anthology	\$35.00 per entry	Complete Anthology	\$45.00 per entry

Payments may be made via **PayPal** (worldwide) to Treasurer@epicauthors.com, or by **check and/or money order** (for U.S. or Canadian residents). All payments must be received and/or cleared by Midnight, CST, August 16th, 2009.

PayPal payments must state the payment is for the 2010 competition, including the title of the entry/ies and entrant's name listed on the original entry form/s. Payments received without the required information will be disqualified.

If you are paying by check or PayPal e-check, versus PayPal, please be sure to allow your payment the appropriate time required for postage and processing. Checks are payable to **EPIC** and require a minimum of ten (10) days from receipt to clearing of payment. Include the title of the entry and entrant's name (listed on the original entry form). Mailing address is:

EPIC Treasurer
Competition Entry Fee
PO Box 2097
Virginia Beach, VA 23452

Disqualification

Yes, entries are disqualified from this competition and here are some reasons why:

1. Entering an ineligible work, either outside of the qualification period, previously entered, or containing unacceptable content
2. Not being in an "as it is sold" format (e.g. a homemade PDF ARC copy)
3. Sending an incorrectly named file for the **2nd time**, thinking we won't notice
4. Being entered by someone other than author, publisher or editor
5. Violating any rules and/or eligibility
6. Being entered by an author into a multi-author anthology
7. Deliberate lying or cheating by the entrant

While the first 6 points on this list will earn you a place on our Idiot of the Moment Bulletin Board, the final *will* earn you a lifetime ban from our competition.

Codes and Categories

There are **EIGHT DIVISIONS**; four represent their individual categories. The four major divisions are Anthologies, Fiction, Romance, and Erotic Romance. Placement in an incorrect division and/or category may result in deduction of points for the overall entry score, which will make placing as a finalist difficult.

- **Work(s) legally forbidden for sale to minors due to sexual content must be entered in either Erotica Fiction or the appropriate Erotic Romance category**
- *No placement changes may occur during any stage of the contest due to entrant error.*

Each category requires a minimum of **six (6) entries** to compete as a valid category. If a category does not meet the entry criteria, one of the following will occur at the competition Committee's discretion:

- The category will stand and entries will be judged as entered
- The category would merge with one chosen as comparable; examples of potential combinations may be:
 - Historical would be combined with Western
 - Horror Romance and/or Horror Erotic Romance would be combined with Paranormal
 - Spiritual/Metaphysical Romance would be combined with Spiritual/Metaphysical Fiction
 - Children Non-Fiction/Fiction would be combined with Young Adult Non-Fiction/Fiction

CATEGORIES:

For the purpose of this competition, these are the definitions for categories within divisions. The definitions are not debatable and your scores will be marked down if the judges feel your entry is incorrect for either DIVISION and/or CATEGORY.

The following generalized descriptions of each division reflect the overall focus of that specific division. **Be sure you understand the detailed definitions for each division and category.**

The left column contains the **CODES** to use when naming the entry PDF file.

Divisions with no minimum required word count

P	Poetry Non-Fiction and/or Fiction focus on an ancient form of communication that uses rhythmic language to evoke an emotional response. The very nature of poetry as an individual mode of expression makes it nearly impossible to define.
C	Children Non-Fiction and/or Fiction works encompass readers aged birth to eleven years old. While they may be illustrated, the text should carry the story. Examples are: Picture books , with illustrations as an integral part of the story; Fiction or Non-Fiction books , intended to be read aloud to children or for children to read themselves

Divisions with a minimum 10,000 word count

YA	Young Adult (YA) Non-Fiction and/or Fiction works portray adolescents as the protagonists, rather than an adult or child, and the subject matter and story lines are consistent with the age and experience of the main character - often focusing on the challenges of youth. Average reading audience may be twelve to eighteen years old.
NF	Non-Fiction works contain writings of factual nature, whether generalized or specific non-fiction. The subject matter is objective when dealing with perceived truths as this writing style is dependent on the factual nature of the subject matter, regardless of dispute and subjectivity. The material should be factual, not fictitious, and involve personal experience and/or reporting on other experiences. The range of topics is unlimited, encompassing memoir writing, biography and autobiography, oral history, instructional manuals, cookbooks, or any factual and informative reportage.
A1 A2 A3 A4	Non-Fiction Fiction Romance Erotic Romance or Erotica Anthologies are collections of stories published in one volume of work, whether by one author or multiple contributors. Complete entries (or at least the majority of the works) should reflect Fiction, Romance, or Erotic Romance/Erotica.

Fiction spans categories and may contain works with an imaginative form of narrative, although works of fiction need not be entirely imaginary and may include real people, places, and events. These works must not devote a significant portion of their plot to elements from either <i>Romance</i> or <i>Erotic Romance</i> , and the primary focus of the work must be examples of the mystery solved, the horror survived, or the West won.	
F1	Adventure Adventure works feature fast-moving plots, set in any time and place; thrills of pursuit and adventure around every corner, high stakes, non-stop action, plot twists to surprise and excite, vibrant and exotic settings, and an intense pace that never lets up – these are the keys to this storyline.
F2	Erotica Erotica works contain works of frankly sexual nature, which may or may not have a romantic subtext. These works focus on the journey of sexual exploration, experimentation and enlightenment, intending to arouse the reader within the construct of a fictional or non-fictional narrative, utilizing frank language and descriptions.
F3	Fantasy and/or Paranormal Fantasy and/or Paranormal works use magical, mythological, supernatural and/or paranormal (psychical) forces as primary elements for plot, theme, and/or setting. These works generally distinguish from science fiction and horror by expectations that avoid scientific and macabre themes. This competition will include Traditional High and Low fantasy, Urban Fantasy, Dystopian/Apocalyptic fantasy and/or modern Paranormal fantasy.
F4	Historical Historical works blend accurate and authentic historical facts with imaginative writing to portray ideas, attitudes, tendencies, and themes true to a bygone era, with the setting an important literary ingredient.
F5	Horror Horror works scare, unsettle or horrify by exploiting the oldest and strongest emotion: fear. They promote morbid, gruesome, surreal, or frightening themes; terrors run wild and stand outside the realm of rational explanation.
F6	Mystery and/or Suspense Mystery and/or Suspense works investigate and solve crimes. These works start with a crime and the story emphasis is on solving the crime, or focus on a crime that has not yet been committed and is about to happen. Emphasis is on tension created by anticipating the outcome or preventing the outcome.
F7	Science Fiction Science Fiction and/or Futuristic works contain elements largely possible within scientifically established or postulated laws of nature (though elements might be pure speculation). These works, while often seen as futuristic, can encompass any time, place or space, and/or our own universe or imaginary worlds.
F8	Spiritual and/or Metaphysical Spiritual and/or Metaphysical works portray any inspirational and/or spiritual beliefs that create an intellectual and/or emotional impact. Entries may include philosophies that offer insights regarding quality or state of being, with the desired result benefiting the reader emotionally, physically and/or spiritually.
F9	Western Western works take place in the mid to late 19th century (approx 1830-1905), usually in the western half of the United States though settings may vary in locale from Canada to Mexico, to the outback of Australia. These works focus on action, good prevailing over evil, and strong, independent characters with frontier expansion, nature and/or the environment often being important elements.
F10	Mainstream Works placed in this category do not match any one specific category genre or cross multiple-genres without one superseding another.

Romance contains stories that focus on falling in love and making relationships work. The structure is that love is the primary focus and that the story will end with a happily-ever-after (HEA), or at least a happy-for-now (HFN) ending. Entries may reflect the changing times using a spectrum of beliefs and lifestyles, embracing a wide array of characters, time-periods, plot lines, and heat levels (from sweet to very sensual). They do not require family values or morals nor end in marriage. However, a resolution must occur even if it is a difficult choice.

R1	Contemporary	Contemporary Romance works are set in the world of today (or within the last few decades), based on characters living and working in a world with modern conveniences and current social mores.
R2	Fantasy	Fantasy Romance works , for the purpose of this competition, are traditional High Fantasy and/or Sword and Sorcery with romantic, character driven elements. These works separate from science fiction and horror by avoiding purely scientific and/or macabre themes and expectations. This category is <i>specifically</i> for works that contain events and/or characters that exist totally outside of the “real world” (Earth) in imaginary worlds. If the “real world” features heavily in the storyline, it may be better to consider Paranormal Romance or Paranormal Erotic Romance .
R3	Historical	See FICTIONAL – HISTORICAL definition, add “Romance” slant
R4	Horror	See FICTIONAL – HORROR definition, add “Romance” slant
R5	Mystery, Suspense, and/or Adventure	Mystery, Suspense, and/or Adventure Romance works investigate and solve crimes. These works start with a crime and the story emphasis is on solving the crime, or focus on a crime that has not yet been committed and is about to happen. Emphasis is on tension created by anticipating the outcome or preventing the outcome. High stakes, vibrant and exotic settings, and an intense pace put the adventure in these works.
R6	Paranormal	Paranormal and/or Urban Fantasy Romance works , for the purpose of this competition, are defined containing supernatural and/or paranormal forces in gritty, realistic, urbanized, real-world settings in the past, present or future. They are defined as being ‘of the mind’ (or psychical) and may include supernatural and/or other sentient beings of mythological and/or fantastical natures; the action should occur within the “real world” (Earth) realm, perhaps with brief forays into other realms and/or dimensions running parallel to our own. If “real world” (Earth) does not exist, or only cameos, it might be better to consider Fantasy Romance or Fantasy Erotic Romance .
R7	Science Fiction	See FICTIONAL – Science Fiction definition, add “Romance” slant
R8	Spiritual and/or Metaphysical	See FICTIONAL – Spiritual and/or Metaphysical definition, add “Romance” slant
R9	Western	See FICTIONAL – Western definition, add “Romance” slant

Erotic Romance ventures beyond the bedroom door, touching on areas traditional romance does not. This genre tends to use bolder language and avoid many of the euphemisms used in other books, focusing on the *act* of sex rather than the more traditional love scenes. Sex scenes, while explicit, are there for the purpose of character development, blending romance with sexual content, furthering internal and external personal interaction on slightly different level than traditional romance. Sexual exploration, and situations potentially considered taboo and/or forbidden, may eradicate society’s perception of sexual mores.

E1	Contemporary	See ROMANCE – Contemporary definition, add “Erotic Romance” slant
E2	Fantasy	See ROMANCE – Fantasy definition, add “Erotic Romance” slant
E3	Historical	See FICTION – Historical definition, add “Erotic Romance” slant
E4	Horror	See FICTION – Horror definition, add “Erotic Romance” slant
E5	Mystery, Suspense, and/or Adventure	See ROMANCE – Mystery, Suspense, and/or Adventure definition, add “Erotic Romance” slant
E6	Paranormal	See ROMANCE – Paranormal definition, add “Erotic Romance” slant
E7	Science Fiction	See FICTION – Science Fiction definition, add “Erotic Romance” slant
E8	Western	See FICTION – Western definition, add “Erotic Romance” slant