



FLORIDA BOOK AWARDS



BY NIKKI MORSE, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The Florida Book Awards (FBA) is the nation's most comprehensive state book awards program, established to recognize and celebrate the best literature written by Florida authors and best books written about Florida published each year. The awards are coordinated through Florida State University Libraries with other library, literary and cultural organizations including the State Library and Archives of Florida, the Florida Humanities, Florida Center for the Book, Midtown Reader, and the Word of South literature and music festival.

The book awards were founded in 2006 by Florida State University faculty members Dr. Wayne Wiegand and Dr. John Fenstermaker, who recognized and wanted to celebrate the rich literary culture in the state. While the program was based at FSU, they had a vision to create a statewide program and contacted humanities organizations across the state and invited them to be venture partners. All the original partners are connected with the program, and several new ones have joined since then. Florida State University Libraries took over management of the program in 2010 and has since seen continued growth with new categories and increasing submissions.

In many ways, the breadth of award-winning books and authors reflects the state's literary culture. Since the program began, it has been the only state book awards program to have a category for Spanish Language books. This year, a new award was also introduced in the Poetry category, the Gold Medal for Poetry: Chapbooks.

Now the Florida Book Awards is in its 16th year of competition and the 2022 bid cycle was launched last summer. Books published within the current year may be submitted by authors, publishers, or members of the public in any of the 11 categories of competition: Cooking, Florida Nonfiction, General Fiction, General Nonfiction, Older Children's Literature, Poetry, Popular Fiction, Visual Arts, Young Adult Literature and Young Children's Literature.

Entries must be received no later than January 13, 2023, but applicants are encouraged to submit their books for competition as soon as possible after they are published. Winners will be announced in the first week of March 2023. For instructions on submitting books to the contest, visit <https://www.floridabookawards.org>.

