

MEDIA RELEASE

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Melton City Libraries Short Story Competition returns in 2026

Aspiring writers, storytellers and creatives are invited to let their imagination run free as the 2026 Melton City Libraries Short Story Competition opens for entries.

Celebrating its 21st year, the competition provides the opportunity for entrants to have their work judged by popular authors and go in the running to share in over \$3000 in prizes.

Entries can be presented in text, illustration, video, verse, voice, or a combination of these across three categories – junior, teen and adult.

Written entries are capped at 1500 words for juniors and teens and 3000 words for adults, while non-written entries should be no longer than five minutes in length.

A standout judging panel will review this year's submissions, featuring:

- Andrew McDonald - bestselling children's author of *Real Pigeons* and *Hello Twigs*
- Demet Divaroren - award-winning young adult author of *Living on Hope Street* and *Growing Up Muslim in Australia*
- Mark Brandi - acclaimed crime author of *Wimmera*, *The Rip* and *Eden*

There'll also be a chance to meet the judges at Melton Library and Learning Hub and Caroline Springs Library and Learning Hub throughout the competition period in a series of special author talks, where they'll be sharing their best tips on writing a winning entry.

Amazing prizes are up for grabs including gift vouchers, new-release books, and tools to help inspire writers on their storytelling journey.

Entries close Friday 10 July and can be submitted online. Authors must live, work or study in the City of Melton.

For information and to enter, visit melton.vic.gov.au/MCLShortStory

Quotes attributable to City of Melton Mayor Cr Lara Carli:

"The Short Story Competition is a fantastic opportunity for emerging writers, illustrators and creative storytellers across our community to share their work and have it recognised by professional authors."

"As we celebrate 21 years of the competition, we're inviting anyone who has a story to tell to give it a go—whether you're picking up a pen for the first time or refining your creative craft."

ENDS

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