

# 2020 SMIAH Mini First Chapter Contest

**\*\*If you do not follow all rules, your entry will be disqualified.**

**Please be prepared for disqualification if you do not READ and follow all rules.\*\***

## **RULES:**

1. All entries must be received by **August 8, 2020 at 11:59 p.m. EST** to qualify.
2. Entries must be emailed to: **smiahwritersconference@gmail.com**
3. Anyone may enter this contest.
4. All entries must be the original, unpublished work of the author.
5. SMIAH is not responsible for entries that are disqualified due to rule violations.
6. This is a First Chapter contest only. If you submit a prologue AND a first chapter, your entry will be disqualified.
7. Please be professional and sensitive that your submission aligns with the nature of the SMIAH Writers Conference. We do not accept entries with graphic language, extreme violence, or sex scenes.
8. Submissions must be an attached Word document, and should be double-spaced, using 12 point Times New Roman font with one inch margins.
9. Word Limit: 3000. If your first chapter contains fewer than 3000 words, it is not required that you send more to make up the word count difference.
10. Pages must be numbered in consecutive order.
11. Please submit with a cover page. Do NOT put your name on the cover page or any other page of the manuscript. Your cover page should include only: the manuscript title, category name, and approximate word count.
12. Remember, the author's name should not appear anywhere in your entry. (We'll get all your personal information when you register and pay). PLEASE double check this before submitting. This includes your headers and footers.
13. Proof your work before submitting. Show us your best!
14. You may submit up to 3 entries.

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## **CATEGORIES:**

If you are unsure what category your manuscript would fit in, you alone must decide. For instance, if your manuscript could be both mystery and speculative, only you, the author, can make the decision as to which category it best fits. Please be aware that the judges who read and judge your entry will be judging for that particular category (i.e. speculative or mystery), so enter with that in mind.

**General Fiction/Nonfiction**

**Mystery/Suspense**

**Romance**

**SciFi/Fantasy/Speculative**

**YA Contemporary**

**YA SciFi/Fantasy/Speculative**

**Middle Grade**

## **SUBMISSION DETAILS:**

1. All entries must be received by **August 8, 2020 at 11:59 p.m. EST** to qualify.
2. Email the chapter to **smiahwritersconference@gmail.com** following the submission guidelines. Make sure you include your name, registration order number, category, and chapter title in the body of the email, for example:  
**Smith, Jane, Order #1234, Romance, Love the Write Man**
3. You will be sent an email confirmation once your first entry has been received. We will send an additional confirmation for subsequent entries.
4. SMIAH is not responsible for entries that are disqualified due to rule violations or for entries that are emailed to the wrong address.

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## **JUDGING AND AWARDS:**

1. All contestants will receive professional feedback from three judges.
2. Judging will be based on the merits that should be found in a first chapter, including a good opening hook, strong characterizations, compelling voice, conflict, dialogue, and little to no grammar/mechanical errors. Judges will also be looking at your presentation. Did you follow the rules, submit in the correct format, and were you in the correct category, with the manuscript at the appropriate length? Generally, the first place winner is an entry with a fresh idea, presented with clarity, structure, and elements of exceptional writing.
3. Top three winners will receive awards.
4. Awards will be announced on Saturday, September 26, 2020 during the SMIAH Mini awards ceremony.

If you have any questions, please contact Sarah John at [smiahwritersconference@gmail.com](mailto:smiahwritersconference@gmail.com)

Thank you!