

= Hugo Award =

The Hugo Awards are a set of awards given annually for the best science fiction or fantasy works and achievements of the previous year . The awards are named after Hugo Gernsback , the founder of the pioneering science fiction magazine *Amazing Stories* , and were officially named the Science Fiction Achievement Awards until 1992 . Organized and overseen by the World Science Fiction Society , the awards are given each year at the annual World Science Fiction Convention as the central focus of the event . They were first given in 1953 , at the 11th World Science Fiction Convention , and have been awarded every year since 1955 . Over the years that the award has been given , the categories presented have changed ; currently Hugo Awards are given in more than a dozen categories , and include both written and dramatic works of various types .

One of the most prestigious science fiction awards , the Hugo Awards have been termed as " among the highest honors bestowed in science fiction and fantasy writing " . Works that have won have been published in special collections , and the official logo of the Hugo Awards is often placed on the winning books ' cover as a promotional tool . The 2015 awards were presented at the 73rd Worldcon , Sasquan , in Spokane , United States , on August 22 , 2015 . The 2016 Hugos will be presented at the 74th Worldcon , MidAmeriCon II , in Kansas City , United States , on August 21 , 2016 .

For lists of winners and nominees for each category , see the list of award categories below .

= = Award = =

The World Science Fiction Society ( WSFS ) gives out the Hugo Awards each year for the best science fiction or fantasy works and achievements of the previous year . The award is named after Hugo Gernsback , who founded the pioneering science fiction magazine *Amazing Stories* and who is considered one of the " fathers " of the science fiction genre . Works are eligible for an award if they were published in English in the prior calendar year . There are no written rules as to which works qualify as science fiction or fantasy , and the decision of eligibility in that regard is left up to the voters , rather than to the organizing committee . Hugo Award nominees and winners are chosen by supporting or attending members of the annual World Science Fiction Convention , or Worldcon , and the presentation evening constitutes its central event . The selection process is defined in the WSFS constitution as instant @-@ runoff voting with five nominees per category , except in the case of a tie . The awards are split over more than a dozen categories , and include both written and dramatic works .

For each category of Hugo , the voter may rank " No Award " as one of their choices . Voters are instructed that they should do so if they feel that none of the nominees are worthy of the award , or if they feel the category should be abolished entirely . A vote for " No Award " other than as one 's first choice signifies that the voter believes the nominee ( s ) ranked higher than " No Award " are worthy of a Hugo in that category , while those ranked lower are not .

The five works on the ballot for each category are the most @-@ nominated by members that year , with no limit on the number of stories that can be nominated . From 1953 to 1958 the awards did not include any recognition of runner @-@ up novels , but since 1959 all of the candidates have been recorded . Initial nominations are made by members in January through March , while voting on the ballot of five nominations is performed roughly in April through July , subject to change depending on when that year 's Worldcon is held . Worldcons are generally held near the start of September , and take place in a different city around the world each year .

The idea of giving out awards at Worldcons was proposed by Harold Lynch for the 1953 convention . The idea was based on the Academy Awards , with the name " Hugo " being given by Robert A. Madle . The award itself was created by Jack McKnight and Ben Jason in 1953 , based on the design of hood ornaments of 1950s cars . It consisted of a finned rocket ship on a wooden base . Each subsequent award , with the exception of the 1958 award , has been similar to the original design . The rocket trophy was formally redesigned in 1984 , and since then only the base of the trophy has changed each year . There is no monetary or other remuneration associated with the

Hugo , other than the trophy .

= = = Retro Hugos = = =

Retrospective Hugo Awards , or Retro Hugos , were added in the mid @-@ 1990s . These awards are given by Worldcons held 50 , 75 , or 100 years after a Worldcon where no Hugos had been awarded , which were the conventions in 1939 ? 41 , 1946 ? 52 , and 1954 , and are given for works that would have been eligible in that year , by the same process as the regular Hugos . Retro Hugos have only been given five times : in 1996 , 2001 , and 2004 for 50 years prior , and 2014 and 2016 for 75 years prior . The six Worldcons eligible in 1997 ? 2000 , 2002 , and 2015 chose not to award them . The next opportunity will be in 2022 for 1947 .

= = History = =

= = = 1950s = = =

The first Hugo Awards were presented at the 11th Worldcon in Philadelphia in 1953 , which awarded Hugos in seven categories . The awards presented that year were initially conceived as a one @-@ off event , though the organizers hoped that subsequent conventions would also present them . At the time , Worldcons were completely run by their respective committees as independent events and had no oversight between years . Thus there was no mandate for any future conventions to repeat the awards , and no set rules for how to do so .

The 1954 Worldcon chose not to , but the awards were reinstated at the 1955 Worldcon , and thereafter became traditional . The award was called the Annual Science Fiction Achievement Award , with " Hugo Award " being an unofficial , but better known name . The nickname was accepted as an official alternative name in 1958 , and since the 1992 awards the nickname has been adopted as the official name of the award .

In 1959 , though there were still no formal guidelines governing the awards , several rules were instated which thereafter became traditional . These included having a ballot for nominating works earlier in the year and separate from the voting ballot ; defining eligibility to include works published in the prior calendar year , rather than the previous rule of the " preceding year " ; and allowing voters to select " no award " as an option , which then won that year in two categories : Dramatic Presentation and Best New Author . The eligibility change additionally sparked a separate rule , prohibiting the nomination of works which had been nominated for the 1958 awards , as the two time periods overlapped .

= = = 1960s = = =

In 1961 , after the formation of the WSFS to oversee each Worldcon committee , formal rules were set down in the WSFS constitution mandating the presenting of the awards as one of the responsibilities of each Worldcon organizing committee . The rules restricted voting to members of the convention that the awards would be given at , while still allowing anyone to nominate works ; nominations were restricted to members of the convention or the previous year 's convention in 1963 . The guidelines also specified the categories that would be awarded , which could only be changed by the World Science Fiction Society board . These categories were for Best Novel , Short Fiction ( short stories , broadly defined ) , Dramatic Presentation , Professional Magazine , Professional Artist , and Best Fanzine ( fan magazine ) . 1963 was also the second year in which " no award " won a category , again for Dramatic Presentation .

In 1964 the guidelines were changed to allow individual conventions to create additional categories , which was codified as up to two categories for that year . These additional awards were officially designated as Hugo Awards , but were not required to be repeated by future conventions . This was later adjusted to only allow one additional category ; while these extra Hugo Awards have been

given out in several categories , only a few were ever awarded for more than one year .

In 1967 categories for Novelette , Fan Writer , and Fan Artist were added , and a category for Best Novella was added the following year ; these new categories had the effect of providing a definition for what word count qualified a work for what category , which was previously left up to voters . Novelettes had also been awarded prior to the codification of the rules . The fan awards were initially conceived as separate from the Hugo Awards , with the award for Best Fanzine losing its status , but were instead absorbed into the regular Hugo Awards by the convention committee .

== 1970s ==

While traditionally five works had been selected for nomination in each category out of the proposed nominees , in 1971 this was set down as a formal rule , barring ties . In 1973 , the WSFS removed the category for Best Professional Magazine , and a Best Professional Editor award was instated as its replacement , in order to recognize " the increasing importance of original anthologies " .

After that year the guidelines were changed again to remove the mandated awards and instead allow up to ten categories which would be chosen by each convention , though they were expected to be similar to those presented in the year before . Despite this change no new awards were added or previous awards removed before the guidelines were changed back to listing specific categories in 1977 . 1971 and 1977 both saw " no award " win the Dramatic Presentation category for the third and fourth time ; " no award " did not win any categories afterwards until 2015 .

== 1980s and 90s ==

In 1980 the category for Best Non @-@ Fiction Book ( later renamed Best Related Work ) was added , followed by a category for Best Semiprozine ( semi @-@ professional magazine ) in 1984 . In 1983 , members of the Church of Scientology were encouraged by people such as Charles Platt to nominate as a bloc Battlefield Earth , written by the organization 's founder L. Ron Hubbard , for the Best Novel award ; it did not make the final ballot . Another campaign followed in 1987 to nominate Hubbard 's Black Genesis ; it made the final ballot but finished behind " no award " . 1989 saw a work ? The Guardsman by Todd Hamilton and P. J. Beese ? withdrawn by its authors from the final ballot after a fan bought numerous memberships under false names , all sent in on the same day , in order to get the work onto the ballot .

In 1990 the Best Original Art Work award was given as an extra Hugo Award , and was listed again in 1991 , though not actually awarded , and established afterward as an official Hugo Award . It was then removed from this status in 1996 , and has not been awarded since . The Retro Hugos were created in the mid @-@ 1990s , and were first awarded in 1996 .

== Since 2000 ==

In 2003 , the Dramatic Presentation award was split into two categories , Long Form and Short Form . This was repeated with the Best Professional Editor category in 2007 . 2009 saw the addition of the Best Graphic Story category , while the most recent change to the Hugo Awards was in 2012 , when an award for Best Fancast was added .

In 2015 , two groups of science fiction writers , the " Sad Puppies " led by Brad R. Torgersen and Larry Correia , and the " Rabid Puppies " led by Vox Day , each put forward a similar slate of suggested nominations which came to dominate the ballot . The Sad Puppies campaign had run for two years prior on a smaller scale , with limited success . The leaders of the campaigns characterized them as a reaction to " niche , academic , overtly [ leftist ] " nominees and winners in opposition to " an affirmative action award " that preferred female and non @-@ white authors and characters . In response , five nominees declined their nomination before and , for the first time , two after the ballot was published . Multiple @-@ Hugo @-@ winner Connie Willis declined to present the awards . The slates were characterized by some journalists as a " right wing " , " orchestrated

backlash " by a " group of white guys " and were linked with the Gamergate controversy . Multiple Hugo winner Samuel R. Delany characterized the campaigns as a response to " socio @-@ economic " changes such as minority authors gaining prominence and thus " economic heft " . In all but the Best Dramatic Presentation , Long Form category , " no award " placed above all nominees that were on either slate , and it won all five categories that only contained slate nominees .

= = Categories = =

The only discontinued awards which were instated in the WSFS constitution as permanent categories were the Best Professional Magazine and Best Original Art Work Hugo Awards . Worldcon committees may also give out special awards during the Hugo ceremony , which are not voted on . Unlike the additional Hugo categories which Worldcons may present , these awards are not officially Hugo Awards and do not use the same trophy , though they once did . An additional award , the John W. Campbell Award for Best New Writer , is presented at the Hugo Award ceremony and voted by the same process , but is not formally a Hugo Award .

= = Recognition = =

The Hugo Award is highly regarded by observers . The Los Angeles Times has termed it " among the highest honors bestowed in science fiction and fantasy writing " , a claim echoed by Wired , who said that it was " the premier award in the science fiction genre " . Justine Larbalestier , in *The Battle of the Sexes in Science Fiction* ( 2002 ) , referred to the awards as " the best known and most prestigious of the science fiction awards " , and Jo Walton , writing for Tor.com , said it was " undoubtedly science fiction ? s premier award " . The Guardian similarly acknowledged it as " a fine showcase for speculative fiction " as well as " one of the most venerable , democratic and international " science fiction awards " in existence " . James Gunn , in *The New Encyclopedia of Science Fiction* ( 1988 ) , echoed The Guardian 's statement of the award 's democratic nature , saying that " because of its broad electorate " the Hugos were the awards most representative of " reader popularity " . Camille Bacon @-@ Smith , in *Science Fiction Culture* ( 2000 ) , said that at the time fewer than 1000 people voted on the final ballot ; she held , however , that this is a representative sample of the readership at large , given the number of winning novels that remain in print for decades or become notable outside of the science fiction genre , such as *The Demolished Man* or *The Left Hand of Darkness* . The 2014 awards saw over 1900 nomination submissions and over 3500 voters on the final slate , while the 1964 awards received 274 votes . The 2015 awards saw 2122 nominating ballots and 5950 votes .

Brian Aldiss , in his book *Trillion Year Spree : The History of Science Fiction* , claimed that the Hugo Award was a barometer of reader popularity , rather than artistic merit ; he contrasted it with the panel @-@ selected Nebula Award , which provided " more literary judgment " , though he did note that the winners of the two awards often overlapped . Along with the Hugo Award , the Nebula Award is also considered one of the premier awards in science fiction , with Laura Miller of Salon.com terming it " science fiction 's most prestigious award " .

The official logo of the Hugo Awards is often placed on the winning books ' cover as a promotional tool . Gahan Wilson , in *First World Fantasy Awards* ( 1977 ) , claimed that noting that a book had won the Hugo Award on the cover " demonstrably " increased sales for that novel , though Orson Scott Card said in his 1990 book *How to Write Science Fiction & Fantasy* that the award had a larger effect on foreign sales than in the United States . Spider Robinson , in 1992 , claimed that publishers were very interested in authors that won a Hugo Award , more so than for other awards such as the Nebula Award . Literary agent Richard Curtis said in his 1996 *Mastering the Business of Writing* that having the term Hugo Award on the cover , even as a nominee , was a " powerful inducement " to science fiction fans to buy a novel , while Jo Walton claimed in 2011 that the Hugo is the only science fiction award " that actually affects sales of a book " .

There have been several anthologies collecting Hugo @-@ winning short fiction . The series *The Hugo Winners* , edited by Isaac Asimov , was started in 1962 as a collection of short story winners

up to the previous year , and concluded with the 1982 Hugos in Volume 5 . The New Hugo Winners , edited originally by Asimov , later by Connie Willis and finally by Gregory Benford , has four volumes collecting stories from the 1983 to the 1994 Hugos . The most recent anthology is The Hugo Award Showcase ( 2010 ) , edited by Mary Robinette Kowal , which contains most of the short stories , novelettes , and novellas that were nominated for the 2009 award .