

YALSA Board of Directors
Virtual January Meeting
January 15, 2022

Topic: Policy updates for Amazing Audiobooks

Background: Over the past few months, Celeste Swanson (Chair-Selection List Oversight Committee) and her team have collaborated with Catherine Outten (Team Lead-Amazing Audiobooks) to put together a list of proposed changes for the Amazing Audiobooks policy and procedure document. Work on this project began when SLOC committee members realized that some of the dates listed in the policy were not accurate. Further changes were then recommended as the committee analyzed other sections of the policy.

Action Required: Action

Overview: The Selection List Oversight Committee (SLOC) would like to request an update to the policy and procedure document for the Amazing Audiobooks Blogging Team. The purpose of these changes is to ensure consistency among all of the blogging teams and to update areas of the policy to reflect current committee practice. We also felt that it was important to include YALSA's statement on Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion within the policy.

Recommendations:

All of the requested changes are highlighted below in yellow. Anything with a line through it is something we would like to remove. The other highlighted sections are the items that we would like to have added to the document. The justification for each change is listed in red.

Amazing Audiobooks Policies and Procedures

All of our Selected Lists have been transitioned over to the Hub. Transitioning the selected lists to The Hub will offer a better opportunity to highlight books that are being considered for each list in a more timely and easily accessible manner, as well as provide members with more virtual participation opportunities. More info can be found [here](#).

Blogging Team Function Statement

To select, annotate, and present for publication an annual list of notable audio recordings significant to young adults from those released in the past two years.

The Team

YALSA Board of Directors
Virtual January Meeting 2022
Policy updates for Amazing Audiobooks
Item #15

The Amazing Audiobooks Blogging Team consists of 10 - 15 YALSA members and one Team Lead. Team members are appointed by the Hub's Member Manager and serve a term of one year. Team members may be selected to serve a concurrent second one-year term based on the member's first year performance and their interest and availability in serving another year, for a total of a two-year maximum concurrent term length on the team. The term of service begins Jan. 1st in the year under consideration and concludes Dec. 31st of that year. **The term is not necessarily concurrent.**

~~Members who have served two consecutive years as a member and/or administrative assistant may not be appointed to the same team for three years from the conclusion of their last term. This guideline will not apply to the Chair. The team lead and team members may be selected to serve a concurrent, second one-year term based on their first-year performance and their interest and availability in serving another year, for a total of a two-year maximum concurrent term length on the team. **We think this should also apply to Team Leads.**~~

~~Members who have served 2 consecutive years as a member, team lead, and/or administrative assistant may not be appointed to the same team for 3 years from the conclusion of their last term. In extreme circumstances, such as when a team member resigns suddenly, and at the President's discretion, an exception may be made if a team member resigns suddenly. The President, after discussion with the Team Lead, may determine that the best course of action is decide to fill the vacancy with an experienced member, and appoint a member who successfully served on the blogging team in question in good standing during the previous three years. **We think this should also apply to Team Leads.**~~

Team Member Responsibilities

Each team member must be responsible for listening to and ranking evaluating the majority of audiobooks submitted for consideration in a given year. Members conduct all work virtually and work year-round, often listening to upwards of 100+ books. Members will also write blogs/reviews for *The Hub*. Members must participate actively in the work of the team. Specific duties are assigned by the Team Lead. Members must be able to listen to audiobooks in all possible formats, both digital and physical. If the Team Lead/Member Manager determines that a committee member is not participating fully, that member may be asked to step down from the committee and might not be permitted to participate the following year. **Participation has been an issue in the past. We think these statements will help add clarification.**

Team Lead Responsibilities

The Team Lead presides at all meetings of the group and manages an online workspace for the group. It is the responsibility of ~~staff~~ the Team Lead to contact the various audiobook publishers with an explanation of the team's charge and need for members to receive submissions to be judged for the annual list. The Team Lead should work with staff to renew efforts each year to increase the number of audiobook publishers who are aware of and involved in this project. The Team Lead is a voting member of the group, with all the rights and responsibilities of the other members. It is also the Team Lead's responsibility to notify team members of times and formats/platforms for meetings, to compile a list of suggested titles for discussion, and to provide an agenda before each meeting.

Eligibility & Criteria

Eligibility

- All literary genres are eligible for consideration.
- The Team will consider and vote on titles published within the past two calendar years September 1 of the previous year through December 31 of the current year. This was changed a couple of years ago. The policy needs to be updated to reflect the change. A title may only be submitted once and cannot be reconsidered the next year.
- Audiobooks must be available for libraries to purchase and lend. This can include a digital format that is available for lending or in a physical format.
- ~~Titles previously published in another country (in any format) will be considered eligible the first year the title is available for libraries to purchase and lend in the US. Though an audiobook need not be published in the United States, it must be widely available for purchase in the U.S. at the time of consideration. All of the committees already allow books from outside the United States, so we felt that this should be reflected in the policy. We also agreed that this should be consistent among all of the committees.~~
- Titles previously unavailable in a format for libraries to purchase and lend will be considered eligible the first year the title is available for libraries to purchase and lend.
- The audiobook is intended for or appeals to young adults, who are defined as persons age 12 to 18; works for this entire age range are to be considered. Adult titles are also eligible for consideration if they have crossover appeal.
- Audiobooks featuring single or full cast narration are eligible.
- The Team Lead, with assistance from designated YALSA staff, is responsible for verifying the eligibility of all nominated titles.

The criteria against which any particular audiobook should be judged as a candidate for a final list of annual recommendations by YALSA include:

- Appeal of content to any or all potential listeners between 12 and 18 years old. While the list as a whole addresses the interests and needs of young adults ranging in age from 12 to 18, individual titles may appeal to parts of that range rather than to its whole. Material need not be “family friendly,” or appeal to the youngest common denominator of adults.
- Adapted materials must remain true to, expand, or complement the original work.
- Effective use of voices, music, sound effects, and language.
- Appropriateness of material for audio presentation.
- Suitability of match between performer and text.
- ~~Possible expansion of audience of young adults for a text that has not been readily accessible in its print format to its target audience.~~
We felt that this was confusing and was not needed in the policy
- Professional production quality.
- Correct pronunciation of all text words is required, however, a title would not necessarily be disqualified if an error is deemed by the Team to be minor. when evaluating the recording as a whole.
- Clarity of recording is required.
- Informative packaging is preferred.

- Books that represent a diverse range of characters, authors, and perspectives with diverse voices and life experiences.

We felt that this was important to include in the criteria.

Curricular suitability can be a positive consideration but is not a requirement for inclusion.

Nominations

The nomination period runs from January 1 to ~~December 4~~ November 1. The purpose of this change is to make this date consistent among all of the committees and to give each team more time to finalize the list.

The Team Lead will accept nominations throughout the year, as well as suggestions from the field. The suggestion form, created by the Team Lead, will be available on the Hub and on the YALSA website. We felt like this needed to be clarified. Team members may nominate an unlimited number of titles. Team members may recommend to the Team Lead that a particular production company be contacted specifically for review copies of a title that deserves team attention. ~~Neither publishers nor authors may nominate their own titles.~~ Authors and Publishers are encouraged to send suggested titles to the Team Lead. The selection list team will then review these titles to determine if they should be nominated for the list. The Team Lead will regularly disseminate a list of nominated titles to group members. Each nomination must have been heard by at least ~~one~~ two group members in its entirety. This was updated for clarification. The original statement was somewhat vague.

Team members are encouraged to solicit the opinions of young adults on titles being considered for nomination.

Selection Process

A simple majority vote will determine ~~The winners~~ which titles are on both the final list and on the Top Ten List. The final list, with annotations written by the team, will be complete by Dec. 31. The list will be made available on [The Hub](#), Booklist, and the [Teen Book Finder Database](#).

Meeting Procedures

Voting Process

At the discretion of the Team Lead, straw votes may be conducted periodically. The sole purpose of such voting is to guide discussion by revealing levels of support for individual titles. The final vote will occur after nominations have closed. Members are only able to vote on nominated books they have read. We added this for clarification.

Amazing Audiobooks List

The final list of recommended titles ~~numbers between 25 and 30 and~~ we wanted to allow for more flexibility addresses the wide scope of interests and concerns of listeners between 12 and 18. No one title need address the interests of all listeners in this range, but the list as a whole must offer a balance of developmental levels, intellectual concerns, and experiential

backgrounds. ~~Each year's submissions for consideration must have been produced or released within the 24 months previous to the list's release at Midwinter. This information is redundant.~~

The list is to be annotated, with the annotations reflecting both the content of the audiobook and the performance quality through which the production company enhances any print on which the production is based. An audiobook produced and released close to Midwinter may be eligible for reconsideration in the following year if fewer than $\frac{3}{4}$ of committee members have had the opportunity to review it between its submission and the final selection meeting of the term.

Diversity

~~Librarianship focuses on individuals, in all their diversity, and that focus is a fundamental value of the Young Adult Library Services Association and its members. Diversity is, thus, honored in the Association and in the collections and services that libraries provide to young adults.~~

Equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) are ideals that the Young Adult Library Services Association (YALSA) seeks to affirm in all facets of the organization. As a professional organization dedicated to enhancing library services for and with teens, YALSA recognizes that all teens, and particularly teens from underserved and marginalized communities, need and deserve to see themselves reflected in the library staffing, policies, signage, web site content, and much more. Therefore, YALSA seeks to address the cultural mismatch between today's increasingly diverse teen population and the librarian workforce, which remains overwhelmingly white and female. (2018 YALSA EDI Statement). ~~We decided to change the diversity statement to YALSA's EDI Statement.~~

Revision

These procedures will be subject to review, and possible revision by the YALSA Board of Directors following the first two years of implementation. Revised, 01/08. Revised, 11/14.

Alignment to Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Goals:

We believe that including YALSA's statement on Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion will help guide the work of the committee, ensuring that the lists created by the committee reflect the diversity of the teens we serve.

Fiscal Implications:

The only fiscal implication will be the time needed to update the document on the ALA website.

Please email Selection List Oversight Committee Chair, Celeste Swanson, with any questions at acbadger@gmail.com.