

AASLH Leadership in History Awards

Award of Excellence for Publications Guidelines

The AASLH Publication Awards are presented annually to books of exceptional scholarly achievement in a variety of state and local history subjects. The awards are designed to heighten awareness of outstanding books of state and local history interest and:

- to encourage the publication and reading of books on state and local history topics
- to recognize the authors of outstanding scholarly works
- to acknowledge original contributions to scholarship
- to promote changing best practices and trends in the field of history

Eligibility

All published matter:

- May be submitted by an author or publisher. Self-nominations are welcome.
- Can be singly and jointly authored/edited works
- Must address local history or historical practice in North America
- Must be available in the English language

For books, they must:

- Be in hardcover, original paperback, or e-book (see category requirements)
- Be published within two years prior to January 1 of the year of the competition
- Have a valid ISBN
- Be available for sale in the United States
- Have sufficient back matter to demonstrate good scholarship (references, endnotes, index, etc.)

The following are NOT eligible:

- Reprints of books originally published in another year

- Books containing previously published material UNLESS at least 50% of the book's content is new (further documentation will be required)
- Plays/screenplays
- Studies/research papers (these may be eligible for the Award of Excellence for Projects)
- Anthologies
- Annual reports/brochures/newsletters/marketing materials

Awards are presented in two categories, and the winning authors are celebrated at the Annual Conference later in the year. Unlike the other Leadership in History Award categories, AASLH Publication Awards are competitive. One winner and up to one Honorable Mention are selected in each category. In the event that the Award Committee determines the quality of the entries does not warrant the awarding of any prize, the Committee shall have the right to make no award available. The final submission date is March 1. The awards will be presented in-person at the AASLH Annual Conference or virtually if necessary. Authors or publishers will be advised of the Award Committee's decision in advance of the conference.

Publication Award Categories

Best Large Press Local History Book: Awarded annually to the most outstanding book published on a state or local history topic by a larger press (publishes more than three titles per year).

Best Small Press/Independent Author Local History Book: Awarded annually to the most outstanding book published on a local history topic by a press/organization that published fewer than three books a year for the past three years, or by an author not affiliated with a historic site, museum, or university. This may include authors who work with subsidy or private publishers.

Award Criteria

Criteria for selection include:

- Exceptional and meritorious work
- Contribution to advancing the field of state and/or local history
- Excellence and thoroughness of research
- Style and appropriateness of presentation
- Suitability and rigor of methodology

- Nominations should answer the question, “Is It Good History?”

Definition of Good History

1. Embraces difficult topics by reflecting current scholarship, grounding the work in primary source research, and providing a genuine contribution to the understanding of history.
2. Acts to build diversity and inclusiveness through interpretation that considers race, ethnicity, gender, social class, and geography, and is provocative through presenting contested history and multiple perspectives.
3. Cultivates an experimental and creative spirit as a source for imaginative problem solving, exploring new approaches, and resourcefulness, while also looking to others for inspiration. Projects that extend the mission of an organization, demonstrate risk-taking, and offer activities outside conventional boundaries will merit the greatest consideration.
4. Demonstrates the relevance of history and showcases how the public can make use of the past in discussions of the present and the future.
5. Attempts to be accessible to wide audiences with differing learning styles, abilities, and interest in history.

Prizes

- Formal recognition at the AASLH Annual Conference
- AASLH Awards seal to use in marketing
- Complimentary registration for the awards ceremony for the award winner

Submission Instructions

The nomination form for publications is fairly simple. It does not require budget information or letters of critical review like other award types. You will need basic information like author contact info and resume and ISBN. Reviews and press are optional. You will need to provide a two-part nomination narrative:

Part one: Please introduce the publication and describe its achievements and impact on the community served. Also state goals and objectives for the publication and how they were met, as well as identify intended audiences and how they were reached. Describe its impact with specific examples (i.e. number of copies sold, how it was used in education programs/schools, etc.) – 500 words

Part two: For publications published by organizations, state how the project or organizational achievement has supported the mission of your institution. Include your institution's mission statement. (If you are an individual author, please note that in the text box.) – 250 words

Please fill out the nomination form at our online portal at aaslh.submittable.com/submit.

Send two copies of the book to AASLH via USPS Media Mail: American Association for State and Local History Attn: AASLH Book Award 404 BNA Drive, Suite 105, Nashville, TN 37217

Submissions must be received by March 1. Please note that materials will not be returned.

Questions? Email us at abain@aaslh.org or call 615-320-3203.