

Future Stories: A Short Story Competition

2026 Edition

Terms & Conditions

This competition is organised by Dubai Future Foundation (“**DDF**”) for Future Stories: A Short Story Competition (“**Competition**”). Set out below are the official terms and conditions of this Competition, which together with the [Storytelling Guidelines](#) apply to and govern this Competition (Collectively the “**Competition Rules**”)

1. Eligibility:

This Competition is open to all individuals, including legal residents of the United Arab Emirates and international participants.

“**Participant**” means any individual entering the Competition, whether as a Solo Author or as Co-Authors. In the case of Co-Authors, references to a Participant shall include all team members jointly and severally, unless the context requires otherwise.

Participants may enter this Competition either individually or as part of a team (“**Team**”). Each Team shall consist of no more than two (2) members (Co-Authors) and must designate one member as the authorised representative (“**Team Representative**”), who shall act on behalf of all Team members in all matters relating to the Competition.

Each Participant and, in the case of a Team, each Team member must comply with these Competition Rules. All Team members shall be jointly and severally liable for compliance with these Competition Rules.

Participation in this Competition is restricted to individuals and Teams where each Participant (including all Team members) who are at least 18 years of age. Participants must provide valid proof of age and identity upon request to verify eligibility and DFF reserves the right to request any additional consent forms at DFF’s sole and absolute discretion.

DDF reserves the right to ask for such documentation from any Participant and, in the case of a Team, from any or all Team members at any time during the Competition. Failure to provide satisfactory proof of age, identity, or eligibility, or failure by any Team member to meet the eligibility requirements, may result in disqualification from the Competition of the Participant or, where applicable, the entire Team.

Winners placing in the top three of any genre may not submit entries in that same genre for the next two editions of the competition. For the years 2024-2026, the selected genre is science fiction (sci-fi).

In the case of a Team, the Team Representative warrants that they have obtained all necessary authorisations and consents from each Team member to participate in the Competition and to be bound by these Competition Rules.

The following are not eligible to participate in the Competition:

- Employees, officers, directors, and representatives of DFF;
- Judges and organizers of this Competition; and

- Immediate relatives of the foregoing excluded persons.

2. Participation:

Each Participant may submit only one (1) Story. In the case of a Team, only one (1) Story may be submitted per Team, and no individual may participate in more than one Team or submit multiple entries, whether individually or as part of a Team. The Story must be submitted by the Team Representative on behalf of all Team members.

All Participants (and, in the case of a Team, all Team members) shall be responsible for ensuring that the submission complies with these Competition Rules.

3. Winners:

The Competition will recognize winners based on their performance, as determined by the judging criteria specified in these Competition Rules.

The following categories of winners will be awarded:

- Top 10 Winners: The entries ranked in the top ten (10) positions will be acknowledged as winners (“**Top 10 Winners**”)
- Top 3 Winners: Among the Top 10 Winners, the entries ranked in the top 3 positions will be specially recognized as the top three (3) winners of the Competition, (“**Top 3 Winners**”)

The Top 10 Winners and the Top 3 Winners shall be collectively referred to as “**Winners**”.

Where a winning entry is submitted by a Team, the Team shall be designated as the Winner, and any references to a Winner shall include all Team members.

Winners shall not publicly announce or disclose their status (including on social media or any other platform) prior to the official announcement by DFF and are required to refrain from disclosing their status until such official announcement has been made by DFF.

4. Submission Rights:

By entering this Competition, each Participant who is not selected as one of the Winners, hereby grants DFF and each of DFF’s affiliates, and any other third parties acting on behalf of any of the foregoing, Competition partners, prize providers and the successors, licensees and assigns of each of the foregoing (collectively, the “**Competition Organisers**”), a fully paid up, non-exclusive, assignable, sublicensable, worldwide and perpetual license to display publicly and use for promotional purposes the Story, including any excerpts thereof. This license includes, but is not limited to, posting or linking to the Story on DFF and/or other third-party websites, applications and platforms and the display and promotion of the Story in any other media, worldwide.

By entering this Competition, each Participant agrees and expressly consents that the following information and submission components (“**Participant Information**”) may be displayed and/or announced publicly including (without limitation) in any medium, events, and platforms such as social media and the official website of DFF in perpetuity:

- First name
- Last name
- Age
- Nationality
- Writing from
- Title of the Story
- Story Synopsis
- The Short Story
- Images/photographs/video footage taken at the Forum

Each Participant represents and warrants that the Competition Organisers are free to use the Participant Information in the manner described above, as provided or as modified by DFF, without obtaining permission, notification, or license from any third party and without any compensation to the Participant.

By entering into this Competition, each Participant hereby:

1. Authorizes all verifications required by DFF concerning the Participant's identity and eligibility, and agrees and acknowledges that the Participant may be disqualified from the Competition in the event of the existence of any indication of falsified, fraudulent, false, untruthful, incorrect or inexact identity or address; and
2. Warrants and ensures that the Story will be an original work of authorship and that its use or possession by DFF will not cause DFF, its affiliates and/or the Competition Organisers to infringe any third-party rights or enable third parties to interfere with the rights and licenses granted to DFF, its affiliates and the Competition Organizers.

5. Intellectual Property Rights:

i. Grant of License

For the purposes of this Clause 5, "**Term**" shall mean the period from the date of submission of the Story up until 23:59 (UAE time) on the last day of the Dubai Future Forum (or such other date as may be specified by DFF in writing), unless extended by DFF at its sole discretion.

By entering the Competition and upon being selected as a Winner, each Participant hereby expressly grants to DFF for the duration of the Term an exclusive, irrevocable, royalty-free, sublicensable and worldwide license to use the Story to:

1. Promote, publish and distribute the Story in the Dubai Future Forum and elsewhere free of charge in any form whatsoever (to be determined in DFF's sole discretion); and
2. Publish and display the Story in any medium, including but not limited to the Competition Organizer's websites, third-party websites, applications, and platforms including, but not limited, for promotional purposes.

In the case of a Team, each Team member hereby represents and warrants that all intellectual property rights in the Story are either jointly owned or validly assigned, and that all necessary consents have been obtained to grant the rights set out in this Clause. All Team members grant such rights jointly and severally.

Each Participant acknowledges and agrees that DFF shall have full discretion in determining how the Story is used, displayed, adapted, or promoted during the Term.

Any use of artificial intelligence tools in the creation of the Story must comply with DFF's requirements, including disclosure obligations and any applicable Human–Machine Collaboration (HMC) labelling requirements.

ii. **Restrictions on Participants during the Term**

Each Participant (and, in the case of a Team, all Team members) agrees, for the duration for the Term, not to publish the Story on any platform or program, nor submit it in any other competitions, whether in the United Arab Emirates or elsewhere worldwide.

In addition to the foregoing, each Participant agrees not to publish, display, distribute, or otherwise make the Story available on any platform or program, including personal websites, blogs, or social media.

Furthermore, each Participant shall not commercialize or exploit the Story in any manner during the Term. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Selling or otherwise commercialising the Story;
- Licensing or offering the Story to any third party;
- Using the Story in any promotional or commercial materials;
- Entering into any agreements or arrangements that grant any rights to third parties in relation to the Story in any form.

For the avoidance of any doubt, the exclusive licence granted under this Clause shall grant DFF sole control over the use and dissemination of the Story during the Term.

iii. **Grant of License After the Term**

Following the expiry of the Term, each Winner agrees and hereby grants to DFF and the Competition Organisers, a fully paid up, non-exclusive, assignable, sublicensable, worldwide and perpetual license to display publicly, distribute and promote the Story (including any excerpts thereof) and the Participant's winning status in the Competition. This license includes, but is not limited to, posting or linking to the Story on DFF and/or other third-party websites, applications and platforms and display and promotion of the Story in any other media, worldwide.

Each Participant warrants that the Story is an original work of authorship and that its use by DFF, its affiliates, and licensees will not infringe any third-party rights or give rise to any claim, demand or liability. The Participant shall be solely responsible for any breach of this warranty.

The Winners acknowledge that any breach of these Competition Rules may result in irreparable harm and significant injury to DFF and/or the Competition Organisers. DFF is entitled, in addition to any other rights and remedies it may have, to seek damages for such loss (including indirect and damage to its reputation) as well as enforce its rights by seeking and obtaining specific performance and/or injunctive relief.

The provisions set out in Clause 5 (Intellectual Property Rights) shall survive the termination or expiration of this Competition. This includes, without limitation, all licenses granted, restrictions on publication and commercialization, and the rights of DFF to use, promote, publish, and distribute the Story. Such rights shall continue to apply and remain in full force and effect notwithstanding the termination or expiration of the Competition.

All intellectual property related to the Competition, including but not limited to copyrighted material, trademarks, trade names, logos, designs, promotional materials, web pages, source codes, drawings, illustrations, slogans and representations are owned by or licensed to DFF and its affiliates. All rights are reserved. Nothing in these Competition Rules grants any Participant any right or license to use any such intellectual property in any manner whatsoever. Any unauthorized copying, reproduction, distribution, or use of such intellectual property without the express prior written consent of DFF or the relevant rights holder is strictly prohibited.

6. Competition Timeline:

The Competition timelines are set out below and may vary, and DFF reserves the right, at its sole and absolute discretion, to update, postpone, suspend, extend, cancel, or otherwise modify the Competition, including any timelines, stages, judging process, or prizes, at any time and for any reason:

- Opens for submissions in April 2026.
- Closes for submissions on 31 July 2026 (23:59 GST).
- Judging period will be between August and October 2026.
- Winners will be announced on the DFF website in November 2026.

7. Prizes:

DFF reserves the right, at its sole discretion, to determine, amend, or substitute any prizes, and full details of the prizes will be published or updated on the official DFF website.

Where a winning entry is submitted by a Team, each Team member shall be treated as a Winner and DFF shall determine, at its sole and absolute discretion, the manner in which any prize is allocated, delivered, or made available.

All prizes are non-transferable, non-exchangeable, and may not be redeemed for cash or any alternative, except at DFF's sole discretion.

To the fullest extent permitted by applicable law, DFF (including its affiliates) shall, except where caused by its gross negligence or wilful misconduct, have no liability and each Participant shall indemnify and hold DFF harmless for any claims, demands, liability, suits, actions, proceedings, judgments, fines, losses, damages, penalties (including, without limitation, attorney's fees) in relation to personal injury or death or damage to person or property, arising from or related to this Competition, or due in whole or in part, directly or indirectly, to (i) the acceptance, possession or use of the prize; or (ii) any physical activity, travel or travel-related activity in relation to the Competition or participation in this Competition.

8. Judges:

The Winners will be determined by a judging committee as set out in the Competition website [here](#).

Should any Participant, or Winner be found to be approaching or trying to influence any judge, directly or indirectly, this will result in immediate disqualification from the Competition.

DFF reserve the right, at its sole discretion, to change the composition of the judging committee at any time during the Term. All decisions made by the judges are final and binding. No correspondence or appeal will be taken into consideration, and no changes to the decisions will be made under any circumstance.

9. Third Party Collaborators:

By participating in this Competition, each Participant consents to DFF sharing the Participant Information with third parties with whom DFF collaborates with ("Third Party Collaborators") for the purpose of administering, promoting and running the Competition and securing the prizes.