



**BOLOGNA
CHILDREN'S
BOOK
FAIR**



**31 MARCH
3 APRIL
2025
BOLOGNA
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THE 62ND BOLOGNA CHILDREN'S BOOK FAIR

**The 2025 international awards: trends, business and opportunities for illustrators
60 years of the BolognaRagazzi Awards and 10 years of the Strega Ragazze e Ragazzi Prize**

THE BOLOGNA PRIZE FOR THE BEST CHILDREN'S PUBLISHERS OF THE YEAR

Organised by Bologna Children's Book Fair and the Italian Publishers Association (AIE) in collaboration with the International Publishers Association (IPA), the award acknowledges the **best publisher chosen for each of six areas of the world** (Europe; Africa; Asia; Oceania; Central and South America and the Caribbean; North America). This year the Bologna Prize for the Best Children's Publishers of the Year (BOP) marks its **12th edition**. Created for the 50th anniversary of BCBF, the award aims to recognise publishers that have stood out over the past year for the creativity, quality and courage of their editorial choices. The prize, awarded by the publishers themselves on the first day of the fair, also serves as a formidable tool for scouting new talent, while also fostering interaction and exchange between countries.

BOLOGNARAGAZZI AND CROSSMEDIA AWARDS

In 2025 we celebrate the **60th anniversary of the BolognaRagazzi Awards (BRAW)**, the prizes BCBF has been awarding since 1966 to recognise the best new releases and to identify trends in publishing for children and teens. To celebrate this important milestone, with the support of Grafiche AZ, BCBF will present a volume that tells the history of the award through the covers of all the winning and mentioned books over the six decades, thus also offering an overview of the history of children's publishing itself. The BRAW are one of the most prestigious awards for children's publishing and a great business opportunity for the winners. Winning one of the prizes or an honourable mention can promote the sale of book rights on the international market and allows publishers, authors and illustrators to bring their work to the attention of the world publishing industry. The evolution of forms of media, and the possibility to transfer, intersect or expand books onto other platforms, prompted the Bologna Children's Book Fair to broaden its approach by establishing the **BolognaRagazzi CrossMedia Award (BRCMA)**, which is now in its fifth edition.

THE ILLUSTRATORS EXHIBITION AWARDS

A genuine hothouse for new talent, the Illustrators Exhibition represents an opportunity for selected young artists to launch their careers as illustrators before a global public. In order to promote their visibility and generate business opportunities, over the years the Bologna Children's Book Fair, in collaboration with various international partners, has established a number of awards that aim to support the artists' work.

Established in 2009 by the Bologna Children's Book Fair and the Fundación SM, an organisation active in the field of education and the promotion of children's books, the **Bologna Children's Book Fair - Fundación SM International Illustration Award** was created to unearth and encourage new talents in illustration. The award is open to artists aged under 35 who have been selected for the Illustrators Exhibition and offers the winner a grant payment to provide them with the peace of mind to create, over the course of one year, an illustrated book that will then be published and launched on the world market by the Spanish publishing house SM. The book's original illustrations are then presented in a personal exhibition at the following year's edition of Bologna Children's Book Fair.

The 13th edition of the **ARS IN FABULA - Grant Award** is also back. This award was established by the ARS IN FABULA - School of Illustration in collaboration with the Bologna Children's Book Fair to support new illustration talents through a high-level training programme. The award is given each year to an unpublished young illustrator, aged under 30 and chosen from among those selected for the Illustrators Exhibition, by a jury made up of teachers from the Master's course who meet in Bologna during the fair. The prize consists of the opportunity to attend the ARS IN



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FABULA – Master in Illustration for Publishing, free of charge, working on a book project assigned to the winner by one of the course's partner publishers.

Among the winners of the Illustrators Exhibition, an artist will also be chosen by the design studio Chialab to take part in an immersive workshop in Bologna, where they will create the visual identity of the next edition of the fair. For the first time this year, the **BCBF Visual Identity Workshop** will be open not only to all winners of the Illustrators Exhibition, but also to the finalists.

Furthermore, the **Bologna Portfolio Award** will be featuring for the first time at the fair. After making its debut during the Bologna Grand Tour at the Guadalajara International Book Fair. The Bologna Portfolio Award will seek the most compelling portfolio structure among the finalists of the 2025 Illustrators' Exhibition who will participate in a special portfolio review session reserved for them. The winner will receive a trip to China to attend the China Shanghai International Children's Book Fair, of which BCBF is a co-organizer. BCBF's focus on the portfolio as the illustrator's primary and essential communication tool extends further and looks to Japan: in collaboration with the Japan Foundation and JBBY, the first edition of the **BOLOGNA Japan Foundation/JBBY PORTFOLIO AWARD** will take place at the fair. The winner of this award will also be taken to China by BCBF for the next China Shanghai International Children's Book Fair.

THE INTERNATIONAL AWARDS

While the Bologna Children's Book Fair organises important awards that influence and guide the sector of publishing for children and teens, it is also the stage for some of this category's main international accolades: the **Astrid Lindgren Memorial Award** will be announced live at the 2025 children's book fair, while Ibby will present the **shortlist for the Hans Christian Andersen Award**, which will be presented at BCBF in 2026.

THE STREGA RAGAZZE E RAGAZZI PRIZE

The **Strega Ragazze e Ragazzi Prize** this year celebrates ten years since its inception. The award for literature for children and teens is organised by the **Maria e Goffredo Bellonci Foundation** and **Strega Alberti Benevento**, organisers of the Premio Strega, with the **Centre for Books and Reading** and **BolognaFiere – Bologna Children's Book Fair**, in collaboration with **BPER Banca**, the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation (MAECI), the Italian Education System in the World, media partner RAI, and technical sponsors Librerie Feltrinelli and SYGLA.

The **Best Storytelling in Pictures** category returns for its fourth year at the fair. This category was created to highlight the relationship between the Bologna Children's Book Fair and the Strega Prize, rewarding excellence in illustrated books. In Bologna, the first selections of the competition categories 6+, 8+, 11+ and the shortlist for the Best Debut Book will also be announced.

IN ALTRE PAROLE (IN OTHER WORDS)

Each year for 15 years BCBF has organised the translation competition **In Altre Parole (In Other Words)**, with the support and collaboration of the Italian Trade Agency and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation (MAECI). Dedicated to a different language every year, **Korean** for this edition, the prize aims to acknowledge the value that translators bring to the publishing sector, showcasing their talent and recommending them to publishers.

THE CARLA POESIO AWARD

Now in its seventh edition, the Carla Poesio Award is the accolade named after the scholar who made such a fundamental contribution to founding and developing the Bologna Children's Book Fair. The award is assigned to the author of the best Italian degree thesis on the subject of children's literature.



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BOLOGNABOOKPLUS PRIZES

As part of the initiatives dedicated to self-publishing, the **Indie Authors Book Jacket Award** takes center stage, aiming to give visibility to the best book covers by self-published authors, highlighting a sector that is still little explored but full of vitality. The award has two categories: Indie Italian Book Jacket Award and Indie Authors Children and YA Book Jacket Award. Additionally, the **Talking Pictures** award, dedicated to the best Estonian visual books (Estonia is the BCBF Guest of Honor Country), is organized in collaboration with Hamelin Cultural Association and Steven Guarnaccia. The winner and honorable mentions will be announced on the first day of the fair.

BOLOGNA LICENSING AWARDS

The **9th edition** of the **Bologna Licensing Awards** is also scheduled to take place at the fair and is the only award in Italy that acknowledges the work of companies, licensors, licensees and retailers at an international level in the development of intellectual property and brands during the last year. The prize has received over 250 nominations in the various categories from all over the world, an increase of over 40% compared to 2024.

PUBLISHER AWARDS

The **PublisHer Excellence Awards** are the prizes assigned as part of PublisHer, an initiative created in 2019 by Bodour Al Qasimi (founder and CEO of Kalimat Publishing Group, United Arab Emirates). The awards were created with a threefold mission: to celebrate the professional achievements of women, to promote diversity, equity and inclusion, and to foster professional development. There are three categories: **Lifetime Achievement** (for a doyen of publishing – with a career spanning at least 20 years – who has made a significant and lasting impact on the industry), **Emerging Leader Award** (for a rising star in publishing aged under 30 who has demonstrated exceptional leadership, vision and the power to drive positive change) and **Innovation** (for any woman who has made an innovative contribution to any aspect of the publishing industry). A jury of industry experts will select the winners, who will be announced at BCBF 2025.



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