**Case Closed First Chapter Competition: FAQs (Frequently Asked Questions)**

You can view the **BSL** video, listen to the **audio** and read the **.doc** versions of these FAQs on the Case Closed project page website:

<https://www.spreadtheword.org.uk/projects/case-closed/>

We thought it might be useful for you to take a look through these FAQs, along with the Terms and Conditions if you are thinking of submitting to the Case Closed First Chapter Competiton. If you have a question about the programme, please take a look through these FAQs to see if it’s answered.

We are **inviting first chapter entries** from new crime, thriller and mystery fiction from unpublished and unagented UK-based writers aged 18+ who are from one or more of the following communities:

* Black, Asian or Global Majority
* Deaf and/or Disabled
* LGBTQIA+
* Working Class

The competition is free to enter via our Submittable page, or by post by downloading the Postal Entry Form. It will open on Wednesday 5 July and close at 10am on Tuesday 26 September. Terms and conditions are available to read in written English, listen to in audio and watch in British Sign Language video on the Spread the Word website. The submission length for the first chapter is a maximum of 4,000 words. There is no minimum word count. The submission does not need to be from a completed project.

**FAQs**

**Why are you running the Competition?**

We are keen to encourage and support more people from backgrounds underrepresented in UK publishing to try writing crime, thriller and mystery fiction. Working in partnership with the agents at C&W Literary Agency our longer-term aspiration is that the winning writers will go on to finish their novels and gain representation and publication.

**What are the prizes for the Competition?**

There will be one winner and four highly commended writers. The winner will have a 60-minute one-to-one session with the crime writer Tracey Lien, as well as meetings with agents from C&W and professional development with Spread the Word. The four highly commended writers will receive one-to-one meetings with the two agencies.

**Will reasonable adjustments be made if deaf and/ or disabled writers are placed in the competition?** Yes. Reasonable adjustments will be made to support access to the Competition prizes.

**How do you define Crime, Thriller and Mystery Fiction?**

We have worked with the crime writer Fiona Cummins to create a Getting Started Guide, which includes definitions and examples for all three genres. You can download the document here: <http://bit.ly/caseclosedgettingstarted>

**Do I have to have a completed project to enter?**

No. The Competition requires you submit the first chapter from your crime, thriller or mystery fiction project to a maximum of 4,000 words. It doesn’t matter if the project has not been completed.

**Can I submit more than one entry?**

Only one entry will be accepted. Please adhere to this; if we see multiple entries we will read your first entry and discount the others.

**Is there a fee to enter the Competition?**

There is no fee for submitting.

**Can I submit a video or audio entry?**

The online and paper submission only requires checkbox confirmation of your eligibility and upload/inclusion of the first chapter. As there are no other text boxes to fill, we are not offering a video or audio entry for this Competition. There is also the option to submit via post. Your writing extract will need to be typed in English.

**How do I make my submission?**

Online entries should be made through the online form:

<https://spreadtheword.submittable.com/submit/4dbe11bc-0d1b-4002-900a-8ff95b380090/case-closed-first-chapter-competition>

which is also linked on the Case Closed project website. Please note you will need to create an account with Submittable, which is free to do, to submit your entry.

If you prefer to post your entry, you can post your writing extract with the entry form, which can be downloaded from the Case Closed website: <https://www.spreadtheword.org.uk/projects/case-closed/> and send it to: Case Closed, Spread the Word, The Albany, Douglas Way, London SE8 4AG.

We can only accept printed text postal entries. Please make sure you send us copies of your work as postal entries cannot be returned. We will acknowledge receipt.

**Will you be providing feedback for all the entries?**

Unfortunately, we aren’t able to provide feedback for all the entries we receive. The winners and highly commended writers will receive feedback in their development meetings. If you are looking for feedback, we suggest that in the first place you ask a trusted critical friend, whose opinion you trust.

**Can I submit a writing extract that has been published elsewhere?**

No. We are looking for new writing for this Competition. The first chapter can be from a new or completed project but it must be unpublished.

**Can I submit a writing extract from a book that already has a publishing deal but has not yet been published?**

The Competition is for writers who are unagented and unpublished. If you have a publishing deal, you are ineligible to apply.

**I have self-published previously. Can I enter?**

It is ok to submit to the Competition if you have only self-published your work, as long as your entry to the Competition has not previously been self-published.

**For my first chapter I want to enter a piece that I’ve published on my blog. Can I enter it?**

No. We are looking for new unpublished writing for this Competition.

**I was not born in the UK, but I now live here in the UK. Can I still enter?**

Yes, people over 18 residing in the UK are welcome to enter, you do not have to have been born in the UK.

**Who are the judges for the Case Closed First Chapter Competition?**

The initial reading will be done by the Spread the Word team who will prepare a longlist of entries for the agents at C&W to read and select the winner and highly commended writers.

**How can I connect with the Case Closed First Chapter Competition on social media?**

You can connect in the following ways:

On Twitter: <https://twitter.com/STWevents>

On Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/spreadthewordwriters/>

Hashtag: #caseclosed

**I’d like to enter the Competition, but I still have a question.**

Please email [bobby@spreadtheword.org.uk](mailto:bobby@spreadtheword.org.uk) and we’ll do our best to answer your query.

The Case Closed website is: <https://www.spreadtheword.org.uk/projects/case-closed/>

If you are considering submitting an entry to the Competition, please make sure you have read the **Eligibility Criteria** and **Terms and Conditions**, available on the website in BSL video, audio and .doc formats on the link above.

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