

I. POLICIES regarding the NATIONAL TRANSLATION AWARD

1. Two NTA awards

1.1. Starting with the competition for books published in 2014, there will be two National Translation Awards: the National Translation Award for Prose and the National Translation Award for Poetry.

1.2. The award for Prose will be open to books of fiction, of creative non-fiction, and of drama written in prose; the award for Poetry will be open to books of poetry, including prose poetry, and of drama written in verse.

To be eligible for an NTA, a translation must be into English, the translator must be a U.S. citizen or U.S. resident, and the book must have been published during the preceding calendar year. A book in which all or nearly all the text has been translated by a single translator is eligible, as is a book in which all or nearly all the text has been translated collaboratively by a team of no more than four translators, provided at least one of the translators is a U.S. citizen or U.S. resident. If such a collaborative translation is chosen as a winner, the award will be shared by the translators. Collections in which various parts have been translated separately by four or more translators are not eligible. Self-published books are not eligible.

1.3. Books are to be submitted to one award or the other (i.e. the submitting party must choose a category for hybrid or ambiguous works).

1.4. The amounts of the two awards will be equal and will be determined by the Board each year.

2. Definition embodying criteria

2.1. Each National Translation Award is awarded annually to a literary translator (or translators) who has made an outstanding contribution to literature in English by masterfully recreating the artistic force of a book of consummate quality.

2.2. Guidelines for jurors are contained in Appendix A.

3. The judging process

3.1. The Vice President of ALTA will coordinate and exercise administrative oversight over the judging process but will play no role in the selection of books for the long or short lists.

3.2. There will be one jury of three people for each category (Prose and Poetry), each of whom will evaluate all entries in that category. The jury for each award will generate a longlist of eight to twelve books by consensus.

3.3. Each book on a longlist will be sent to an expert reader for comparison of the translation to its source text. The expert readers will write reports, with the awards' definition in mind, and following guidelines that do not offer additional criteria but ask that statements on certain kinds of assessment be included, with examples, along with overall ratings of the translations. Guidelines for expert readers are contained in Appendix B.

3.4. Each jury will receive the expert readers' reports without the expert readers' names and will keep these reports confidential. Each juror will read all the expert reports submitted to his/her jury. Each jury will then generate a shortlist of four to six books by consensus, will select a winner by consensus, and will write a citation about the winning book. If a jury is unable to choose a winning book by consensus, it may do so by majority vote.

3.5. Jurors should not quote expert readers' reports in a citation for a winning book, or if they do wish to quote, should not indicate that they are doing so (thus, minor plagiarism will prevent expert readers from being identified by stylistic clues).

4. Selection of jurors and expert readers, and composition of juries

4.1. At least two jurors on each jury must be literary translators and members of ALTA who have published at least one translated book each in a genre relevant to the category of award they are judging for; self-published books may not be used to meet this eligibility requirement. The third juror may be a literary translator or may be an author in a relevant genre, an editor, a publisher, a librarian, a professional literary critic, a professional book reviewer, or a member of an additional relevant professional category that has been added to this list by approval of the Board.

4.2. To serve as an expert reader, a person must have expertise in the source language of the translation he/she is asked to assess and must be a literary translator who has published at least one translated book in a genre relevant to the category of award for which the translation that he/she will evaluate has been entered. Expert readers will ordinarily be members of ALTA, but a qualified non-member may serve when no member is available who has the necessary knowledge of a source language.

4.3. The Vice President will select jurors and expert readers.

5. Logistics

5.1 To allow sufficient time for each jury to evaluate all entries, the postmark deadline for entries will be as early in the year as possible.

5.2. The names of the jurors will be published at least one month before the deadline for entries. Each juror will specify whether he/she will accept a PDF file or requires a paper book. Names will be accompanied by e-mail addresses and postal addresses. Publishers will be asked to send files or books directly to the jurors. If they prefer, publishers may send paper books even to jurors willing to accept PDF files, but they may not send PDF files to jurors who require paper books. Exceptions will be made in the case of international jurors, who may indicate they prefer paper books, but must be willing to accept PDF files if necessary due to prohibitive shipping costs for some small publishers.

5.3. Expert readers will remain anonymous, and their reports will remain confidential. For each book on a longlist, the ALTA office will ask publishers to send PDF files of the source text and the translated book to the office. (In some cases this will impose on a translator or a publisher the task of scanning a source text.) ALTA will then send those PDF files on to expert readers. So as to reduce labor and shipping costs, each expert reader will be asked to accept one PDF file of the source text and one of the translation, and to print these out if he/she must read on paper. The expert readers will send their reports to ALTA electronically, and ALTA will forward them to the jury without the readers' names on them.

5.4. Jurors may be offered an honorarium. All announcements of award winners will list the jurors for each award by name.

6. Conflicts of interest

6.1. No one with a book in contention in a given category (Prose or Poetry) may participate in any stage of the judging process for that category in that year. No one may serve as a juror and an expert reader in the same judging process (within the same category).

6.2. Potential jurors and expert readers must declare a conflict of interest if:

- an author or translator of a submitted book is
 - someone with whom they have had a financial connection within the past year or will have such a connection in the coming year;
 - their student or protégé, or their recent former student;
 - their close relative by blood, marriage, or romance;

or if:

- the name of the potential juror or expert reader appears in the acknowledgments or the dedication of a submitted book, or as the writer of a blurb for one.

6.3. Each person who agrees to serve as a juror or expert reader will be provided with these Conflicts of Interest provisions in writing and will be asked to confirm in writing that he/she understands them and will abide by them. (E-mail is acceptable as writing.)

Appendix A: Guidelines for Jurors

National Translation Award Guidelines for Jurors

The intention of the definition of the National Translation Award is to make excellence of the translation and excellence of the source text the only criteria. This definition removes earlier emphasis on the stature or reputation of the source text (its “importance” and “significance”).

For each award, the longlist should contain from eight to twelve books, and the shortlist from four to six books.

All longlists and shortlists are to be chosen by consensus, as are the winning books. But if a jury is unable to choose a winning book by consensus, it may do so by majority vote.

Expert readers’ reports and all discussions by the jury should be kept confidential. Expert readers’ reports should not be quoted in a citation for a winning book, or if quoted, then the citation should not indicate the quotation (thus, minor plagiarism will prevent expert readers from being identified by stylistic clues).

Jurors are bound by the ethical considerations outlined in the “Conflicts of Interest Statement,” which you have received separately.

Appendix B: Guidelines and Assessment Form for Expert Readers

National Translation Award

Guidelines and Assessment Form for Expert Readers

Thank you for agreeing to serve as an expert reader for the 20__ National Translation Award. The book you will evaluate has been read and longlisted by the jurors on the basis of their reading of the English translation only.

Your expert comparison of the translation to the source text is required to help the jury determine whether the translation is of a high enough caliber to advance to the NTA shortlist. Please return your report to the ALTA office as a data file in a format specified by the office. (Do not send your report to any jurors.)

As you write your report, please consider the following:

- The official definition of the NTA and its criteria is as follows:

“Each National Translation Award is awarded annually to a literary translator who has made an outstanding contribution to literature in English by masterfully recreating the artistic force of a book of consummate quality.”

- The excellence of the translation and excellence of the source text are the only criteria. The perceived “importance” or “stature” of the source work and/or its author in their culture of origin are not criteria for this award.

- Your report is anonymous and will remain confidential. The ALTA office will ensure that your identity is not made public and is not revealed to either the jurors or the competitors. Jurors will be asked not to quote your report in a citation for a winning book, or if they do wish to quote, then not to indicate that they are doing so (thus, minor plagiarism will protect you from being identified by stylistic clues). Please be candid and forthcoming in your assessment, as your expert opinion is crucial in informing the jurors’ decisions.

- You are bound by the ethical considerations outlined in the “Conflicts of Interest Statement,” which you have received separately.

Your report (on the attached evaluation form) must include:

- Your opinion as to whether the source text is “of consummate quality” (yes or no).
- A two- to three-paragraph statement evaluating the quality of the translation on the basis of

the latter's fidelity to (or in some cases, successful transcreation of) the semantic, formal, stylistic, emotive, intellectual or other significant attributes of the source text.

- Specific examples from the text to substantiate your evaluation.
- Your overall rating of the translation, from 1 to 5, with 1 indicating "inadequate" and 5 indicating "exceptional."

American Literary Translators Association
20__ National Translation Award

EXPERT READER EVALUATION

NOMINEE:

Translator:

Author, Title, Publisher:

Source Language:

Genre:

EXPERT READER:

Name:

SOURCE TEXT:

In your opinion, is the source book “of consummate quality”? (Yes or no)

EVALUATION OF THE TRANSLATION (use as much space as you need):

OVERALL RATING OF THE TRANSLATION:

How would you rate the overall quality of the translation?

Please assign a number from 1 to 5, with 1 indicating “inadequate” and 5 indicating “exceptional.”