

Submission Guidelines

At Starfish Bay, our focus is dedicated solely to children's books. We publish engaging and imaginative stories across a wide range of formats—from board books and picture books to early readers, middle grade (ages 8–12), and young adult (ages 12+).

We believe books for younger readers should be both meaningful and magical—offering reliable information, inspiring a sense of wonder, and encouraging a bright, hopeful outlook on the world.

We're always on the lookout for bold ideas and original voices and work closely with our passionate authors and illustrators to craft memorable stories that resonate with children.

Starfish Bay Publishing and our imprints, Starfish Bay Children's Books and Tiny Seed Publishing, each operate under distinct publishing models. If you are over 18 and interested in learning more, please read the following guidelines carefully.

Publishing Programmes Available to All Authors

We have three publishing programs that are available to all authors, as follows:

Author Advance Programme

Secondary Publishing Programme

Author Supported Traditional Publishing Programme

Author Advance Programme

This new publishing programme is open to both unsolicited and solicited authors and is currently accepting submissions to Starfish Bay Publishing in the following categories:

- Early chapter books (ages 5-9)
- Middle grade fiction (ages 8-12)
- Young adult fiction (ages 12+)
- Graphic novels
- Non-fiction for children of all ages.

Here is a summary of the requirements and benefits of this programme:

- Authors are asked to contribute a temporary loan of \$6,600, which will be returned in full after two years, with no conditions.
- Each participating author will receive an additional payment of \$1,000 interest within two years of making the \$6,600 transfer, without any conditions.
- Participating authors are guaranteed at least AU\$1,100 in royalties for each of their books within five years of publication.
- One Traditional Publishing contract
- 20 complimentary paperback copies of their book.

- Unsolicited Authors will gain solicited status, meaning their next submission(s) will be eligible for our Traditional Publishing Programme.
- Authors will receive professional editing, illustrating, design, printing, and binding.
- Books published will be available to order and sell from online and retail bookstores.
- Once published, the book will be exhibited at our stand at Bologna Children's Book Fair at no additional charge.
- With the exception of the temporary loan, the Author Advance Programme follows a standard Starfish Bay Traditional Publishing offer, and all costs related to publishing a book are covered by Starfish Bay.

Making Your Submission

Please note that a willingness or ability to contribute funding to any of the above programmes does not guarantee acceptance for publication. As a traditional publisher, we uphold high editorial standards and prioritise quality above all else. All submissions will be carefully reviewed by our editorial team, and a publishing offer will only be extended if the manuscript is approved through our review process.

If you are interested in submitting to this programme, please be sure to include a cover letter that outlines key details about your manuscript. This should include the story's themes, main characters, intended age group, and market appeal. We'd also love to learn a little about you, so please include a brief author biography.

- For middle-grade and young adult fiction submissions, please share the complete manuscript and a full-page synopsis outlining major plot points.
- For non-fiction submissions, please provide a complete outline and a few sample chapters.

Please note that we currently only accept submissions written in English.

We recommend that you do not submit any manuscripts with an illustrator already attached. We collaborate with a wide range of talented illustrators from around the world. This allows us to match each story with the most suitable artistic style or vision. Our team will work closely with you to find the perfect illustrator to bring your story to life.

What We Are Looking For

We are looking for unique and imaginative stories that captivate young readers. Strong, well-developed characters, vibrant language, and a genuine, relatable voice are key elements we seek in submissions.

Regarding non-fiction books for children and young adults, we are looking for captivating real-life stories that connect with young readers, particularly those in primary school. Stories that are both relatable and inspiring are especially welcomed.

We currently accept submissions by email only. Please email your submission to starfishbaypublishing@outlook.com, and our editorial team will review it as soon as possible.

Due to the volume of submissions we receive, we regret that we are unable to respond to every query. If

you have not heard from us within six months, please assume that we have decided not to pursue your project.

Secondary Publishing Programme & Author Supported Traditional Publishing Programme

Tiny Seed is one of Starfish Bay Publishing's imprints, dedicated to publishing children's picture books and board books. Tiny Seed is currently running two programmes that are open to both unsolicited and solicited authors.

- Author Supported Traditional Publishing Programme
- Secondary Publishing Programme.

If you are interested in learning more about these programmes, please visit the Tiny Seed website:

<https://tinyseedpublishing.com/submission-guidelines/>

All unsolicited authors whose submissions are accepted by Tiny Seed will become solicited authors, allowing them to participate in all of the programmes operated by Starfish Bay.

We kindly request that the full payment of the amount associated with each programme is made within two weeks of signing a publishing agreement. However, we understand that arranging payment in full might not always be feasible right away. If you require additional time, we are happy to offer a flexible payment schedule. For example, you could pay a \$1000 deposit within two weeks of signing a publishing agreement, followed by monthly instalments of at least \$1000 per month until the full amount has been received.

Publishing Programmes Available for Solicited Authors Only

We have five publishing programs that are available exclusively to our solicited authors. These programs currently operate under our Starfish Bay Children's Books imprint.

Traditional Publishing Programme

We greatly appreciate all authors who have participated in our Author Supported Traditional Publishing Programme and Secondary Publishing Programme, as well as those whose work will be included in these programmes and the Author Advance Programme. To show our gratitude, these authors will now be considered solicited authors.

Since 1st January 2025, our Starfish Bay Children's Books imprint has only reviewed, selected, and published picture books that have been submitted by solicited authors. Starfish Bay covers all costs, including editing, illustration, design, printing, sales, marketing, and distribution, while authors receive royalties generated from book sales.

We have reserved 50 spaces for solicited authors, along with additional places for Signed Authors, in our 2025 Traditional Publishing Programme. We are very pleased to announce that the following solicited authors have joined our Traditional Publishing Programme since 1st January 2025:

- *Tata's Shoes* by Ester Reato
- *Silver's Pirate* by Katie Aaron
- *Where Have These Jeans Been?* by Adele Hunter
- *Too Loud Cicada* by Audrey Crowfoot
- *Learning to Fly* by Andrew Dittmer
- *Finding Kharm after the Storm* by Kelly-Anne Norman
- *Emus Don't Fly* by Sue Bormann
- *There's room for just one in my tree...and that's me!* by Kylie Tull
- *If I Were A...* by Lorna Stallman
- *Please, Not the Alphabet Book!* by Anna Brotherson
- *Ant's Don't Dance* by Bethea Todhunter
- *Grampires* by Emma Fraser
- *Dog* by Joanne Vernon
- *From Grandad, With Love* by Karyn Miller
- *Chubby Cheeks* by Robert Marrone
- *Can You Speak Ballet?* by Rhonda Ooi
- *Acorn's Away* by Sarah Tonkin
- *Prickly Pete* by Jennifer Seal
- *Muffin McFluff: Catnap Catastrophe* by Millie Lewis
- *The Dog of Awning Dell* by Harison Butler
- *Tremendous Trevor's Spooky Adventure* by Ben J. Melen
- *Our Bushwalk* by Teagan Bouma
- *Hannah's Hat* by Cheryl Polonski
- *Selena's Spooktacular Specs* by Millie Lewis

Bologna Author Experience Programme

Starfish Bay regularly attends international book fairs, showcasing our titles to publishers and foreign rights agents worldwide. To allow solicited authors the opportunity to experience Bologna Children's Book Fair with us, we have introduced the Bologna Author Experience Programme. Here are the benefits and requirements this programme offers:

- Participating solicited authors must provide a temporary loan of \$16,000, which will be returned in full within one year with no conditions.
- One return flight ticket to Bologna (up to \$2,000).
- Accommodation in Bologna (up to \$1,000).
- Three Traditional Publishing contracts.
- 200 complimentary hardback copies of each book.
- Participating authors may spend up to three hours at our stand during the fair to introduce their books to visitors.

We will be able to accommodate two authors per day - one in the morning and one in the afternoon. As the fair lasts four days, we can accept a maximum of 8 authors per year.

To ensure fairness, this programme operates on a first-come, first-served basis. We are currently accepting applications for the 2026, 2027, and 2028 Bologna Children's Book Fairs.

Author Testimonials

We love hearing from our authors about their experience working with us. Karen Hendriks, author of *Vesper Jones and Marshmallow*, had this to say when she visited our stand during the Bologna Children's Book Fair 2025, where she met our Deputy Publisher, Matthew Long, and her book's illustrator, Francesca Corso:

"I am beyond excited. I was lucky enough to meet Francesca at the Starfish Bay stand. I am so excited about *Vesper*. Lots is happening but I am so pumped for my books with Starfish. I love how you get me and my writing. It is awesome seeing our world in action. You are my book family. All my interactions have been great, and I have really enjoyed everything so far."

Karen is the author of the following Starfish Bay picture books:

- *Vesper Jones and Marshmallow*, illustrated by Francesca Corso —publication date: 5th August 2025
- *A Christmas Beetle Wish*, currently in the editorial process
- *Mirabel Shines*, currently in the editorial process
- *Spud's Mars Mission*, currently in the editorial process
- *Summer Fun Fair*, currently in the editorial process
- *Saving Pearl and Reef*, illustrated by Leanne Argent, currently in the illustration process — established publication date: 6th April 2026
- *Enid Thinks Outside the Shell*, illustrated by Jason Hart, currently in the illustration process — established publication date: 6th July 2026