

2020 Costa Book Awards: Category Judging Panels

First Novel

The judges for the 2020 Costa First Novel Award are:



Eric Karl Anderson

Blogger & YouTuber

Eric Karl Anderson is a writer, book blogger and YouTuber also known as LonesomeReader. His novel *Enough* won the Pearl Street Publishing First Book Award. He's previously judged numerous book awards including the Lambda Literary Awards, Green Carnation Prize and The British Book Awards.



Jill Dawson

Novelist

Jill Dawson is the award-winning author of ten novels including *The Crime Writer*, *Fred and Edie* and her most recent, *The Language of Birds*, which tells the story of the nanny murdered in the Lord Lucan case. She is also the editor of six anthologies of poetry and short stories, a Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature and runs Gold Dust Mentoring, a scheme for new writers. She lives in an eco-house in the Cambridgeshire Fens.



Debbie James

Owner and Manager, Kibworth Books

Debbie James studied music at the universities of Leeds and Weimar and worked as a freelance percussionist before deciding to open a bookshop in 2009. Kibworth Books has since won several awards for its work with children and supporting diversity and inclusivity. Debbie also sits on the BA's Independent Booksellers Forum, Green Bookselling Task Force and Divisional Board.

Novel

The judges for the 2020 Costa Novel Award are:



Poorna Bell
Journalist and Author

Poorna Bell is an award-winning journalist and author. The former Executive Editor and Global Lifestyle Head for HuffPost, she won Stylist's Rising Star Award in 2019 and is one of Balance magazine's Wellness personalities. She is a regular contributor to BBC radio and the author of *Chase the Rainbow* and *In Search of Silence*. Poorna's charity work includes being a judge for the Mind Media Awards and an ambassador for male suicide prevention charity, CALM.



Sadie Jones
Author

Sadie Jones is the author of five novels including; *The Outcast*, winner of the 2008 Costa First Novel Award and a Richard and Judy bestseller; *Small Wars*, longlisted for the 2009 Orange Prize and *The Uninvited Guests*. Also a screenwriter, Sadie adapted *The Outcast* for BBC1 (in 2014) and her most recent novel is *The Snakes* (2019). Born in London, Sadie is the daughter of the Jamaican writer Evan Jones and British actress, Joanna Jones. She is married to the architect, Tim Boyd.



Iain Rushworth
Bookshop Buyer, WHSmith Travel

Iain Rushworth is Bookshop Buyer for WHSmith Travel where he is responsible for looking after the standalone bookshops across the UK. Iain has always worked within the books industry across both publishing and retail and was previously a judge for the Desmond Elliott Prize.

Biography

The judges for the 2020 Costa Biography Award are:



Eleanor Rosamund Barraclough

Historian and Broadcaster

Eleanor Rosamund Barraclough is an historian, author and broadcaster. Formerly a BBC New Generation Thinker, she has presented a variety of programmes for Radio 3, Radio 4 and BBC4, and regularly presents Radio 3's arts and culture show Free Thinking. As Associate Professor of Medieval History and Literature at Durham University, she specialises in Viking Age history, and Nordic and Arctic cultures. She is author of *Beyond the Northlands: Viking Voyages and the Old Norse Sagas*.



Sumit Paul-Choudhury

Writer, Entrepreneur and Former Editor-in-Chief of New Scientist

Sumit Paul-Choudhury is a writer, speaker and entrepreneur whose work explores the endless possibilities offered by science, technology and the future. A former editor-in-chief of New Scientist, he trained as a physicist at Imperial College before turning his hand to journalism, covering finance and technology from London and New York.



Horatio Clare

Writer

Horatio Clare's books include *Running for the Hills* (Somerset Maugham Award), *A Single Swallow*, *Down to the Sea in Ships* (Stanford Dolman Travel Book of the Year), *Aubrey and the Terrible Yoot* (Branford Boase Award), *The Light in the Dark* and *Something of his Art: Walking to Lubeck with J S Bach*. He lectures in nonfiction at the University of Manchester.

Poetry

The judges for the 2020 Costa Poetry Award are:



Zaffar Kunial
Poet

Zaffar Kunial's debut book, *Us* (Faber & Faber), was shortlisted for a number of awards including the Costa Poetry Award and the T. S. Eliot Prize. He is the Douglas Caster Fellow in Poetry at Leeds University. His pamphlet of cricket poems, *Six*, was published by Faber in 2019.



Tristram Fane Saunders
Poetry Critic, The Telegraph

Tristram Fane Saunders lives in London and is The Telegraph's poetry critic. He has also reviewed poetry for Radio 4's *Front Row* and his most recent poetry pamphlet is *Woodsong* (Smith|Doorstop, 2019). His poems will appear in *New Poetries VIII* (Carcenet, 2021) and he is the editor of *Edna St Vincent Millay: Poems & Satires* (Carcenet, 2021).



Leah Wilkins
Bookseller, Five Leaves Bookshop

Leah Wilkins has a degree in English with Creative Writing. She worked as assistant editor on the literary journal *The Letters Page* with Jon McGregor for five years. Leah has worked as poetry buyer and events coordinator at Five Leaves Bookshop, which was voted best independent bookshop at the Nibbies in 2018, for six years. She writes poetry and is working on a pamphlet collection.

Children's Book

The judges for the 2020 Costa Children's Book Award are:



Patrice Lawrence

Writer

Patrice Lawrence is an award-winning writer for children, teenagers and adults. Her books for young adults include *Orangeboy*, winner of the Bookseller YA Prize and Waterstones Prize for Older Children's Fiction, and *Indigo Donut*, which won the Crimefest YA Prize. Her latest novel is *Eight Pieces of Silva*. She contributes to Radio 4's *Saturday Review*, *Woman's Hour* and *Front Row* and has written for a number of print and online publications.



John McLay

Children's Literary Scout and Book Event Organiser

John McLay is an International Children's Literary Scout, author, reviewer, anthologist and co-founder of the Bath Festival of Children's Literature. Born in Middlesbrough before the first moon landings, but after man went into space, he grew up on a story diet of books, comics and *Doctor Who*. He lives in Bath.



Alex O'Connell

Arts Editor and Children's Book Critic, *The Times*

Alex O'Connell is arts editor and children's book critic at *The Times*. She began her journalistic career alphabetically ordering a leader writer's bookshelves before becoming assistant to the literary editor and then transferring into the heady world of news, eventually moving to the banana republic of arts. She grew up near Stoke-on Trent, studied in Edinburgh and now lives in North London with her partner, three children and dog.