



Australian and New Zealand Society of Indexers

John Simkin Medal: Award criteria and procedures

Note: this policy was endorsed by the ANZSI Council on 31 May 2016.

A. Introduction

1. The John Simkin Medal, previously known as the ANZSI Medal, is awarded by ANZSI for an outstanding index to a book or periodical compiled in Australia or New Zealand. The medal is named in honour of John Simkin, one of the founding members of the Australian Society of Indexers (now ANZSI), who promoted the benefits of indexes and ideals of indexing throughout his 40-year association with the Society.
2. The ANZSI Medal was first awarded in 1985 and was offered annually until 2013, when it became biennial. Due to its prestigious nature, the Medal is awarded only when merited. Details of previous Medal winners are available at <http://www.anzsi.org/about-us/awards/the-john-simkin-medal/medal-winners/>
3. While the award is recognition of excellence within the profession of indexing it is also a means of promoting indexing more widely and especially to the publishing, information technology and book world.
4. The medal is awarded at the discretion of the ANZSI Council ('the Council') after a judging process. The results are usually announced at a significant ANZSI event such as an AGM or a conference. The John Simkin Medal and a certificate is presented to the indexer and the publisher receives a certificate
5. The purpose of this document is to guide the Award nomination and judging process. It includes award administration procedures (Section B) and judging criteria (Section C).

B. Award administration

Frequency

6. The Award will be made at intervals determined by Council but not more frequently than annually.

Eligibility

7. To be eligible for the award, the index must be commercially available and must have been first published no earlier than three years before the year in which the award is made.
8. It must have been compiled in Australia or New Zealand even though the text to which it refers may have originated elsewhere.
9. The book/journal index may be in either paper or digital format.
10. Indexes are judged at the level of outstanding professional achievement, thus sufficient material is required, both in quality and quantity, for appraisal. The index should be substantial in size, the subject matter should be complex, and the language, form and structure of the index should demonstrate the indexer's expertise as well as serving the text and the needs of reader.
11. There are no restrictions on the subject matter.

Judging Panel

12. Council will assemble a Judging Panel for each Award, and appoint a Chair.
13. The Panel will comprise at least three members, chosen from at least two of these groups:
 - An ANZSI member who is an Accredited Indexer
 - A member of the ANZSI Accreditation Committee
 - An editor (such as a member of IPED or its affiliated bodies)
 - A publisher representative knowledgeable about the value of indexes
 - Other persons considered by the Council to be suitably qualified.
14. The members of the Panel are chosen to represent a range of subject indexing expertise. Non-voting advisors may be asked to participate in deliberations if the judges need specialised expert advice.
15. The Judging Panel will be disbanded after completion of the judging in each award year.

Judges' decisions

16. The Judging Panel report and recommendation(s) are to be submitted to Council for endorsement.
17. The Judging Panel may recommend that more than one medal be awarded when two or more indexes are judged to be outstanding.
18. The Judging Panel may choose to recommend that no award be made.
19. The Judging Panel may choose to recommend the award of one or more 'Highly Commended' certificates but is not compelled to do so.
20. The Judges' decision is final and no further correspondence will be entered into.

Administrative procedures

21. The nomination process and Medal administration will be handled by a registrar on behalf of the Judging Panel and Council. The Receiving Officer Accreditation could fulfil this role as the administrative processes are similar to accreditation processes.
22. The Receiving Officer will be responsible for receiving submitted books, checking eligibility, distributing them among judges and returning them to candidates at the end of the process.
23. The Receiving Officer will keep appropriate records and claim postage and other relevant expenses from the Treasurer.

Nomination and assessment processes

24. Publishers, indexers and all interested persons will be invited to nominate indexes which meet the eligibility criteria, and which they regard as worthy of consideration. Indexers will be encouraged to nominate their own works.
25. There is no application fee.
26. The Receiving Officer and the Chair of the Judging Panel will determine timelines such as closing dates for nominations and the evaluation schedule, and will determine wording of notices, news items etc.
27. The Receiving Officer will place calls for nominations in the ANZSI Newsletter and in the newsletters and e-lists of associated professional bodies.

28. Applicants/Nominators will be invited to submit a completed application form together with a print copy of the book or a link to the electronic file of both book and index. Nominators will be requested to advise the Receiving Officer by email if they have posted a print book.
29. All submissions will be acknowledged by the Receiving Officer.
30. The nomination process will be confidential in that the Judging Panel will not be informed of the identity of the indexer of each work assessed. If the indexer's name appears in the book then the Receiving Office will mask it.
31. No indexes prepared by members of the Panel can be considered during their term of service on the panel. Judges who have any conflict of interest must disqualify themselves from judging that particular book.
32. Judging Panel members will each independently assess each book index against the criteria.
33. If there are numerous entrants the judges may shortlist and give a more comprehensive assessment only to the titles shortlisted.
34. It is anticipated that books will be posted among the judging panel members for assessment. Digital books will be emailed.
35. The Panel will discuss nominations and make their final recommendation(s); meetings may be virtual (teleconference or email) or in person. If it is feasible to meet in person, any expenses likely to be incurred by the panel members (for example, for travel/accommodation) must be approved by Council before being incurred. It will be the joint responsibility of the Receiving Officer and the Chair of the Judging Panel to submit estimated costs to Council for funding approval.
36. Hard copy books will be returned after judging and announcement, and the applicant will be notified that the book has been returned.
37. Readers of this document are reminded of the Resources page on the ANZSI website (<http://www.anzsi.org/resources/>) which refers to a wealth of material about indexing principles and practice, editing indexes and evaluating indexes.

Section C

Judging criteria

Indexes are judged at the level of outstanding professional achievement.

If there are numerous entries the judges may shortlist and give a more comprehensive assessment only to the titles shortlisted. The criteria listed below are intended to assist judges shortlist and evaluate candidate indexes.

References which discuss how to evaluate an index are listed in the Resources section of the ANZSI website (<http://www.anzsi.org/resources/reading-lists/indexing-in-general/>)

Accuracy

- Accurate spelling
- Correct punctuation
- Correct alphabetical order of index headings (mains, subheadings and cross-references), or correct order of filing if arrangement is other than alphabetical
- Accurate locators (locators at index headings match discussion in text)
- Locators sorted correctly
- Double-posted entries have matching sets of locators
- Accurate cross-references
- Correct entry element for compound names or names in languages other than English (cross-referencing used if necessary to assist the reader).

Comprehensiveness and consistency

- The index covers the metatopic and other topics systematically
- The index treats the subject matter in a consistent way
- No significant subject content is omitted
- The index as a whole is consistent and suitable for its audience.

Analysis

- The metatopic and other topics are analysed appropriately and logically
- Scattered pieces of like information are gathered
- Synonyms are handled by gathering and/or cross-referencing
- There are multiple entry points for key concepts
- The number and level of subheadings to main headings is handled well: appropriate number; appropriate depth of treatment
- Subheadings exhibit parallel structure
- Excessively long strings of undifferentiated locators are avoided
- Over-analysis is avoided
- Double-posting is employed where appropriate
- Cross-references (*See ...*) lead from alternate entry points to the relevant entry/entries
- Cross-references (*See also ...*) lead to related topics
- Passing mentions in the text are not indexed.

Expression

- Index entries reflect the language of the text
- Main headings are nouns or noun phrases (no isolated adjectives as main heading)
- Main headings and subheadings are succinct
- Main headings and subheadings are precise
- Main headings and subheadings are unambiguous (glosses explain headings that are homonyms, similar or which might otherwise be ambiguous)
- Main headings have the key word/phrase first
- Subheadings have the key word/phrase first (unless a preposition is used for clarity; initial prepositions are usually ignored in sorting)
- The subject matter is dealt with even-handedly, with no apparent indexer bias
- Terminology is appropriate for the intended audience.

Usability

- A headnote explains special typefaces, special treatments, departures from convention, codes and abbreviations used in the index. The headnote should be clear and well expressed
- The index is clearly laid out and easy to scan
- Style (e.g., fonts, locator elision) is consistent throughout
- Relationship between headings and subheadings is obvious
- Heading turn-over lines are readily identifiable
- Cross-references aid navigation without being excessive
- Cross-references are valid (have targets, are not circular).

Other aspects which the judges may consider

- The index serves both the new reader and the returning reader in providing concise and precise access to where information may be found
- Visual appeal
- Simplicity and elegance
- Unusual challenges and how they were addressed.

Attachment 1. Sample notice for promotion of the award



Australian and New Zealand Society of Indexers Inc.
PO Box 2069
Canberra ACT 2601 Australia

John Simkin Medal [year]

The Australian and New Zealand Society of Indexers (ANZSI) invites nominations for the John Simkin Medal – an award recognising an outstanding index to a book or periodical compiled in Australia or New Zealand.

The John Simkin Medal, previously known as the ANZSI Medal, has been renamed in honour of John Simkin, one of the founding members of the Society. John promoted the ideals of indexes and indexing throughout his 40-year association with the Society, so it is with pleasure we acknowledge his enormous contribution to indexing in this way.

The ANZSI Medal was first awarded in 1985. Due to the prestigious nature of the Medal, it is awarded only when merited. Details of previous ANZSI Medal winners are available at: <http://www.anzsi.org/about-us/awards/the-john-simkin-medal/medal-winners/>

and Highly Commended indexes at: <http://www.anzsi.org/about-us/awards/the-john-simkin-medal/highly-commended-indexes/>

To attain the award, indexes must be of the highest calibre. The index should be substantial in size, the subject matter complex, and the language, form and structure should demonstrate the indexer's expertise in serving the primary needs of the text and the reader. There are no restrictions on the subject matter of the book.

The book may be in either paper or electronic format.

To be eligible for the award, the book must be commercially available and have an imprint date of [date (three years prior to award year)] or later. The index must have been compiled in Australia or New Zealand, although the text to which it refers may have been published elsewhere.

Publishers, booksellers, editors, librarians, indexers and interested persons are all invited to provide nominations. Indexers are encouraged to submit their own work.

The winning indexer will receive the John Simkin Medal and a framed certificate. The publisher will receive a framed certificate.

Applications

A completed nomination form together with a hard copy of the book or a link to the electronic file of both book and index is required. Hard copy books will be returned after judging. Nomination forms are available at <website address>

Applications must be received no later than [date] at the postal address above or (in the case of digital books) by the Receiving Officer at [email address].

Applicants who have posted books should advise the Receiving Officer that they have done so.

All nominations will be acknowledged.

Presentation of the John Simkin Medal will be made to the winner at [event, date].

[Name]

Chair, John Simkin Medal Judging Panel

Attachment 2. Sample nomination form



Australian and New Zealand Society of Indexers Inc.
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Canberra ACT 2601 Australia

John Simkin Medal [year] nomination form

The Australian and New Zealand Society of Indexers (ANZSI) invites nominations for the John Simkin Medal – an award recognising an outstanding index to a book compiled in Australia or New Zealand.

The index must be commercially available and have an imprint date of [year] or later. It must have been compiled in Australia or New Zealand, even though the text to which it refers may have originated elsewhere.

The index should be substantial in size; the subject matter complex; and the language, form and structure should demonstrate the indexer’s expertise in serving the primary needs of the text and the reader. The book may be in either paper or electronic format. There is no restriction on the subject matter.

A completed nomination form together with a hard copy of the book should be sent to the Receiving Officer, John Simkin Medal, at the above address, and the Receiving Officer should be notified by email that the book has been posted. In the case of digital books, the form and a link to the electronic file of both book and index should be emailed to the Receiving Officer, John Simkin Medal at [email address]. All nominations will be acknowledged.

Publishers, booksellers, editors, librarians, indexers and all interested people may nominate indexes, and indexers may nominate their own work. **The closing date for entries is [date].**

Publication Details

Name of indexer			
Title of book			
Author (if applicable)			
Publisher			
Edition		Date of publication:	
Link to online book text			
Link to online index			

Contact Details

Nominator (full name)	
Organisation	
Telephone	
Email	
Postal address	