

TALES & TRADITIONS: EMERGING VOICES IN COLOMBIA



RULES & REGULATIONS

Organised jointly by
ASOCOPI • COLIBRI READER

2026

Purpose of the Contest

The Tales & Traditions Writing Contest promotes creative writing in English while celebrating the diversity of Colombian cultural heritage. It seeks to encourage emerging writers, strengthen English language learning, support the professional development of future language educators, and preserve Colombian myths, legends, folklore, oral traditions, and regional narratives through thoughtful storytelling.

Core outcome

Ten selected stories will be published in one professionally edited anthology by Colibri Reader. The ten selected authors will be recognised as contest winners.

Contest at a Glance

Item	Requirement
Eligible participants	Students currently enrolled in recognised university Language Teacher Education, Foreign Language Teaching, or master's programmes in ELT in Colombia.
Story language	English, written for an intended reader level between CEFR B1 and C1.
Story length	4,000 to 5,000 words for the main story text.
Theme	A story firmly rooted in Colombian culture, myths, legends, folklore, oral traditions, or regional narratives.
Mentor	One university professor or qualified teacher educator. Each mentor may endorse no more than two participants.
Submission period	1 August to 15 October 2026.
Minimum participation	At least 30 valid submissions are required for the contest to proceed as planned.
Selected stories	Ten stories for publication in the anthology.
Expected publication	February 2027, subject to the editorial production schedule.

1. Organisers and Guiding Principles

The contest is organised jointly by the Colombian Association of English Language Teachers, ASOCOPI, and Colibri Reader. The initiative is guided by collaboration, inclusiveness, professional development, academic integrity, cultural appreciation, and the recognition of multiple voices within Colombia's English Language Teaching community.

ASOCOPI and Colibri Reader will work together to ensure that the contest is national in scope, academically responsible, editorially rigorous, and accessible to eligible participants from universities across Colombia.

2. Contest Format and Anthology

The contest will select ten winning stories for publication in a collective anthology. The working title of the publication is Tales & Traditions: Emerging Voices in Colombia.

- Ten selected stories.
- Ten authors recognised as contest winners.
- One professionally edited anthology published by Colibri Reader.
- A foreword by ASOCOPI.
- An editorial introduction by Colibri Reader.
- A brief biography of each selected author.

The anthology format is intended to broaden participation and offer a richer representation of Colombian narratives, cultural traditions, and emerging voices in language education.

3. Eligibility and Participation

- 3.1. Eligible programmes:** Participants must be currently enrolled in a recognised university in Colombia in a Language Teacher Education programme, a Foreign Language Teaching programme, or a master's programme in English Language Teaching.
- 3.2. Enrolment status:** Participants must remain enrolled in the programme identified on the registration form at the time of submission. Proof of enrolment may be requested.
- 3.3. Individual participation:** Each story must have one author. Collaborative or coauthored submissions are not eligible.
- 3.4. Number of entries:** Each participant may submit only one story.
- 3.5. Minimum participation:** The contest requires at least 30 valid submissions. If this minimum is not reached, the organisers may extend the submission period, postpone the contest, revise the publication schedule, or cancel the edition. Any change will be announced through the official communication channels.

4. Theme and Cultural Focus

Writers are invited to submit captivating stories inspired by the rich tapestry of Colombian culture. Entries may draw from myths, legends, folklore, oral traditions, cultural beliefs, Indigenous narratives, regional storytelling practices, historical memory, or contemporary traditions.

A submission may reimagine a traditional tale or present an original narrative. In every case, the story must remain clearly and meaningfully rooted in Colombian cultural identity.

Cultural responsibility

Writers should represent communities, beliefs, and traditions respectfully. A brief context note must identify the cultural source, region, tradition, or inspiration behind the story and distinguish documented cultural information from fictional invention.

5. Manuscript Requirements

- 5.1. Genre:** The entry must be an original narrative story suitable for inclusion in a literary anthology.
- 5.2. Language:** The story must be written in English and designed for an intended reader level between CEFR B1 and C1.
- 5.3. Word count:** The main story text must contain between 4,000 and 5,000 words. The title, context note, source list, author biography, and required declarations are not included in this total.
- 5.4. Context note:** The manuscript must include a brief note explaining the Colombian cultural inspiration, tradition, place, community, myth, or legend connected to the story. Sources consulted should be identified where appropriate.
- 5.5. Images:** The submitted manuscript must not contain photographs, illustrations, decorative images, or embedded graphics. Colibri Reader may later add editorial design elements to the published anthology.
- 5.6. Publication status:** The story must be original, unpublished, and not under consideration by another publisher or contest when submitted.
- 5.7. Anonymity:** The manuscript must not contain the author's name, university, mentor's name, acknowledgements that reveal identity, or other identifying information. The organisers will assign a submission code for blind review.
- 5.8. File format:** The manuscript must be submitted as a Microsoft Word document in Letter format, with 2.5 centimetre margins, a readable 12 point font, 1.5 line spacing, and numbered pages.
- 5.9. Title:** The story must have a clear title. The file name should contain only the story title or the submission code provided by the organisers.

6. Mentor and Academic Endorsement

Every participant must have a supervising mentor who is a university professor, teacher educator, or other qualified academic connected to language teaching, language learning, literature, creative writing, or a closely related field.

- 6.1. Mentor limit:** A mentor may supervise and endorse no more than two participants in this contest edition.
- 6.2. Role of the mentor:** The mentor may provide academic guidance and general feedback. The mentor must not write, substantially rewrite, translate, or generate the participant's story.
- 6.3. Endorsement letter:** Each submission must include a Letter of Academic Endorsement signed by the mentor. The letter must certify that:
- The participant is currently enrolled in the programme indicated.
 - The mentor has reviewed the submitted manuscript.
 - The mentor identifies no conflict of interest.
 - The work is original to the best of the mentor's knowledge.
 - The mentor has no evidence of plagiarism.
 - The mentor has no evidence of unauthorised AI-generated content.
 - The mentor has not authored or substantially rewritten the manuscript.
 - The submission complies with these rules and regulations.

7. Submission Package and Process

Entries must be submitted through the official online registration form released by Colibri Reader. A complete submission must contain all of the following:

- The completed participant registration information.
- The anonymised manuscript in Microsoft Word format.
- The brief cultural context note and any relevant source list.
- The signed Letter of Academic Endorsement.
- The completed AI Use Declaration.
- The participant's declaration of originality and permissions.
- Parent or legal guardian authorisation when the participant is under eighteen.

Submissions received after the deadline or missing a required document may be declared ineligible. An automated or administrative acknowledgement of receipt does not confirm that an entry has passed the eligibility review.

8. Artificial Intelligence Use and Academic Integrity

The contest follows a transparency-based approach to artificial intelligence. Every participant must submit an AI Use Declaration stating whether AI tools were used, which tools were used, the purpose of their use, and the extent of their contribution to the writing process.

Permitted support	Prohibited use
• Spell checking	• Generation of the full story or substantial portions of it
• Grammar support	• Automatic generation of plots, characters, scenes, or dialogue
• Dictionary and thesaurus consultation	• Substantial rewriting, paraphrasing, or translation of the manuscript
• Limited language editing suggestions that the author independently reviews and chooses	• Any AI-authored content presented as the participant's own writing

8.1. Disclosure: Failure to disclose relevant AI use, or providing a false declaration, may result in disqualification or removal from the anthology.

8.2. Originality screening: All submissions will be screened using Turnitin or an equivalent academic integrity tool. An overall similarity result within approximately 3% to 5% is expected. A result above 5% will be reviewed in context and will not automatically determine plagiarism. Properly attributed sources, common expressions, and required template language may be excluded from the review.

8.3. Human review: Similarity and AI detection reports are indicators rather than conclusive proof. The evaluation committee may request drafts, notes, source materials, or a brief conversation with the participant when authorship or originality requires clarification.

8.4. Plagiarism: Plagiarism, unauthorised copying, fabricated sources, or infringement of another person's rights will result in disqualification and may lead to withdrawal of recognition or publication after the results have been announced.

9. Blind Review and Evaluation

The evaluation process will use blind review. Evaluators will receive coded manuscripts without the participant's name, university, or mentor information.

The evaluation committee will consist of five members:

- Two evaluators appointed by ASOCOPI.
- Two evaluators appointed by Colibri Reader.
- One independent evaluator who is not affiliated with either organisation and whose appointment is agreed by both parties.

Every evaluator must disclose any actual or potential conflict of interest and withdraw from evaluating an affected entry. A replacement evaluator may be appointed when necessary.

Evaluation Criteria

Criterion	What evaluators will consider	Weight
Cultural relevance and respectful representation	Clear connection to Colombian culture and responsible treatment of traditions, communities, and cultural sources.	20%
Narrative quality and enjoyment	Plot development, pacing, characterisation, atmosphere, reader engagement, and overall storytelling effectiveness.	20%
Originality and creativity	Distinctive voice, imaginative treatment of the theme, and fresh interpretation of cultural material.	15%
Language quality	Accuracy, range, coherence, cohesion, style, and control of English.	15%
Readability and CEFR suitability	Accessibility and consistency for the intended B1 to C1 readership.	10%
Educational value	Potential to promote cultural understanding, reflection, language learning, and meaningful discussion.	10%
Task achievement and editorial potential	Compliance with the requirements, effective use of context, structure, word count, and readiness for development into a publishable text.	10%
Total		100%

The committee will deliberate on the highest scoring entries. In the event of a tie affecting the final selection, the committee will review the tied stories again, with the independent evaluator providing the deciding recommendation when required.

10. Selection and Editorial Process

- 10.1. Final selection:** Ten stories will be selected, provided that the contest receives the required minimum number of valid submissions and the entries meet the expected academic, cultural, and editorial standards.
- 10.2. Verification:** Before confirmation, selected participants may be asked to verify enrolment, identity, authorship, source use, and compliance with the AI policy.
- 10.3. Editorial agreement:** Each selected author must sign a separate editorial agreement with Colibri Reader. This agreement will define the editing, publication, distribution, permissions, and any other relevant publication terms.
- 10.4. Revision process:** Selected stories may undergo developmental editing, copyediting, proofreading, and cultural or factual review. Authors must respond to editorial requests within the deadlines provided and remain actively involved in the revision process.
- 10.5. Replacement:** If a selected author withdraws, does not sign the required agreement, cannot verify eligibility or authorship, or does not complete the editorial process, the organisers may invite the next highest ranked eligible author.
- 10.6. Publication schedule:** The anthology is expected to be published in February 2027. The date may change because of editing, design, production, printing, distribution, or circumstances beyond the organisers' control.

11. Recognition and Awards

For the Ten Selected Authors

- Publication of the selected story in the anthology.
- An official recognition certificate issued by ASOCOPI.
- Recognition through the communication channels of ASOCOPI and Colibri Reader.
- One complimentary printed copy of the anthology.
- Complimentary registration as an attendee at the next ASOCOPI Annual Conference.
- Participation in a special colloquium dedicated to presenting the anthology.

For the Ten Mentor Professors

- An official recognition certificate.
- Complimentary registration as an attendee at the next ASOCOPI Annual Conference.
- Participation in the anthology presentation colloquium.

12. Intellectual Property and Publication Permissions

- 12.1. Author ownership:** The participant retains copyright and moral rights in the original story, subject to the permissions granted under these rules and any later editorial agreement.
- 12.2. Contest administration permission:** By submitting, the participant grants ASOCOPI and Colibri Reader a free, nonexclusive permission to reproduce and share the manuscript internally for administration, eligibility checks, originality screening, evaluation, and record keeping connected to the contest.
- 12.3. Promotion:** Selected authors grant permission for their name, university affiliation, biography, story title, and reasonable excerpts from the selected work to be used for contest and anthology promotion through official channels, subject to appropriate consent and the editorial agreement.
- 12.4. Publication rights:** Commercial publication and distribution of a selected story will be governed by the separate editorial agreement. Submission alone does not 7rganizat commercial publication of an unselected story.
- 12.5. Third party material:** The participant is responsible for obtaining permission to use any protected material, traditional account, quotation, or other content that legally requires 7rganization7. Sources must be acknowledged where appropriate.

13. Official Timeline

Date	Activity	Responsible
16 July 2026	Official launch of the contest.	ASOCOPI and Colibri Reader
16 July to 15 October 2026	Promotion, university outreach, and dissemination through official channels.	ASOCOPI and Colibri Reader
1 August to 15 October 2026	Submission period.	Participants
16 October to 20 November 2026	Blind review and evaluation.	Five member evaluation committee
21 to 30 November 2026	Final deliberation and selection of the winning stories.	Evaluation committee, ASOCOPI, and Colibri Reader
1 December 2026	Official announcement of the ten selected stories and authors.	ASOCOPI and Colibri Reader
December 2026 to January 2027	Editorial agreements, editing, design, production, and publication planning.	Colibri Reader with selected authors
February 2027	Expected publication of the anthology.	Colibri Reader

14. Responsibilities of the Partners

Colibri Reader	ASOCOPi	Shared responsibilities
• Editorial coordination	• National dissemination through official channels	• Development and approval of contest guidelines
• Book design and production	• Support for university outreach	• Promotion of the initiative
• ISBN registration	• Issuance of recognition certificates	• Appointment of evaluators and selection of winners
• Publication and distribution	• Organisation of the anthology presentation colloquium at the subsequent ASOCOPi Conference	• Protection of academic integrity
• Editorial communication with selected authors		• Public announcement of results

15. General Conditions

15.1. Acceptance: Submission of an entry constitutes acceptance of these rules and regulations.

15.2. Grounds for disqualification: An entry may be disqualified for ineligibility, late or incomplete submission, failure to meet the word count or format requirements, identifying information in the blind manuscript, plagiarism, prohibited or undisclosed AI use, false declarations, infringement of rights, failure to verify authorship, or conduct that compromises the fairness or integrity of the contest.

15.3. Final decisions: The decisions of the evaluation committee and the organisers are final. Individual scores, ranking details, or written feedback are not guaranteed.

15.4. Changes: The organisers may clarify or amend these rules, deadlines, or procedures when necessary for fairness, legal compliance, academic integrity, or operational reasons. Material changes will be communicated through official channels.

15.5. Personal information: Personal information will be used only for contest administration, evaluation, communication, publication, promotion, event organization, and related legal or record-keeping purposes, in accordance with applicable Colombian data protection requirements.

15.6. Public communication: Only announcements published through the official channels of ASOCOPi and Colibri Reader will be considered authoritative. The official registration link and related forms will be distributed through those channels.

Final reminder

Participants should keep copies of every submitted file, declaration, source, and draft. The organisers may request supporting material during the eligibility, integrity, or editorial review.