



For Immediate Release

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Hollywood, Health & Society Announces Winners of Blue Sky Scriptwriting Contest Envisioning a Better Future

Five Fellowships of \$7,500 Each Awarded; In Consideration for Grand Prize of \$20,000

LOS ANGELES, October 28, 2022—Hollywood, Health & Society’s first Blue Sky Scriptwriting Contest for television storytelling announced the selection of five finalists at the 2022 Sentinel Awards on October 25, 2022, where the writers were invited to accept the recognition. The competition called for pilot scripts set in a future world that we aspire to live in; one that is peaceful, environmentally sustainable and depicts a fair and equitable society, using technology to benefit humanity.

The following pilot television pilot scripts are the winning finalists:

- *A Bright World According to Beto*, episode: “The Start of It All” by Gabriele Almon
- *Ancestral Dreaming*, episode: “Eden Dreams” by Marcella Guerriero
- *Inflection Points*, episode: “Confront Nature: by Peter Andrews
- *Merryville*, episode: “Love and Light” by Oriana Schwindt
- *The Things We Harvest*, pilot episode by Nathan Patton

The selected scripts include a half-hour dramedy, an action-adventure, a young adult drama, a 'solar punk' story, and a political thriller. The creative group of finalists bring diverse writing experiences to this project: web series, pilots for Fox and Amazon Studios, short films, playwriting, journalism, speechwriting, a green fiction website, the Warner Bros. TV Writers Workshop, the Stowe Story Labs for emerging screenwriters as well as scientific consulting, a former first responder, a cartoonist and a podcaster.

After receiving close to 100 entries, the submitted scripts passed through two rounds of judging. Entries were first reviewed by seasoned television writer/producers for the quality of writing that met all the criteria, reflecting themes of racial equity, climate change mitigation or adaptation, advancements toward peace, and incorporating the beneficial use of artificial intelligence (A.I.). The second round of evaluations were scored by experts on these topics.

The storylines focus on worlds set between the years 2045 and 2100. In addition to the pilot, writers submitted a description of the show's premise and key characters, brief treatment on how the story unfolds over the first season. Despite the lofty goals, these stories don't portray unrealistic utopias. Since humans are involved, there is plenty of drama and conflicting forces in these Blue Sky futures. But instead of dystopian scorched-earth landscapes, the scripts envision a better future and show how people resolve the challenges of the times.

“We’re excited to be offering these fellowships to encourage and help incubate stories that take place in a future we’d all hope to realize some day,” said HH&S Director Kate Folb. “Envisioning the possibilities is the first step in making it happen. We celebrate the imaginations of the winning writers as well as to draw attention to stories that offer a new version of the future.”

In addition to the cash award of \$7,500 for each finalist, they will also receive mentorships and expert consultations for script revisions. One grand prize of \$20,000 will be awarded in early 2023 after another judging process. The contest is in partnership with the [Future of Life Institute](#) and the [Writers Guild of America East](#).

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Hollywood, Health & Society is a program of the USC Annenberg Norman Lear Center that provides entertainment industry professionals with accurate and timely information for storylines on health, safety and security. Our free resources include expert briefings, panel discussions, screenings, a quarterly newsletter, social media and more. The program’s funding, past and present, has included generous support from the CDC, The SCAN Foundation, the California Health Care Foundation, the John Pritzker Family Fund, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, and N Square, among others.

Founded more than 20 years ago, The Norman Lear Center is a multidisciplinary research and public policy center studying and shaping the impact of entertainment and media on society. From its base in the Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism, the Lear Center builds bridges among faculty who study aspects of entertainment, media and culture. Beyond campus, it bridges the gap between the entertainment industry and academia, and between them and the public. For more information, visit www.learcenter.org.

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