

The 15th Japan International MANGA Award
Withdrawal of the Bronze Award for “Friendship Bubble”

April 18th, 2022

Japan International MANGA Award Executive Committee

“Friendship Bubbles” by Toku!, which had initially been selected and announced as one of the Bronze Award winners at the 15th Japan International MANGA Award, was pointed out that the work bears a striking resemblance to “Daze” by Yoonmi, which had been published on a website as an Excellence Award winning work at SILENT MANGA AUDITION® Kumamoto Round EX5 in 2019. Based on the request, the committee conducted an investigation and found similarities between these works which were impossible to overlook as a coincidence. The committee also found no evidence that “Friendship Bubbles” had been created prior to the online-publication of “Daze”.

In light of the above facts, the committee wants to announce that it withdrew the Bronze Award given to “Friendship Bubbles” at the 15th Japan International MANGA Award.

The committee sincerely apologizes to all the concerned parties for any inconvenience caused by this matter.

The committee regards copyright protection as an important issue and makes efforts to inform applicants about it.

Notwithstanding all its efforts, the committee was not able to prevent the situation from happening. The committee takes this very seriously.

The committee will work to prevent a recurrence, including increased efforts to raise awareness of the importance of copyright protection, so that manga creators around the world can participate in the award with trust.