



The [Washington State Poet Laureate](#) program, a collaboration between **The Washington State Arts Commission (ArtsWA)** and **Humanities WA**, is accepting nominations for the 2023-25 Washington State Poet Laureate. Self-nominations are accepted and encouraged.

The Washington State Poet Laureate serves to build awareness and appreciation of poetry — including the state’s legacy of poetry — through public readings, workshops, lectures, and presentations in culturally and geographically diverse communities across the state.

Washington State Poets Laureate represent some of the best and most generous of Washington poets. The duties of the Laureate require public interaction, some travel, and a willingness to undertake a project of the Laureate’s choosing during their two-year term. Past Laureates report that they grow in unique and significant ways as artists, advance their careers, and immensely appreciate the opportunity to meet new people and learn about the entire state.

Overview

- In April 2007 the Washington State Legislature passed a bill that recognized the value of poetry to the culture and heritage of the state by establishing the Washington State Poet Laureate.
- Governor Jay Inslee appoints the Laureate based on recommendations from a geographically and culturally diverse panel of representatives from Washington’s arts, humanities and literary communities.
- **Once appointed, ArtsWA and Humanities Washington provide funding for the honorarium (\$40,000 annually), travel and project expenses, as well as administrative support for the Laureate.**
- The Laureate serves a two-year term, renewable in rare circumstances.
- The 2023-2025 Laureate’s term begins April 15, 2023.

[Click here](#) to learn more about past Washington State Poets Laureate and [click here](#) for the current Laureate Rena Priest.

Deadline

Deadline for nominations is 5pm, Friday, December 2nd, 2022

Important Dates

- **Poet Laureate Nomination Opens:** October 24, 2022
- **Poet Laureate Nomination Closes:** 5PM, December 2, 2022

- **Notification of nomination status on or by:** January 12, 2023
- **Nomination Finalists' interviews with panel:** January 18, 2023
- **The 2023-25 Poet Laureate's term begins:** April 15, 2023

Eligibility

To be eligible for the Washington State Poet Laureate, a candidate must:

- Have significantly contributed to the poetic legacy of Washington State and show demonstrable commitment to serving as an ambassador for poetry to audiences throughout Washington State
- Be a current Washington State resident and reside primarily in Washington State
- Not be a previous Washington State Poet Laureate

Policies

- Self-nominations are accepted and encouraged.
- You may nominate only one individual per Laureate cycle.
- Nominators may work with nominees to complete the nomination form.
- Nominations are only accepted electronically through Submittable (below).
- Re-nominations: Individuals and organizations nominated in previous years are eligible to be nominated again if they did not receive the Laureate designation. A new nomination form must be completed.
- Nominees who receive multiple nominations will receive only one score from the Selection Panel. All nominations will be reviewed.
- Nominators and nominees will be notified of their nomination status on or by Thursday, January 12, 2023.
- **We will make no exceptions regarding the nomination deadline.**

Nomination Requirements

Candidates may self-nominate or be nominated by a third party. In the case of third-party nomination, the person nominating should confirm candidate's interest in advance.

If you know of others nominating the same individual, we encourage you to work together to submit a single nomination. *(Note: more nominations do not increase the nominee's prospect of being selected as a finalist.)*

To nominate yourself or another poet, you will be asked to provide the following for the nominee:

- contact information
- brief biography
- details on your/the nominee's work, accomplishments and skills
- CV or resume
- links to work samples such as publications, video recordings of readings, documentation of performance history, including location, type of event, audience size and type, etc., or other creative methods that showcase their work
- up to three references (if you are nominating another person for the position, one of these references should come from you and state explicitly that you are the nominating party)

Selection Process

- Poet Laureate nominations are submitted using an online portal (Submittable).

- A geographically and culturally diverse panel of representatives from Washington's arts, humanities and literary communities score each nomination. The panel identifies finalists (generally up to three) to be interviewed by the panel. These interviews will happen via video conferencing/or in person depending on circumstances at that time. Finalists will be given more information about the interviews, scheduled for Wednesday, January 18, 2023, and adequate time to prepare.
- After the interviews, the panel makes a recommendation to Governor Inslee, who appoints at his discretion.
- The 2023-2025 Poet Laureate's term begins April 15, 2023.
- ArtsWA and Humanities Washington staff do not score nominations or make recommendations on candidates during the selection process, but do help facilitate the process and answer technical questions.

Selection Criteria

Nominees are reviewed in the following areas:

- Experience as a poet, including proof of accomplishment in the field
- Compelling public speaker and demonstrated ability to engage a variety of audiences
- Committed ambassador for poetry
- Lived experience that highlights and/or connects the program to new audiences
- Demonstrated interest/experience in promoting equity and inclusion through the arts and humanities
- Ability to independently plan and execute projects

Selected finalists will be asked to participate in an interview with the selection panel during which they will have the opportunity to:

- introduce themselves and their work;
- discuss their responses in the nomination form;
- introduce and read up to three poems as if presenting to a general audience

Nomination Instructions

- **Saving:** Save your Washington State Poet Laureate Nomination as you work on it by clicking the "Save Draft" button located at the end of this webpage. You can log out and log back in, take a break, or work on your application over several days without losing your data. *Please note! The 'Save Draft' button will only work if you are connected to the internet. If you are working on the form in a place without internet, or where the connection is spotty, we advise drafting your responses in Word (or any word processing program) and then copying and pasting them into the form when you have reliable internet again.*
- **Collaboration:** If multiple people will be contributing to a nomination of an individual, invite them to collaborate by clicking on the "Invite Collaborators" button located at the top right of this webpage.
- **Required Questions:** Questions marked with a red asterisk '*' must be completed before you submit your nomination. You will not be able to submit your nomination if any required questions have been left unanswered.
- **Submitting:** Once you have completed your nomination, click the "Submit" button at the end of this webpage. You will receive an automated email confirming that your nomination has been successfully submitted.
- **Print or download** a copy of your nomination by navigating to your "Personal Submissions" account list. Click on your nomination submission. This will open up the submission's details page, where you can click the **Download** button in the upper right of the viewing box.

Questions?

Britt Madsen, Grants To Organizations (GTO) Program Specialist, and ArtsWA lead for the WA State Poet Laureate program, at 360-485-1509 or britt.madsen@arts.wa.gov

Additional Information

About ArtsWA

[ArtsWA](#) is the Washington State Arts Commission. The Washington State Legislature and the National Endowment for the Arts fund our programs. Grants are contingent on available state and federal funding. ArtsWA complies with all local, state and federal laws and regulations concerning civil and human rights. For more information regarding Washington State Arts Commission's policies on Accessibility, Diversity, and Nondiscrimination, [click here](#).

About Humanities Washington

In 1965 Congress enacted the National Endowment for the Arts and the Humanities Act, which established the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH). The NEH founded [Humanities Washington](#), along with 56 other state and territorial humanities councils, in 1973. Humanities Washington, originally called the Washington Commission for the Humanities, operates as an independent, 501(c)(3) non-profit and leverages funding received from the NEH. Humanities Washington's work is made possible through contributions from many individuals, corporations, and foundations, the State of Washington and the National Endowment for the Humanities.

Transparency

Let us know if you or your nominee has an affiliation with ArtsWA or Humanities Washington. This is for transparency only; the panel will review your application without bias. Read our full [Conflict of Interest policy](#).