

City of Ellensburg Poet Laureate



PROGRAM GOALS/OBJECTIVES

The City of Ellensburg Arts Commission (EAC) seeks to name one Poet Laureate to serve as an official ambassador of the Ellensburg's vibrant creative scene, promoting the City's rich literary community and celebrating the written word.

The objectives of the Poet Laureate Opportunities are to:

- Enhance the presence and appreciation of poetry and the literary arts in Ellensburg;
- Create a focal point for the expression of Ellensburg culture through the literary arts;
- Raise awareness of the power of literature, poetry, and the spoken word;
- Inspire an emerging generation of critical thinkers, writers, storytellers, and literary artists;
- Bring the literary arts to people in Ellensburg who have limited access to poetry or have few opportunities for exposure to expressive writing;
- Encourage both the reading and writing of literature; and,
- Create a new body of literary works that commemorate the diversity and vibrancy of the Kittitas region.

Purpose of the Position

The Poet Laureate plays a crucial role in keeping the arts accessible and vital to all age groups, and acts as a citywide emissary for poetry and creativity. The Ellensburg Arts Commission (EAC) and the position of Poet Laureate embraces the diversity of human experience, identity, and literary aesthetics. All applications are welcome, as the City of Ellensburg does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, marital status, military or veteran status, disability, pregnancy, genetic information, socio-economic background, physical ability or any other characteristic protected by law. In the pursuit of the Poet Laureate Program being representative of the rich and diverse cultures of poetry in the City of Ellensburg, the Ellensburg Arts Commission strives for diversity and inclusivity when reviewing applications.

Term of Service

The Poet Laureate's term of service is one year and is **renewable annually for up to three years**. The term begins on June 1 and ends on May 31 each year.

Expectations of the Position

The Poet Laureate will be responsible for:

- Contributing to the growth of poetry in the community through school engagement, creation of a city poem, performances and/or projects that are community based;
- Promoting poetry and the Poet Laureate position;
- Undertaking projects throughout the Ellensburg community that will make poetry more accessible to people in their everyday lives;
- Participating in the selection of the succeeding Poet Laureate and guide the transition into the role at the discretion of the Ellensburg Arts Commission;
- Preparing a written report of activities every six months or upon request of City Council or the Ellensburg Arts Commission.

PROPOSAL GUIDELINES

Eligibility and Criteria for Applicants and Nominations

- Applicant should be able to present publicly;
- Applicant should be able to show evidence of achievement in the art of poetry;
- Applicant should be able to demonstrate a commitment to promoting awareness or enjoyment of poetry;
- Applicant must be at least 18 years of age;
- Applicant must be a resident of Kittitas County;
- Applicant must be able to meet expectations of the position and available to reach audiences through travel or other means.

Proposals

In order to be considered for the Poet Laureate position, applicants must submit a proposal to the EAC. The following items are required to be included in all proposals:

1. A one-page cover letter that includes contact information for the applicant and the nominator, if applicable.
2. Submission of a minimum of **6 and no more than 10 poems** that represent your best artistic achievements. Submit no more than 1 poem per page. All pages must include the **title of poem, your name** and page number, if appropriate, on each page. The work sample may contain information that indicates where the poem has been published or performed, or if it has received any awards for merit.
3. The applicant's résumé or curriculum vitae not to exceed two (2) pages.
4. A written narrative of what the applicant hopes to accomplish as Poet Laureate, could include ideas for a Poet Laureate special project, not to exceed two (2) pages. Sample questions to consider: How would the nature and significance of your approach to poetry impact or involve the community? What would be your timeline and what sorts of resources or collaborations would you be seeking? What is the projected budget for this work? What public events, school activities, or festivals would you be involved in as Poet Laureate?
5. Budget – Annual budget for program expenses, time, travel, etc., not to exceed \$2,500 per year.
6. (Optional) Up to two (2) pages of supplementary materials, including excerpts from published book reviews, judges' comments, or other critical writings that help contextualize the poet's work for the EAC.
Note: recommendation letters are not appropriate and will not be considered.

Completed application packets should be saved as a single .pdf file and submitted via e-mail to Carolyn Honeycutt, Ellensburg Art Commission staff, subject line: Poet Laureate Application at ellensburgarts@ci.ellensburg.wa.us.

In order to be considered, application packets must be received by midnight March 16, 2020. Incomplete and late submissions will be deemed ineligible and will not be considered.

If for any reason you are not able to submit application materials via email, please contact Carolyn Honeycutt to make other arrangements: ellensburgarts@ci.ellensburg.wa.us or by phone at: (509) 962-7146.

Selection Process

The Poet Laureate panel, as specified in the Ellensburg Arts Commission Policy, reviews all submitted materials to arrive at three (3) finalists.

The three (3) finalists are interviewed in person by the panelists who will select the final artist. This name will then go on to the EAC who will make a final recommendation to the City Council for approval.

Recognition of the Poet Laureate

The stipend for the Poet Laureate will not exceed \$2,500 for the first year. Quarterly reports and invoices may be submitted for partial payment through the year. If all terms are met, Poet Laureate is invited to resubmit for additional funds up to \$2,500 for each subsequent year of the term.

Timeline for Applications and Selection of the Poet Laureate

Friday, February 18: Call for proposals

Monday, March 16: midnight: Deadline for applications to be received

Date TBD: Panel reviews applications and chooses top 3 candidates

Date TBD: Top 3 candidates interviewed and finalist is chosen

Thursday, April 9: EAC approves candidates and makes final selection

Monday, May 4: Poet Laureate candidate is presented to City Council for approval.