



Fairfax Poet Laureate PROGRAM

ARTSFAIRFAX believes the arts are transformative and fundamental to our lives; they promote social engagement and understanding that connect people of different backgrounds, cultures, and experiences; and the arts are essential to building communities, creating a sense of place, and fueling social and economic growth. These core values define what we want for culture in Fairfax County and our programs.

Purpose of the Poet Laureate Program

The Fairfax Poet Laureate program recognizes a professional poet's achievements and their demonstrated history of accomplishments, and it promotes their continued pursuit of their creative work. It is both a high honor and very competitive program, whose intent is to showcase poetry and the literary arts. By designating a poet laureate, **ARTSFAIRFAX** seeks to raise the visibility of poetry by supporting a leadership role for a poet to engage new audiences, create new opportunities for poetry to be shared, and encourage the creation of poetry and other literary works.

Goals of the Fairfax Poet Laureate Program

Through the *Poet Laureate Program*, **ARTSFAIRFAX** seeks:

- To recognize and provide support for poets and writers at critical stages in their creative lives and professional careers;
- To use the arts and humanities to engage people in cross-cultural and community-wide exchange of ideas, stories and culture;
- To encourage wide participation in poetry through diverse cultural programming available to all residents of Fairfax County;
- To promote opportunities for poets, literary organizations and writers to create, present, and celebrate their creative endeavors; and
- To be a catalyst for increased private sector support for poetry and other literary activities through leveraged public funding.

Fairfax Poet Laureate Role and Program

The Fairfax Poet Laureate will serve as a poetry ambassador for a two-year term by promoting the appreciation of poetry as an art form in the county, region and state. The Poet Laureate will encourage writing and reading of poetry and all forms of literature, as well as create opportunities for civic engagement with diverse audiences through poetry.

During their tenure the Poet Laureate will have the following leadership responsibilities:

- Lead activities during National Poetry Month (April).
- Create and execute a community service project—setting a theme and specific



goals for their tenure. Project activities will use the arts and humanities to help foster literacy among young people, expand audiences and appreciation for poetry, and create engaging cultural experiences for county residents.

- Build networks and opportunities for poets to read and engage new audiences with local businesses, book festivals, schools and other venues.
- Make a selection of their poems for publication as a chapbook and compose a final poem at the end of term as a reflection on their tenure as poet laureate.
- Officiate at different ceremonies within the county.

This award is an investment in the sustained growth and development of poetry and literary arts in Fairfax County, as well as a way to honor a poet's commitment to their craft, and raise their profile locally, regionally and nationally as exceptional poets.

Quick Facts

Poet Laureate Term of Service

The Poet Laureate will serve a two-year term (April 1, 2020-March 30, 2022) and will be awarded \$5,000 for each year. Additional funds will be available to support program activities during their tenure.

Who May Apply to be Poet Laureate:

1. Individuals must be at least 21 years of age at the time of the application and not be enrolled as an undergraduate student in a degree or entry level certification program related to poetry or writing.
2. A current resident of Fairfax County.
3. Individuals must be actively working in and/or deriving income from poetry and must have published at least one work by an established press.
4. For the specified two-year period, the individual must be willing and able to promote poetry, design and implement a community service project, lead or participate in workshops, readings and other activities, including an inaugural reading in April 2020, around Fairfax County and the region.

When is the Deadline to Apply

The adjudication of the poet laureate applicants will occur at the same time as the Artist Grant panels with same deadlines. Application is due 9 January 2020 and the panel meets 21 February 2020. The Poet Laureate program has a separate application, guidelines and jurors. A panel of distinguished writers, poets and other literary professionals will make the final recommendations to the **ARTSFAIRFAX** board, who will select the poet laureate. The panel is open to the public. The Fairfax Poet Laureate will be announced in early April 2020.

How to Stay Informed

Program and Application Information Session 13 November 12:00-1:30 pm, Mosaic Community Space. Also sign up for the E-newsletter: register at www.artsfairfax.org