



OFFICE OF ARTS & CULTURE  
CITY OF SEATTLE

## Civic Poet 2025-26 Guidelines

### Grant Overview

The Seattle Office of Arts & Culture (ARTS), in partnership with the Seattle City of Literature, commissions and supports an experienced poet for a two-year residency. The Civic Poet is a cultural ambassador for Seattle's rich, multi-hued literary landscape and represents Seattle's diverse cultural community. The selected awardee will receive \$25,000 for their two-year commission from early 2025 through the end of 2026. In addition to annual City events, the Civic Poet will foster community dialogue and engagement between the City, the public, and other artists, while celebrating the literary arts.

As the City's two-year ambassador of poetry, the role of the Civic Poet is to develop an annual workplan, execute a range of creative opportunities citywide, and deliver a closing debrief at the end of each year. These opportunities can include readings, workshops, projects, as well as speaking engagements – all in tandem with literary and community partners. The Civic Poet curates public occasions that connect and engage communities, City departments, and residents while promoting the value of poetry. As a featured presenter, the Civic Poet will participate in two annual public events with the Seattle City of Literature and for National Poetry Month.

### Grant Background and Purpose

Launched in 2015, the Seattle Civic Poet program is inspired by the previous Poet Populist program instituted in 1999 by Seattle City Councilmember Nick Licata. The goal of the Poet Populist program was to support the practice of literary arts, democracy, and to promote local literary arts organizations to a general audience citywide. The Poet Populist program was discontinued in 2008. The Civic Poet program continues its legacy.

**For information and assistance with the application, eligibility, or online technical support, contact Zach Frimmel, Project Manager, at (206) 963-9226 or [Zach.Frimmel@seattle.gov](mailto:Zach.Frimmel@seattle.gov).**

**We have interpreters who can speak to you in your language, including American Sign Language (via video).** Just call us and tell us what language you speak. Expect a short pause while we find an interpreter to join the call.

### Application

[Apply online through Submittable](#). It's free to apply:

If you don't have computer or internet access, contact staff as soon as possible.

## Due Date

**Tuesday, Aug. 20, 2024, 5 p.m. (Pacific)**

Please allow ample time to complete your application. Applications submitted after the 5 p.m. (Pacific) deadline will not be accepted.

## Eligibility

This call is open to Seattle-based poets who have an established body of work including published/self-published works, reading/spoken word, plus project planning experience, and applied racial equity practice. You are eligible if:

- You are based in Seattle (your residence is in the City of Seattle)
- You are eligible to work in the U.S.
- You are 18+ years of age at the time of the application due date
- You are not an enrolled student at any level at the time of the application due date
- You have demonstrated interest/experience in promoting equity and inclusion through the arts
- You show strong program planning and implementation with partnerships

## Funding

The compensation for the two-year Civic Poet commission is **\$25,000**. Funding is for a two-year period and covers time for writing, administration, artist fees, performances, event costs, materials, travel, fees, taxes, and other project-related costs.

## Information Session (Hybrid)

Learn more about the program and how to submit your best application.

Monday, July 22, 1 - 3 p.m. (Pacific)

**In-person:** ARTS at King Street Station

303 S Jackson St, Seattle, WA 98104 (Top floor, Room 315)

**Virtual:** Microsoft Teams

[RSVP](#)

## Application Draft Review Due Date

Tuesday, Aug. 6, 5 p.m. (Pacific)

Applicants can submit draft material for review and feedback up until Aug. 6 at 5 p.m. (Pacific).

**After Aug. 6**, project managers are unable to provide full feedback but will be available to answer any questions and check for eligibility or completeness.

## Application Assistance

To request application assistance, email Project Manager Zach Frimmel at [Zach.Frimmel@seattle.gov](mailto:Zach.Frimmel@seattle.gov) by Aug. 6 to set up a phone or virtual meeting.

## Evaluation Criteria

The peer review panel will assess applications based on the following criteria that total 80 points:

- Advanced skill as a generative and committed poet with strong ties to Seattle (20 points)
- Demonstrated ability to engage audiences across sectors, ages, and cultures (20 points)
- Capacity to apply racial equity practices/skills to work (20 points)
- Ability to plan and execute projects (20 points)

## Final Interview

Applicants with top scores will advance to the final interview level. The final interviews will be on Wednesday, Oct. 23.

## Timeline

- Tuesday, July 9, 2024: Application Opens
- Tuesday, Aug. 20, 2024: Application Deadline
- October/November 2024: Panel Review
- October/November 2024: Notifications
- December 2024/January 2025: Contracting

The two-year Civic Poet commission is active from January 2025 through December 2026.

## Application Components

Important note for components 4, 5, 6, and 7: If you submit an application component (video file, pdf, etc.) that exceeds the maximum limit for that component, panelists will start at the beginning of the submitted file then review and evaluate up until the maximum limit. For example, if you submit a résumé with more than three pages, the panelists will only review the first three pages of your résumé.

You must include the following:

1. A statement of interest and commitment to this 2-year commission, that includes your relationship to Seattle.
  - a. For question 1, your response can be submitted in one of three formats: audio (2 minutes maximum), video (2 minutes maximum), or written (300 words maximum). Note: Your audio/video response should not be highly produced or edited.

The intent of this option is to provide an opportunity for individuals who feel they can represent themselves better verbally versus in writing.

2. A summary of how your new work, projects, and events will reflect new and different voices/perspectives through poetry (300 words maximum).
3. A description of your capacity to plan, implement, and partner on projects/events (300 words maximum).
4. Résumé (three pages maximum)
5. One letter of recommendation (maximum 1 page in length) that endorses your literary accomplishments, ability to plan/implement a project, and your racial equity practice.
  - a. A Letter of Recommendation from a past Civic Poet is not eligible.
6. Two literary work samples: two poems, no longer than five pages each. Include brief work sample descriptions (see instructions in application) and order of viewing.
7. Materials showing proof of establishment within the field:
  - a. Publication cover(s) or promotional piece(s) for an event (2 images maximum)
  - b. Article or media coverage (300 words maximum)
  - c. Audio/video of significant performance (up to 2 minutes)

### **Application To-Do**

- **Read the guidelines**, check your eligibility, and follow-up with staff on unclear elements.
- **Explore the online application early** so you can plan ahead. Consider drafting application responses in a document outside of the online application form itself. This can prevent you from losing any of your work and allows you to keep a record for yourself.
- **Attend an information session**, schedule a draft review, or contact staff with questions.
- **Be clear and concise in your application**, as panelists read and evaluate many applications. Panelists may or may not be familiar with you or your work, so be sure to provide essential information on who you are, your areas of expertise, or key accomplishments.
- **Update or complete your profile** at [submittable.com](https://submittable.com)
- **Prepare work sample(s) early** and seek feedback from a trusted peer if needed.
- **Check all uploaded items** for functionality, clarity, and accessibility.
- **Submit your application at least 45-minutes prior to 5:00 p.m.** (Pacific). Submittable sends notices of blank or incomplete items that may require additional time.

### **Obligation of Award Recipients**

If selected for funding, you must meet the requirements listed below.

#### **Acknowledgement**

When you receive funding from the Seattle Office of Arts & Culture (ARTS), you must acknowledge ARTS' support in printed materials, signage visible to the public, via social media,

or in other ways appropriate to the project. ARTS will supply preferred wording and logos in electronic format.

### **Public Benefit**

State law authorizes the purchase of services on behalf of the public, but not the donation of public money to organizations or individuals. If you are funded, you must provide public benefits to citizens of Seattle as a condition of your funding.

### **Seattle Business License and Washington State UBI Number Are Required for Payment**

If you are awarded funds from ARTS, you must have a Seattle business license and a Washington state Unified Business Identification (UBI) number prior to receiving final payment. (The business license and UBI numbers are NOT needed to apply for funds.)

### **Reporting**

After funding recommendations are approved, ARTS staff will work with you to go over the required reporting documents for you to receive funding. You will need to sign a contract prior to starting engagement, events, and/or creative opportunities. Partners are paid on a reimbursement basis after projects or services are completed and a final report with promotional materials is submitted (approximately 4-6 weeks after paperwork is received.)

### **Insurance**

You will be responsible for securing Event Liability Insurance for your project, collaborators, and listing the City of Seattle as additionally insured.

### **Taxes**

You are responsible for paying all applicable taxes. At the time of notification, you will need to complete appropriate paperwork and submit an updated W-9.

## **ARTS Funding Policies**

### **Commitment to Racial Equity**

The Seattle Office of Arts & Culture commits to an anti-racist work practice that centers the creativity and leadership of people of color - those most impacted by structural racism - to move toward systems that benefit us all. We also acknowledge that we are on Indigenous land, the traditional territories of the Coast Salish people.

We envision a city of people whose success, safety and health are not pre-determined by their race. A city where all artists, performers, writers and creative workers have the freedom, agency and platform to share and amplify their stories, art, cultures and experiences. At the same time, we acknowledge that our actions - both conscious and unconscious, past and present - have benefited some communities while limiting opportunities and outcomes for communities of color. We work toward our vision by addressing and working to eliminate institutional racism in our programs, policies and practices.

In alignment with the City's Race and Social Justice Initiative, we seek new solutions that use arts as a strategy to drive not only our office, but the City as a whole toward racial equity and social justice. We will continue to break barriers and build arts-integrated tools that challenge the status quo and push us toward the inclusive society we envision.

If you have any questions about our commitment or would like to know more about the work we are doing, please call us at (206) 684-7171 or email at [Arts.Culture@Seattle.gov](mailto:Arts.Culture@Seattle.gov).

### **Grant Appeal Process**

You may appeal the recommendations of the independent peer review panel. Appeals must be based solely on the information included in your original application.

Procedure:

- You must first contact the staff member responsible for the program to review the decision and hear a summary of the peer panel feedback: Zach Frimmel, [Zach.Frimmel@seattle.gov](mailto:Zach.Frimmel@seattle.gov) or (206) 963-9226.
- Your appeal must be sent in writing to the Director of the Seattle Office of Arts & Culture within 30 days of formal notice of the decision.
- Our director consults with staff and/or members of the peer panel for input in making the final decision.
- If our director agrees that the award should have been given based on the merit of your original application, you will be awarded a grant.
- A rejection by our director is final and ends the appeal process.
- Our director will notify you of their final decision in writing.

### **Application materials are public information**

Application materials submitted to the Office of Arts & Culture are governed by the Washington Public Records Act and may be subject to disclosure to a third-party requester. To learn more please see [Chapter 42.56 RCW](#) and the City's [Privacy Statement](#).

### **Discrimination is not allowed on City-funded projects**

Applicants receiving funds from the Seattle Office of Arts & Culture must comply with Seattle Municipal Code Chapter 20.44, pertaining to prevention of discrimination in City contracts, and Chapter 5.44, pertaining to license requirements. The complete text of these City codes is available at the City Clerk's office and the Seattle Public Library.

### **Americans with Disabilities Act applies to City-funded projects**

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal law ensuring access to services and facilities for the differently-abled. The Seattle Office of Arts & Culture respects the needs of people with differing abilities and seeks to make available to applicants, participants and, all interested persons information regarding the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act and its applicability to the activities of our agency. For information about public meetings,

accessibility, and auxiliary aids, please contact the Seattle Office of Arts & Culture at (206) 684-7171 (voice), or (800) 833-6388 (TDD Relay). This agency complies with all federal, state, and local laws that prohibit discrimination in employment and services.

**Supports freedom of expression**

The City believes a community that fosters freedom of speech and thought will advance as a society. Artists play an important role in reflecting and challenging the social concerns of the day. The strength of the United States as a nation rests in its tolerance of divergent opinions and ideas. Government support of the arts must similarly tolerate a spectrum of ideas and encourage freedom of thought.

For additional information about funding opportunities and the Seattle Office of Arts & Culture, visit our website at [www.seattle.gov/arts](http://www.seattle.gov/arts), and [subscribe to our email newsletter](#).