



Program Guidelines

CITY OF NORWICH POET LAUREATE

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The honorary position of the City of Norwich Poet Laureate was established in 2017 by a resolution of the City Council. As the City's representative poet, the Poet Laureate serves as an ambassador for poetry by promoting and encouraging the appreciation of creative expression through poetry and literary arts activities. Norwich Creates, a volunteer group of arts and cultural leaders in the community, will facilitate.

The Poet Laureate writes and shares his or her work in public appearances, digital media, workshops, and inspires the community to find and share their own creative voice. Funding for the Poet Laureate stipend is provided by the Carano Family in memory of Cynthia A. Carano.

The Mayor appoints a resident as the City Poet Laureate based on the recommendation of the Selection Committee.

PROGRAM TIMELINE

Requests for applications: Opens in February 2020
Application Deadline: Closes at 5pm on Tuesday, March 31, 2020
Selection Committee Review & Interviews: April 2020
Award Notification: May 2020
Official Appointment: May 2020
Norwich Poet Laureate Term: May 2020 to 2023

EXPECTATIONS

- Design and implement a strategy to engage the community in a way that will nurture creative expression, increase literacy, build self-confidence in communication and expose the power and beauty of language through poetry.
- Possess skills in public speaking, presentation and interaction with audiences.
- Write and distribute poems through print and/or electronic media.
- Collaborate with Norwich Public Schools on an event or program.
- Participate in Otis Library's poetry event (date to be determined).
- Present original work at the mayoral and council swearing in ceremony.
- In addition to the above, provide at least two (2) public appearances in Norwich each year of the three (3) year term. Readings may include but are not limited to: open mic performances, poetry slams, poetry reading events, Norwich First Friday events, radio or television appearances, and participation at community organizations' events.

TERMS OF SERVICE AND REMUNERATION

- One three (3) year term with an annual stipend of \$300 as part of a grant contract.
- He or she may not accept compensation for appearances in the role of City of Norwich Poet Laureate.
- The City reserves the right to revoke the tenure of the Poet Laureate if he or she fails to fulfill his/her duties, is involved in misconduct, and/or moves out of Norwich.

ELIGIBILITY AND CRITERIA

- Must be full-time Norwich resident for at least the two (2) years prior to the application deadline).
- Must be at least 18 years of age on or before the application deadline date.
- A poet who has applied before may re-apply. A new application must be submitted.
- Have access to reliable transportation, either public or private.
- Selection Committee members and their immediate families are not eligible to apply.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Applications and requested materials may be submitted online at www.culturesect.org, or may be mailed to Otis Library, 261 Main Street, Norwich, CT 06360, Attention: Julie Menders, Adult Programming Coordinator.

Applicants must provide the following:

- Completed application.
- Up to two (2) pages of narrative, expressing interest and commitment to this role, noting past poetry activities and explaining how applicant would engage the community. (8 ½" x 11" with Times New Roman 12 point font)
- Résumé, including published works, public readings, awards, honors or other recognition. Include links to website(s), YouTube and/or Vimeo files, etc.
- Two (2) letters in support of the application.
- Three (3) writing samples that may not exceed 15 consecutively numbered pages (8 ½" x 11" and no smaller than 12 point type). One (1) sample must include the theme of the City of Norwich. Copyright information must be provided where appropriate.

REVIEW PROCESS

A City Council-appointed panel of literary professionals and community members form the Norwich Poet Laureate Selection Committee and will review eligible submissions.

The selection criteria are:

- Excellence of the poet's work.
- Compelling narrative.
- Commitment to fostering appreciation and participation in poetry.
- An oral presentation of original work and interview, as invited.

Norwich Poet Laureate Selection Committee reserves the right to request further information from applicants and/or review publicly accessible information, articles, etc. about the applicants as a way to conduct a thorough and thoughtful review process. The Norwich Poet Laureate Selection Committee's recommendation is then submitted to the Mayor for review, final approval and appointment.

SELECTION COMMITTEE

- The City Council of the City of Norwich shall appoint a Poet Laureate Selection Committee consisting of five (5) members who shall be residents or work in the City of Norwich.
- Said members shall serve without compensation and may not be employees of the City.
- All members shall be appointed to serve three-year terms.
- Appointees shall continue to serve after expiration of their terms until their successors are appointed and take office. Appointees may be reappointed for successive terms.
- The Selection Committee shall elect a chairperson and a vice-chairperson from its own number.
- Norwich Creates will provide technical assistance to the Selection Committee and the Poet Laureate Program, including but not limited to the following:
 - Post notice of and convene Selection Committee meetings
 - Take and post minutes
 - Produce and promote the call for poets (requests for applications)
 - Receive and confirm qualified submissions for the Selection Committee's consideration
 - Coordinate interviews with applicants as requested
 - Request items for the Council agenda as appropriate

OTIS LIBRARY

- Library to act as fiduciary for Poet Laureate stipend
- Library staff to provide a financial report to the Selection Committee

CITY MANAGER

- The City Manager's Office to communicate to Norwich Creates any issues or situations that prevent the Poet Laureate from fulfilling expectations. For example; moving out of Norwich, missed appearances, etc.
- The City Manager's Office will provide support to the appointed Poet Laureate, to include but not limited to the following:
 - Approve the Poet Laureate's strategy to engage the community
 - Communication, support and guidance for accountability with fulfilling expectations
 - Coordinate the library's annual poetry event
 - Approve release of annual stipend funds

NORWICH CREATES

- Stipend funds to be raised by the community and not the direct responsibility of the Library or the city government
- Will monitor Poet Laureate activity
- Address any issues or questions that may arise with the Poet Laureate position. Any questions should be sent to cdyer@reliancehealthinc.org or jmenders@otislibrarynorwich.org.