



CALL TO ARTISTS

2019-2021 Tacoma Poet Laureate

Application Deadline: February 18, 2019, 11:59 pm

Stipend: \$4,000

OPPORTUNITY

The Tacoma Arts Commission announces the eighth annual Tacoma Poet Laureate competition, the winner of which will be named Tacoma Poet Laureate for 2019-2021.

The Tacoma Poet Laureate will hold the title for a period of two years, from May 2019 to April 2021, and receive a stipend of \$4,000. The individual will actively contribute to and advance Tacoma's literary community in meaningful ways through readings, performances, workshops, presentations, publications and/or special projects; participate in Tacoma Arts Month each October; and help produce the 2021 Tacoma Poet Laureate ceremony to announce the next Poet Laureate. The Poet Laureate is expected to determine the direction, focus, and appropriate public components for their term of service.

In keeping with the City of Tacoma's Equity and Empowerment Initiative, the Tacoma Poet Laureate should actively strive to engage the breadth of Tacoma's citizenry, expanding access to the literary arts to underserved/underrepresented audiences including people of different races/ethnicities, ages, sexual orientation and identity, ability, and income.

People who are members of historically disenfranchised racial, ethnic, cultural, and other identity groups are encouraged to apply.

Current Tacoma Poet Laureate Kellie Richardson will curate and host a poetry event at which the winner of this year's Poet Laureate competition will be awarded. The event is will be held on Saturday, April 27, 6 pm. The event location will be announced.

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ELIGIBILITY

- Applicant must live in Pierce County and be actively engaged in Tacoma's creative community. Staff will verify addresses against official Pierce County map.
- Applicant must be a practicing artist, dedicated to producing poetry (in any form, genre, or style) on a regular basis.
- Applicant must be 18 years or older.
- Applicant cannot be a previous Tacoma Poet Laureate title holder.
- Applicant cannot be a current Tacoma Arts Commission member, City Council member, City of Tacoma staff member, or Tacoma Poet Laureate selection panel member.

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SELECTION CRITERIA

- Artistic Quality (as exhibited in written and recorded work samples)
- Demonstrated history of involvement and activity within the literary arts
- Ability to engage the breadth of Tacoma’s citizenry in meaningful ways to further the literary arts in our community

DUTIES

The artist selected as Tacoma Poet Laureate must be willing and able to:

- Offer a minimum of two free public workshops in Tacoma each year relating to poetry (four workshops total.)
- Actively contribute to and advance Tacoma’s literary community in meaningful ways through readings, performances, workshops, presentations, publications, special projects, etc. as agreed upon with the City’s Arts Office staff.
- Participate in Tacoma Arts Month programming each October (can be participation in a public event that the City is already producing).
- Competently handle administrative duties including being the point of contact for all programming inquiries from the public, managing a schedule, arranging details for programs, and coordinating press releases with City’s Arts Office staff.
- Help produce, with the assistance of the City of Tacoma’s Arts Office, an event in Tacoma in April 2021 to announce the winner of the 2021-2023 Tacoma Poet Laureate program.

TACOMA POET LAUREATE BACKGROUND

The Tacoma Poet Laureate position was founded in 2008 by Urban Grace Church as a way of focusing attention on Tacoma’s literary talent by organizing and hosting public readings and workshops in local schools and community events.

In 2011, upon the request of Urban Grace Church, the administration of the Poet Laureate program transitioned to the City of Tacoma’s Office of Arts & Cultural Vitality. Urban Grace Church is recognized as the founding partner of the program. Past poets laureate include William Kupinse, Antonio Edwards Jr., Tammy Robacker, Josie Emmons Turner, Lucas Smiraldo, and Thy Nguyễn. The current poet laureate is Kellie Richardson.

TIMELINE

Application deadline:	February 18, 2019, 11:59 pm
Notification:	by April 9, 2019
Tacoma Poet Laureate ceremony:	April 27, 2019, 6 pm
Term of service:	May 2019 – April 2021

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HOW TO APPLY

Please submit the following at <https://tacomaarts.submittable.com/submit>

1. Proof of Residency

Such as your Washington State ID, Driver’s License, housing lease, or current utility bill to indicate your current residency within Pierce County.

2. Short Responses

Answers to the following five questions. Limit each answer to no more than 250 words.

- Describe your relationship to Tacoma.
- What do you see is the role a Poet Laureate should play in a community?
- How would you serve the community as Tacoma Poet Laureate?
- Outline your proposed community engagement strategy. How will you encourage others, especially underserved/underrepresented poetry audiences, to participate in the literary arts?
- Briefly summarize two sample workshops or projects you think might appeal to public audiences that you would consider presenting as Tacoma Poet Laureate.

3. Artist Resume or Bio

4. References

Names and contact information for two references who can speak to how you would serve in a public role promoting poetry.

5. Work Samples with Descriptions

- **5 written poetry samples** of your own composition, and
- **1 to 2 recorded poetry samples** - submit URLs or digital video or audio recording samples of you reading or performing your own compositions. At least one recorded piece should be the same composition as one of the written poetry samples you are submitting.

QUESTIONS?

For questions or assistance, please email Naomi Strom-Avila at nstrom-avila@cityoftacoma.org or call 253.591.5191.