

Manchester City of Literature

Manchester City of Literature: call out for Multilingual City Poets

The Role

Manchester City of Literature are inviting poets to apply for consideration to be our inaugural City Poets. The City Poets will work across our partnership network, acting as an ambassador for Manchester's residents, communities, and literature organisations. The City Poet roles carry a civic responsibility, much like conventional Poet Laureate designations, and the appointees will be commissioned to produce five original poems on behalf of the City.

Three of these poems will respond to Manchester Day, World Poetry Day and the Festival of Libraries; all of which will be taking place in 2022. The two other commissioned poems will be delivered to respond to other exciting public events, projects and community outreach programmes coordinated by Manchester City of Literature and its partnership network. The poets will also translate other poets' writing.

Manchester has a rich literary tradition, as home to some exceptional and high-profile poets, a thriving poetry and spoken word scene, awarding-winning publishers and writing development agencies and libraries which place writing and community outreach at the heart of their work. This heritage is represented in Manchester's designation as an UNESCO City of Literature in 2017.

The three appointed City Poets will occupy the role for a period of one year (and we will be appointing another three City Poets in 2023). The City Poets will each be paid a total fee of £3125 for the performance of the City Poet role, including the 5 commissioned poems, sharing/performing these poems and school-based work to be agreed with the appointed poets. We estimate this as 12.5 days' work over the year.

City Poet Characteristics

We are looking for three City Poets who:

- Are fluent in reading and writing poetry in at least one of one of the following languages (in addition to English): Urdu, Arabic, Chinese, Bengali, Panjabi, Polish, Bengali or Somali.
- Have a publication or live performance history of at least 2 years;
- Have a strong and demonstrable relationship with Manchester;
- Have experience of working as a writer and facilitator in a number of settings, including, but not limited to libraries, schools and community settings;
- Are passionate about representing Manchester and increasing its profile as a city of literature;

- Are comfortable producing commissions with specific briefs and tight deadlines;
- Are inspired by the life of the city as a source of inspiration for new writing.

Application Process

Poets interested in applying for the role should send an expression of interest to Reece.Williams@Manchester.gov.uk, outlining their suitability for the role and detailing what they can offer as the City Poet. This letter should be no more than 3 pages of A4. Should you prefer, we will accept expressions of interest submitted in the form of a video. Videos should be no more than 8 minutes in length.

We are also inviting applicants to submit an artistic CV which demonstrates your experience as a poet. This should be no more than 2 pages of A4 and should speak to the City Poet Characteristics outlined above.

Finally, we request that applicants submit 2 original poems of their choice to support their application. This can be any poem of your choice; a new, unpublished poem or a personal favourite that gives Manchester City of Literature and its partners a sample of the work that you do. We have no preference as to the format of these poems. Applicants can submit written poems or links to videos of the poem being performed.

The deadline for applications is 5pm on Monday 17th January 2022.

Selection Process

Once the deadline for application has passed, the Manchester City of Literature team and representatives from the partnership network including representatives from Manchester City Council, The University of Manchester and Manchester Metropolitan University will shortlist applicants and arrange for interviews to take place.

Ahead of the interview, shortlisted applicants will be provided with further details of what the interview will entail so that they can adequately prepare. We will notify the shortlisted applicants by Friday 21st January 2022 and schedule an interview to take place during the week of Monday 24th January 2022.

Further Information

Should you have any questions, please direct them to Reece.Williams@Manchester.Gov.Uk in the first instance.

Values of Manchester City of Literature

The Contractor shall ensure the vision and values of Manchester City of Literature, stated below, are embedded in all their activities and communications.

Manchester City Of Literature Vision and Values:

The successful applicants will be expected to support the realization of the collective vision for Manchester City of Literature, formed through conversations with stakeholders across the city, for:

An innovative, distinctive, equitable, globally connected city of reading and writing, where diverse voices are celebrated, where creative talent and industries are nurtured and where literary activity changes lives.

They will demonstrate and promote the City of Literature's core values, which are:

- **Distinctive** – creating distinctive cultural experiences inspired by Manchester's unique, radical character and rich cultural heritage whilst looking to the future.
- **Inclusive** – celebrating the rich diversity of voices in the city, building on the strengths of Manchester's people and widening participation in literary activity.
- **Transformative** – developing skills, nurturing creative talent and transforming lives.
- **Connected** – linking and supporting literary activity and enabling collective advocacy for Manchester's literary community and international collaborations.
- **World-leading** – a beacon for high quality, culturally democratic, truly diverse literary activity.



A UNESCO City
of Literature

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