

LANCASTER CITY POET LAUREATE 2024

Vision Statement

The Lancaster City Poet Laureate serves as a beacon and model for the power of poetry, offers fresh perspectives, and creates new ways for people of all ages and walks of life to connect through written and spoken word. The Laureate will elevate the art of poetry and demonstrate through their work its important place in the civic discourse of our community.

Program Objectives

The Poet Laureate program is a partnership between the City of Lancaster, Nobody's Pen, Dr. Clark McSparren, Jerry Eckert, and Phil and Janet Calhoun. The partners support the Poet Laureate by welcoming and encouraging creative expression, and providing forums that invoke open and constructive dialogue.

In particular, the following objectives are paramount:

- Advance the visibility of poetry; inspire the creation of poetry; encourage the performance of poetry; enhance the appreciation of poetry.
- Raise awareness of the importance of literature, poetry, and the spoken word in civic engagement.
- Create multiple focal points for cultural expression through the literary arts.
- Bring poetry to a variety of settings to engage diverse voices and promote cultural connections.
- Create low-barrier ways for community members to engage with poetry, particularly segments of the community that have less access and/or exposure to poetry.
- Inspire an emerging generation of critical thinkers and literary artists.

Position Description

The Poet Laureate is a person who believes in the beauty and transformative power of poetry, whether it be through written or spoken word. The Laureate is:

- A creative leader who is committed to poetry and performance, community engagement, and outreach and education.
- A coordinator that facilitates collaboration between local creatives, cultural organizations, local businesses, and Community Benefit Organizations (CBOs).
- An advocate who promotes literacy and reaches diverse learners through the literary arts.

The position of the Lancaster City Poet Laureate is an honorary position that involves a level of participatory volunteerism.

Eligibility

The Poet Laureate position is open to all applicants 18 years of age and older. Applicants are preferred to reside within the limits of the School District of Lancaster. Applicants that do not live within these limits should demonstrate active interest in the City of Lancaster. Applicants must be able to pass the following clearances:

- Criminal Background Clearance (Act 34)
- FBI Federal Criminal History – Fingerprinting (Act 114)
- Child Abuse History Clearance (Act 151)

Term of Office

The Poet Laureate will serve a nonrenewable term of two (2) years. The Laureate's term will end in April of 2026.

Compensation

An honorarium of \$3,000 will be awarded to the Poet Laureate in two (2) installments. \$1,500 will be awarded upon selection. The remaining \$1,500 will be awarded at the beginning of the Laureate's second year of term.

Duties

The Laureate is responsible for scheduling appearances, readings, and activities throughout their tenure. with administrative support from the Poet Laureate Committee. The Poet Laureate Committee functions as an advisory body and is comprised of a diverse group of Lancastrians including literary artists, educators, and advocates. Following the selection of the Poet Laureate, the Laureate will meet with the Committee to establish directives that suit the abilities, interests, and availability of the Laureate.

The Laureate should expect to:

- Host or participate in a minimum of two (2) literary arts focused activities per quarter. Activities could include open mic events, readings, lectures, educational workshops, or other similar events that are free and open to the public.
- Perform at a minimum of two (2) City events each year.
- Develop one (1) "signature" project or initiative in collaboration with the City that celebrates and defines their tenure.

The Laureate will meet with the Committee once per quarter to report progress, assess goals, and convey needs and concerns. At these meetings, the Committee will offer support and guidance, assist in event scheduling, and respond to expressed needs and concerns.

Application Submissions

The deadline for application submissions is June 10, 2024.

The application form can be accessed using the following link: <https://forms.gle/4hsRj2VemCAbBkeVA>

Paper applications are available upon request. Please contact the Public Art Program Manager for further information:

Molly Kirchoff (she/her)
mkirchoff@cityoflancasterpa.gov
(717) 847-0285

Selection Process

Prospective candidates are invited to submit applications **on or before June 10, 2024**. The Poet Laureate Committee will review all applications received and will select up to three (3) finalists. Finalists will be notified and scheduled for an in-person interview with the Committee. In addition to the interview, finalists will be asked to perform one of their selected works in front of the Committee. The Committee will announce its ultimate selection of the Poet Laureate by the end of July.

The title of the Poet Laureate is awarded through a competitive process to a person who demonstrates a passion for the literary arts, is committed to being a presence in the community, and embraces the opportunity to engage in civic discourse through the arts.

The Poet Laureate Committee will select poets without regard to race, color, religious creed, ability, ancestry, national origin, sexual orientation, or gender identity.



QR code to application form

APPLICATION FORM

Name:

Stage name/Pen name (optional):

Preferred Pronouns:

Address:

Email:

Phone Number:

Application Questions (each to be answered in 500 words or less)

1. Tell us about yourself and your poetry.
2. Describe your poetic journey and the ways in which your practice has developed and/or evolved.
3. What do you believe you can bring to the position of Poet Laureate for Lancaster City? Why are you uniquely suited for this role at this time?
4. Describe your community involvement in Lancaster City up until now and how you might envision engaging new and diverse voices and perspectives if you were selected as the Poet Laureate.

Work Samples

Submit a total of five (5) samples that demonstrate your creative work in any form.

Indicate title and year of work samples and note the format of the attachment in parenthesis (.pdf, .mp4, youtube link, etc.)

Example: The Hill We Climb, 2021 (.pdf)

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____