

POET LAUREATE PROGRAM  
FOR THE CITY OF SANTA FE, NEW MEXICO

The Poet Laureate program of the Santa Fe Arts and Culture Department, established in 2005, strives to promote a meaningful poetic presence as part of the diverse cultural fabric of our city.

The Objectives of the Poet Laureate Program are to:

1. Enhance the literary arts presence in Santa Fe.
2. Create a focal point for the expression of Santa Fe's culture through the literary arts.
3. Contribute to the continued growth of the individual Poet Laureate.
4. Raise awareness of the power of poetry and the spoken word.
5. Provide a forum for cross pollination of art forms.
6. Celebrate the spirit of the people and the special qualities of our city.
7. Create a unique program that will become a model for other cities.
8. Create, over a period of time, a body of work that commemorates the life of our city.

Eligibility

The Poet Laureate must be over 21 years of age and a resident of Santa Fe County for at least two years, or have been employed in Santa Fe County for at least two years with a deep involvement and commitment to the community. The Poet Laureate must be capable of fulfilling duties and public appearances according to their contract.

Description of Position

This is not a political appointment. It is an honorary position given to a person who has established a presence in the world of poetry, demonstrated commitment and passion for poetry, and embraces the opportunity to engage in civic discourse.

The duty of the Poet Laureate of Santa Fe is twofold.

A. The first is ceremonial.

As the Public Voice of our city, the Poet Laureate will make four appearances per year at city sponsored events as determined by the Arts and Culture Department. These might include:

- Mayoral Inauguration—City Councilors Swearing-In
- Mayor's Arts Award Event
- Community Days
- Public Building and Public Art Dedications

Poems presented at these events are encouraged to be original and appropriate to the occasion, but if not possible, appropriate past work is acceptable.

B. The second tier of the Poet Laureate's job is educational.

A special project proposed by the poet should:

- a) Nourish the poet's own personal growth and interests,
- b) Involve an educational outreach initiative for the community, and
- c) Reflect a schedule that is realistic for the poet.

Ideas for this project might include, but are not limited to:

- Curate a series of poetry readings with a unique focus
- Give public readings in unique venues
- Give workshops on and at unique sites—nature ails, public art, midtown-southside of the city, etc.
- Work with arts education programs such as ArtWorks, the Arts and Culture arts education, or otheers program.

The Poet Laureate should determine that the project does not conflict with existing programs or readings in the City.

C. The Poet Laureate will provide for the Arts and Culture Department a written reflection of the two-year term. This may be presented in prose or poetry form. Photo documentation is required of events with proper photo release forms.

#### Term of Service:

The Poet Laureate will serve two years based on the fiscal year. If the Poet Laureate cannot fulfill his/her contract due to extended illness, relocation or inability to perform, the Poet Selection Panel may, at its discretion, review previous applications and select a new Poet Laureate to complete the term. The interim Poet Laureate is eligible to apply for the next complete term. Poet Laureates may not serve back to back terms,

but may be re-nominated four years after the completion of their first term.

Application Process:

The application process is in two phases.

A.

The application packet must include:

- 1) Poet's name, address, phone number.
- 2) Copy of the poet's resume. Letter of interest from poet, including a proposal and budget for an educational outreach project.
- 3) Three to five poems by the poet. If the poet writes in a language other than English, the original poetry and an English translation should be submitted.
  - a. Poems may be submitted on distinctive paper and/or printing method, but must be legible and have the ability to be photocopied without damage.

B. After the Poet Selection Panel's determination of up to three finalists, the finalists will interview with the Panel including a reading of their work.

Selection Process:

A. Description of Poet Selection Panel

The panel will consist of one Arts Commissioner and up to four other members with the following qualifications:

- 1) Expertise in the literary arts field,
- 2) Reflect diversity of age, ethnicity etc.,
- 3) May include past Poet Laureates of Santa Fe.

Process:

All application packets will be reviewed/audited by the Arts and Culture staff before being presented to the Poet Selection Panel to insure that the applicants meet all requirements.

The Selection Process is in two phases.

- 1) In Phase I the Poet Selection Panel will judge all work submitted through consideration of the poetry, resumes and letters of interest. The Poet Selection Panel will decide on up to three finalists.
- 2) In Phase II, the Panel will interview the finalists, interviews will also include the finalists present an oral reading of their work to rank and make recommendations to the Mayor of Santa Fe for final decision. Points to be considered may include:
  - a. Quality of poetry.
  - b. Language and oral facility.
  - c. Suitability of the work for civic celebration.
  - d. Recognition evidenced through publications, grants, fellowships, academic and/or non academic awards.
  - e. Engagement in past projects that involve poetry, and
  - f. Other experiences related to the tradition of poetry.

During the interview with the finalists, the candidates will be apprised of the Poet Laureate's "Code of Conduct," advised of the City's copyright requirements, and given an overview of the contractual agreement.

Compensation:

- A. The Poet Laureate position will receive up to \$5,000/year.
  - a. Compensation for the public appearances will total up to \$2,000/year.
  - b. Compensation for the education project will be an amount up to \$3,000/year dependent on the complexity and time required to complete the project.
  - c. Educational project fees will be determined by the Arts and Culture Department in collaboration with the Poet Laureate. All fees will be based on fair market value and will be paid after the services have been rendered.
- B. Upon selection of the poet, the mayor will be asked to declare a Poet Laureate Day.

Poet Laureate Code of Conduct:

As Poet Laureate, it is the poet's duty and responsibility to:

- A. Remember that as an individual, he/she has no authority outside of the assigned duties, and to conduct his/her relationships with the Arts and Culture Department, Mayor, City Council, the local citizenry, and the media on the basis of this fact.
- B. Resist pressure to use the position to benefit either himself/herself or any other individuals or agency apart from the total interest of the City of Santa Fe.
- C. Welcome and encourage active participation by Santa Fe citizens, organizations, and the media.
- D. Have no interest nor acquire any interest, direct or indirect, which would conflict in any manner with the performance of the Poet Laureate duties.
- E. At all times present himself/herself and the Poet Laureate program in a professional and respectful manner.
- F. Take responsibility for creating a positive environment for the growth and development of the arts in his/her community.

Requirements:

- A. The Poet Laureate will be required to enter into a professional services agreement with the City and obtain New Mexico CRS and City of Santa Fe Business Registration numbers. The Poet Laureate will also be required to register as a City approved vendor through the MUNIS Financial Database.
- B. The City retains the rights to publish and distribute poetry created as part of the Poet Laureate program for noncommercial purposes, including but not limited to use in City-related advertising, brochures, media, publicity, catalogues or other similar

publications.

- C. The City requests the right to reprint poetry created as part of the Poet Laureate program in an anthology of the Poet Laureate program for the purposes of soliciting funds for the program.
- D. The City requests the right to reprint previously published poetry used as part of the Poet Laureate program for both noncommercial uses and an anthology.