

## Poet Laureate Terms of Reference

### Overview:

The Poet Laureate is an honour bestowed by the City as a way of acknowledging and celebrating poets, literary arts, and their value and contribution to civic life. Through the Poet Laureate the City recognizes literary arts, and all art, as a fundamental and necessary component of society. The City of St. John's Poet Laureate will act as an ambassador for literary arts and will integrate literary arts into a range of official and unofficial civic events.

### Term:

The Poet Laureate will serve for two years with the possibility of extension for an additional two years.

### Eligibility:

Applicants to the position of Poet Laureate must meet the following criteria:

- Be a current resident of St. John's.
- Be a recognized poet, spoken word artist, or storyteller with an established or developing body of work. Examples include:
  - Publication of a trade book or chapbook.
  - Publications in recognized literary journals, anthologies, or periodicals.
  - Significant history of spoken word or storytelling performances.
- Have made a significant contribution to poetry, spoken word, or storytelling, and the literary and cultural life of the City.
- Be prepared to accept the responsibilities of the position and be accustomed to citizen engagement and community outreach.

### Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Access:

The City of St. John's is committed to diversity, equity, and inclusion and encourages applications from members of typically underrepresented, marginalized, racialized, equity-seeking communities (visible and invisible), including BIPOC artists, Deaf and hard-of-hearing artists, artists with disabilities, newcomers, and those artists identifying as 2SLGBTQ+.

### Submissions:

We are dedicated to inclusion, access, and openness in the application process. Please email [arts@stjohns.ca](mailto:arts@stjohns.ca) if you require any assistance with your application, or to discuss possible alternative submission formats.

Submissions must include the following:

1. Resume/Curriculum Vitae
2. Confirmation of place of residence
3. Letter of Intent of 500 words maximum detailing the applicant's goals and objectives in terms of how they would represent the City of St. John's; considerations could include:
  - How the applicant would engage with members of the public, including communities and issues of interest to the applicant.
  - How the applicant would engage with local arts, culture, and community organizations.
  - How the applicant would use digital engagement and social media platforms to interact with community and promote literary arts.

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4. A maximum of 5 examples of work selected from within the last 10 years.
5. A bio of no more than 250 words to be used in City promotion of the Poet Laureate if the application is selected.

**The deadline to submit is September 1, 2023, at 4:00 p.m. Please email submissions to [arts@stjohns.ca](mailto:arts@stjohns.ca), using subject line: 2023 Poet Laureate.**

### Selection:

The City of St. John's will establish a selection committee to review applications, conduct a selection process, and recommend to St. John's City Council an appointee to the position of City of St. John's Poet Laureate. The Committee shall be comprised of a minimum of three and a maximum of five members, to include:

- Individuals who have achieved excellence in the field of literary arts, poetry, spoken word, and/or storytelling;
- Individuals with an interest in promoting literary arts in St. John's;
- Representation from City staff.

Selection is based on the following criteria:

Criteria	Weighting	Related Submission Requirements
<b>Community/Professional Standing:</b> The candidate's contribution to the field of poetry, including storytelling and spoken word, and the literary and cultural life of the St. John's. The impact they have made within the City, and amongst peers.	25%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resume/CV</li> <li>• Bio</li> <li>• Letters of nomination and/or support</li> </ul>
<b>Excellence in Craft:</b> The quality of the candidate's submitted work in relation to the expectations of the Poet Laureate position.	25%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Examples of work</li> </ul>
<b>Citizen Engagement:</b> The candidate's preparedness to accept the responsibilities of the position. The candidate is accustomed to public presentation, citizen engagement, and community outreach.	25%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resume/CV</li> <li>• Bio</li> <li>• Statement of Intent</li> </ul>
<b>Goals and Objectives:</b> The candidate's goals listed for the four-year term as Poet Laureate are realistic, achievable, relevant to the citizens St. John's, and reflect the City's corporate vision: "St. John's is a progressive city, shaped by its geography and history, where people want to live and feel they belong."	25%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Statement of Intent</li> </ul>

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### **Responsibilities:**

The duties of the Poet Laureate will be kept deliberately modest in order to leave incumbents free to concentrate on their own projects. The Poet Laureate will be responsible to shape the position according to priorities agreed upon in consultation with the City of St. John's. Their duties will include:

- Contributing high quality, imaginative, and insightful work to appropriate public functions by reading or reciting their own or others' work, including:
  - Presenting work within the widest possible scope about the City's history, culture, landscape, and life for official City events and occasions, including to City Council during National Poetry Month (April) and at least three additional official Municipal events per year, to be determined in coordination with relevant City staff.
  - In addition, participating in various other events as required.
- Inviting other poets, spoken word artists, and/or storytellers to present their work at various events.
- Raising the profile of the City's literary and cultural community both locally and farther afield.
- Providing advice when appropriate to City staff and to the City's Arts and Culture Advisory Committee on issues pertaining to literary arts, poetry/spoken word/storytelling, and the status of writers/spoken word artists/storytellers.
- Attending meetings of the Arts and Culture Advisory Committee as needed, to report on their experience and activities as Poet Laureate.
- Liaising with City staff on a regular basis, including providing a written report on their experience as Poet Laureate at the conclusion of their term.