



2026 Application

Youth Poet Laureate

Application Deadline:
5 p.m. on October 31, 2025

One year term:
Starting January 2026

HALIFAX

PARKS &
RECREATION

Application process:

2026 Youth Poet Laureate

Program Description

As a legacy project celebrating over 20 years of the Poet Laureate Program, the Halifax Regional Municipality has created this exciting opportunity for young poets to hone their writing skills and engage with others on issues that resonate across the Halifax region. The role of the Youth Poet Laureate is that of a resident poet, storyteller or spoken word artist, between the ages of 14-18. The successful applicant will serve as a literary ambassador for youth across the Halifax region, bringing their work to a wider audience. Through their tenure in this position, the Youth Poet Laureate will seek to inspire and engage local youth to share their stories through written and spoken word.

Program Goals

The 2026 Youth Poet Laureate will create new works of poetry, present at select Regional Council meetings and be an advocate for poetry, language, arts and young writers through various speaking engagements across the Halifax region. The Youth Poet Laureate will take part in AfterWords Literary Festival's Youth Mentorship Program and will be paired with a mentor, who will support their development as a poet. The goal of this role is to instill a long-lasting love of the literary arts for all residents of the Halifax region, while modelling creative action and leadership for your peers. This is a role that underscores the importance of hearing from our community's youth in creative ways, encourages youth to engage in municipal initiatives.

Roles and Responsibilities

While there are a few expectations and deliverables for the Youth Poet Laureate, the intention is to keep this program as flexible as possible. The role will be tailored to the selected poet, their interests/abilities and their Poet Laureate counterpart.

Duties

- Attend and provide a reading at one or two Regional Council meetings, throughout your term.
- Participate and complete the Youth Mentorship Program through AfterWords Literary Festival.
- Youth Poet Laureate may also attend and provide readings at various events across the Halifax region, should they have the capacity and interest.

Term and Support

Term	One year term – January to December 2026.
Financial support	<p>\$1,000 Honorarium from the municipality.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Split into two payments at the beginning and end of term. <p>Speaking fee of \$100 from AfterWords Literary Festival.</p>
Additional support	<p>Access and participation in the AfterWords Literary Festival Youth Mentorship Program (valued at over \$1,500).</p> <p>Additional paid speaking opportunities as available.</p>

Mentorship

The selected Youth Poet Laureate will participate in the AfterWords Literary Festival Youth Mentorship Program. This will include connecting with an established, professional poet in the Halifax region who can provide guidance and advice on every aspect of poetic life, from writing to presentation, with a particular focus on presenting poetry as a municipal poet laureate.

This mentorship will be delivered during a six-week period and includes:

- Weekly meetings (virtual or in-person, to be determined by the mentor and mentee, with guidance from the mentorship program organizer).
- Two virtual writing workshops, alongside all the applicants to both the Youth Poet Laureate position, and the Youth Mentorship Program.
- Additional paid opportunity to read at a public event alongside the other mentees and mentors.

Eligibility

Applicants must meet all of the following criteria:

- Be between the ages of 14-18;
- show a keen interest in the role and its responsibilities;
- be a current resident of the Halifax region for the duration of the term; and
- be prepared to work alongside the Poet Laureate and Afterwords mentor to grow your writing practice and experience through resident engagement and community outreach.

Note: the term of this position spans over two school years, applicants should keep this in mind before applying.

Call For Submissions

Your submission should be emailed as one (1) PDF document in 8.5" X11" portrait format, not exceeding a file size of 5 MB to artgrants@halifax.ca. Video applications are also welcome.

Submissions should include:

- **Letter of intent** – up to 500 words telling us a bit about yourself and your interest in the role as well as your goals and objectives in terms of how you would represent the Municipality; considerations could include:
 - Why is poetry important to you?
 - What are some themes and topics you are interested in exploring and sharing?
 - Are you comfortable reading your work in front of people?
 - What kinds of audiences do you want to read or speak to?
- **Past work** – two to three samples of your work:
 - **Video submissions:**
 - file type: AVI, MOV, MPG, MPEG; and
 - viewable with QuickTime, RealPlayer, Windows Media Player, VLC, YouTube or Vimeo.
 - **Audio submissions, in one of the following file types:**
 - uncompressed in AIF, AIFF, WAV;
 - lossless (FLAC, M4A, MP4); or
 - compressed (MP3, WMA).

Submission deadline: 5 p.m. on October 31, 2025



Selection Process

Submissions are reviewed by peers in the field of poetry and the literary arts and spoken word.

Selection is based on the following scoring rational:

Vision for the role	The candidate's vision for their time in this position and their enthusiasm for this opportunity.	/ 25
Community interest	The candidate's interest in the field of poetry, including storytelling and spoken word.	/ 25
Past work	The quality of the candidate's submitted work.	/ 25
Goals & objectives	The candidate's goals listed for the term as Poet Laureate are realistic and achievable.	/ 25

Email to submit your application to: artgrants@halifax.ca.

Subject Line: HRM Youth Poet Laureate – [NAME]

Application deadline: 5 p.m. on October 31, 2025

All applicants will be notified of the results of the selection process by email, within six weeks of the nomination deadline.

All eligible applicants will be invited to a group writing workshop hosted by AfterWords Literary Festival as a thank you for submitting your work.

Have questions about this municipal program, nomination process or the selection process, please contact:

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