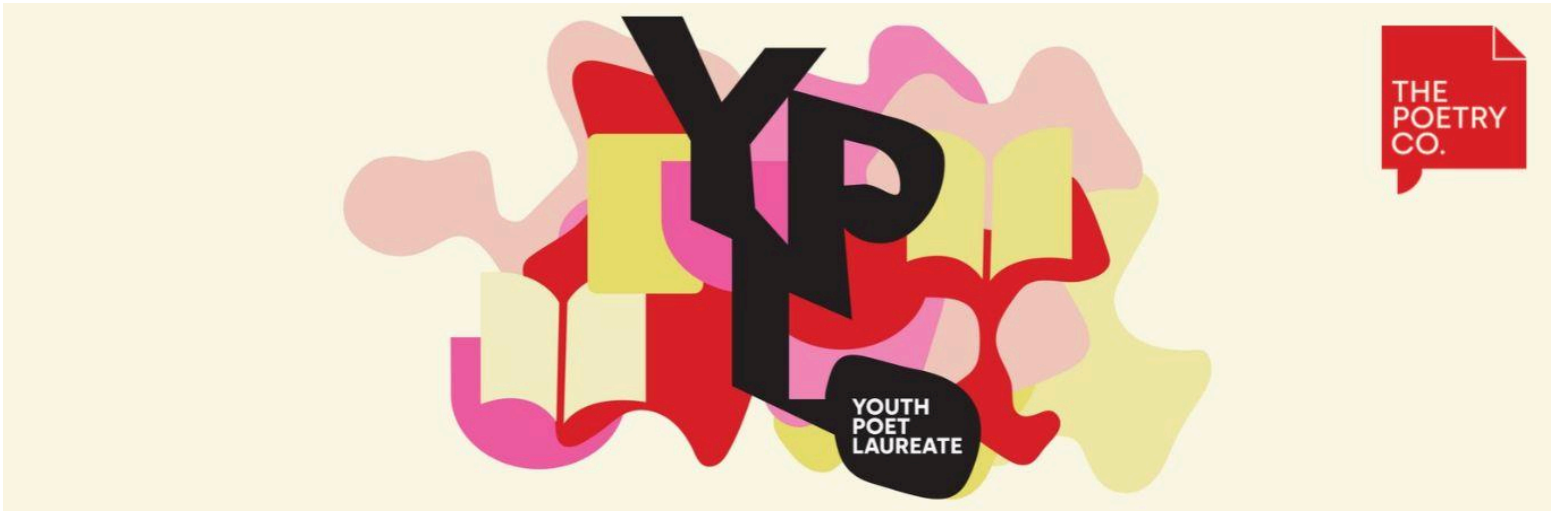


Youth Poet Laureate Program 2027-2028 Application Pack

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About the Program

The Poetry Company is building Australia's first Youth Poet Laureate Program, to elevate the nation's most brilliant young poets, embed their voices into our public life, and gather audiences to enjoy their work.

This program is a first for Australia. It will support a Youth Poet Laureate from every state and territory to join a curated mentorship program running across 2027-2028.

Eight exceptional young poets aged 18-25 will be selected through an open call-out and nomination process, and an expert panel will appoint one poet from the cohort as the National Youth Poet Laureate. Together, the eight poets will form a powerful cohort of young voices, sharing their work with audiences across the country.

The program is both an artistic development program and an audience development program. The Youth Poet Laureates will be commissioned, paid and mentored, with additional opportunities to amplify contemporary Australian poetry and fire the creativity of the next generation of Australian poets.

Key Dates

- Applications open 9am (AEDT) Thursday 5 November, 2026 and close 11:59pm (AEDT) Tuesday 16 February 2027
- Please note the deadline for assisted applications is 3pm (AEDT) Thursday 11 February, and the deadline for technical assistance is 3pm (AEDT) Tuesday 16 February 2027.
- Unsuccessful applicants notified mid-May 2027
- Announcement of 2027-2028 cohort **Thursday 20 May 2027**
- Interviews for National Youth Poet Laureate 31 May - 3 June 2027

  Note: The National Youth Poet Laureate will be selected from the State Youth Poet Laureates cohort. There is an option on the form to select whether you would like to be considered for this role or not - whether or not you would like to be considered for the National Youth Poet Laureate role will not affect the outcome of your application.

- Monthly meetups, workshops and mentoring - June - November 2027 (exact schedule TBC)
- Writers Lab 2027 - Wednesday 30 June - Friday 2 July
- National Young Writers Festival 2027 - Friday 2 July - Sunday 4 July
- Monthly meetups, workshops and mentoring - March - October 2028 (exact schedule TBC)
- Writers Lab 2028 - Wednesday 30 August - Friday 1 September (TBC)

Eligibility

To be eligible to apply for the 2027-2028 Youth Poet Laureate program, poets must:

1. Be aged 18-25 at the time of the application deadline
2. Be an Australian citizen or have a permanent residency visa
3. Be based in Australia, and intend to be for the duration of the program (2027-2028)
4. Have the capacity to participate in the program, from April 2027-November 2028

   The Youth Poet Laureate program will involve a base commitment of approximately 8 hours a month in the first year, and 12 hours a month in the second year. Additionally, there are two 3-day writing camps and a 2-week residency period included in the program. At least 80% attendance is expected; however, we will be flexible around other

academic, work and family commitments as needed. More detail is provided in the timeline.

Poets Receive

- $12,000 stipend for the State Youth Poet Laureates across the 2 years, and an additional $3,000 for the National Poet Laureate
- Individual mentorship with an established poet - delivered online and/or in person
- Publication of up to 3 commissioned poems on The Poetry Company's channels
- Full travel support to attend two 3-day writing camps (one each year) including workshops, professional development and peer networking
    - The Works - full travel and accommodation support to attend two 3-day gatherings (one each year), bringing together the full cohort of 8 poets with mentors and industry figures for workshops, writing, creative and professional development and peer networking
- A 2-week writing residency including access to desk space at their state partner organisation's headquarters
- Access to an online workshops program, including sessions focused on the business and craft of being a writer

Time Commitment

We anticipate poets to be committed to approximately 1 day per month for the duration of the program. This estimate reflects the time required to get the most out of their laureateship and takes into account the following commitments:

- 1x 2-hour monthly workshop with the Youth Poet Laureate cohort
- 1x 1-hour bi-monthly meetup with mentor (5hrs per year of active mentorship sessions)
- 2-hour preparation for bi-monthly mentorship sessions to ensure poets make the most of each session.
- 2-week residency at their state partner organisation's headquarters
- 1x 3-day writing lab in both 2027 & 2028 (travel and accommodation provided)

Accessibility

We are committed to ensuring this program is accessible to all poets, and funds are available to support this. Please feel welcome to reach out to us directly to discuss your access needs, and also include this with your submission.

The application form allows you to download a copy of the questions, and also to start and save your application so you can keep working on it before you submit.

If you need assistance with submitting your application, or just want to have a chat about the program structure and any adjustments you may need, you can make a time via this link.

Information sessions and Workshops

Online information session - Wednesday 3 December, 4-5pm
Join us online to learn more about Australia's first Youth Poet Laureate Program and the application process. We'll share an overview of the program, what to expect across 2027–28, and how to approach your submission, followed by time for questions.

This session is open to anyone thinking about applying and looking to gain more information on the program. Please let us know if you have any access needs.
Register here: https://events.humanitix.com/youth-poet-laureate

Online Workshop: How to write a stellar application - Tuesday 19 January, 4-5pm
Writing an application can be overwhelming, and it can be hard to know where to begin. Join us online to learn more about the Youth Poet Laureate Program application process and how to approach your submission.

This session is open to anyone curious and looking to gain more information on what it takes to craft a strong application. Please let us know if you have any access needs.
Registrations will open soon - subscribe to our newsletter here to find out when bookings open.

If you cannot make either of these sessions but still wish to speak to someone about your application, please reach out to youthpoetlaureate@thepoetryco.org

What can I expect from the application form?

Your privacy is important to us, and we will always handle your information with care. For more information, please see The Poetry Company's Privacy Policy.

Once you start a submission in the application portal, you can save and edit as many times as you like before submitting up until the submission deadline. You can also download a copy of the application questions if you need to, and they are included below.

1. **Eligibility checks**
   The form will ask you to check all the boxes confirming you are eligible for the program

(see full list above for eligibility)

2. **Artist Statement**
    a. Question one: Tell us about your connection to poetry so far, and your commitment to poetry as an art form. (200 words)
    b. Question two: Why would you like to be a Youth Poet Laureate? (200 words)
    c. Question three: Why is now the right moment for you to step into this role? (200 words)
    d. Would you like to be considered for the National Youth Poet Laureate role? (Yes / No)
    Please note: Your answer to this question will not affect the outcome of your application - the State Youth Poet Laureates and National Youth Poet Laureate are determined by separate judging panels.
3. **About You**
    a. Headshot upload
    b. 50-word artist biography

Please upload a hi-res artist headshot as a .png or .jpg file, and a short (50 word) biography, to be used on our digital channels including website, newsletters and social media.

Note that we will only use this headshot if you are one of the selected Youth Poet Laureates – we ask that you submit it with your application as there is a tight turnaround between notifying successful applicants and the public announcement.

4. **Sample of Your Work**
    a. Written sample of your poetry - up to 3 poems, maximum 5 A4 pages
    b. Option to submit audio or video sample of your work (please note we do need a written transcript if you choose to submit audio or video files)

Summary of Support Material

- Written Sample of Your Work
- Audio or Video sample of your work (optional)
- Headshot upload
- 50-word biography

Selection Criteria

Submissions will be reviewed and shortlisted by The Poetry Company's team before applications are brought before an expert panel of 3 judges in each state and territory. Each panel will include a representative from our State Partner, a practicing poet or industry expert and a young person.

We consider both individual practices and the make-up of the overall cohort, including diversity, perspectives, ages and approaches to poetry.

Applications will be reviewed against the following criteria:

1. **Commitment to Poetry:** A demonstrated commitment to the landscape of contemporary Australian poetry through previous artistic practice, development, community engagement and/or education.
2. **Readiness:** The willingness and capacity to participate and have the program support and enhance your poetic practice at this point in your creative development.
3. **Impact:** Potential for this Laureateship to support your creative development and advance your poetic practice, and demonstrated readiness to make the most of the opportunity.
4. **Creative Merit:** The creative concepts, processes and poems submitted show a high degree of originality and contribute to the wider culture of contemporary poetry in Australia.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is a Youth Poet Laureate?

A laureate is someone honoured with an award, prize, or official recognition for outstanding achievement in a particular field, whether science, literature, the arts, or poetry. Long ago, laureates were often crowned with a laurel wreath to demonstrate their achievement publicly.

The Poetry Company is launching Australia's first Youth Poet Laureate Program, designed to elevate the nation's most brilliant young poets, embed their voices in public life, and bring audiences together to enjoy their work. One exceptional young poet aged 18-25 from each state and territory will be selected to form a powerful cohort of young voices.

The Youth Poet Laureates will be commissioned, paid and mentored, with additional opportunities to amplify contemporary Australian poetry and fire the creativity of the next generation of Australian poets.

Why does Australia need a Youth Poet Laureate?

There aren't enough opportunities for emerging poets in Australia, particularly for young people who have yet to establish a professional practice. A National Youth Poet Laureate scheme will inspire more young people to become poets, support their creative and professional development, and raise the visibility of poetry throughout Australia.

Why a ‘laureate’? Isn’t that just an old-fashioned word/concept?

The phrase ‘National Youth Poet Laureate’ emphasises the importance of this role. It is also a universally respected title that will allow our Youth Poet Laureates to participate in international projects alongside the many other ‘National Youth Poet Laureates’ from countries around the world.

How does this relate to the separate Poet Laureate of Australia scheme?

The National Youth Poet Laureate scheme is an independent scheme that celebrates and supports emerging poets under the age of 25. However, we foresee many opportunities to work closely with Australia’s Poet Laureate in the same way that Poet Laureates and Youth Poet Laureates work together in other countries.

How will it work?

Eight young poets aged 18-25 will be selected from every state and territory to join a curated mentorship program running across 2027-2028. The Youth Poet Laureates will be commissioned, paid and mentored, with additional opportunities to amplify contemporary Australian poetry and fire the creativity of the next generation of Australian poets.

Will I be paid?

Yes! Poets selected for the State Youth Poet Laureate program will receive a $12,000 stipend over the 2-year program, with the National Poet Laureate receiving an additional $3,000.

How do I apply?

Please complete the online application form via The Poetry Company’s website here. For more information on what to expect, see page five of the application pack.

When are applications due?

Applications open 9am (AEDT) Thursday 5 November, 2026 and close 11:59pm (AEDT) Tuesday 16 February 2027.

Please note the deadline for assistance with your application is 3pm (AEDT) Tuesday 16 February.

Who should apply?

We invite applications from poets aged 18-25 who meet the eligibility criteria, are committed to Australia’s wider contemporary poetry culture, believe this Laureateship will support their creative development and are ready to make the most of the opportunity.

What kind of opportunities will I have?

- Individual mentorship with an established poet - delivered online and/or in person.
- Publication of up to 3 commissioned poems on The Poetry Company’s channels

- Full travel support to attend two 3-day writing camps (one each year), including workshops, professional development and peer networking.
- A 2-week writing residency including access to desk space at their state partner organisation's headquarters
- Access to an online workshops program, including sessions focused on the business and craft of being a writer
- Paid stipend to support you over the duration of the 2-year program

Where do I need to be based?

We invite applications from Australian citizens or those with a permanent residency visa who intend to be based in Australia for the duration of the program (2027-2028).

Do I need to have been published?

No. The Poetry Company invites all poets aged 18-25, regardless of experience, who are actively shaping their practice and want the space, support and guidance to explore, develop, and refine their craft.

How much time commitment is the program?

Successful applicants must be able to participate in the program from April 2027-November 2028 and agree to take part in at least 80% of planned activities. We expect poets to participate approximately 1 day of engagement per month.

Do I have to be available for the entire duration of the program?

We expect applicants to have the capacity to participate in the program, from April 2027-November 2028 and agree to participate in a minimum of 80% of planned activities. We will do our best to accommodate and work with successful applicants if circumstances change.

The program is designed with a flexible structure so participants can make the most of the program while juggling other commitments, and the majority of activities are delivered online with the exception of the yearly 3-day writers' labs, the 2-week residency (dates to be determined by successful applicants) and any opportunities which may arise including performances.

How are the poets selected?

Submissions will be reviewed and shortlisted by The Poetry Company's team before applications are brought before an expert panel of 3 judges in each state and territory. We consider both individual practices and the make-up of the overall cohort, including diversity, perspectives, ages and approaches.
We will also consider:

- Commitment to Poetry: A demonstrated commitment to the landscape of contemporary Australian poetry through previous artistic practice, development, community engagement and/or education.
- Readiness: The willingness and capacity to participate and have the program support and enhance your poetic practice at this point in your creative development.
- Impact: Potential for this Laureateship to support your creative development and advance your poetic practice, and demonstrated readiness to make the most of the opportunity.
- Creative Merit: The creative concepts, processes and poems submitted show a high degree of originality and contribute to the wider culture of contemporary poetry in Australia.

When will I hear back?

All applicants for the Youth Poet Laureate program will be notified of the outcome of their application by 13 May 2027.

Do you provide Alternative Submission Formats?

We are committed to ensuring that our programs are an inclusive and welcoming experience for all, and we work hard to remove barriers to participation for artists and audiences. We are committed to working with artists to find the best way to submit your application, whether through written submission or alternative formats such as video or audio. If you need alternative formats to support your submission, please contact us at youthpoetlaureate@thepoetryco.org or on 1800 POETRY.

What is the difference between the Youth Poet Laureates and the National Youth Poet Laureate?

One poet aged 18-25 will be selected from every state and territory to form a cohort of eight Youth Poet Laureates. Additionally, an expert panel will appoint one poet from the cohort as the National Youth Poet Laureate.

The National Youth Poet Laureate will have some extra responsibilities (which will be remunerated accordingly), with a significant focus on public speaking and media appearances as part of the role. The selection process for the National Youth Poet Laureate will include sharing some more of your work and ideas for the role, as well as a short interview conducted via video conference call.

What if I don’t want to be considered for the National Youth Poet Laureate role?

If you would prefer not to be considered for the National Youth Poet Laureate, that is more than okay! Your decision not to be considered does not prejudice your chances of selection into the cohort.

Do you prioritise any applicants?

The Poetry Company is committed to supporting artists who face systemic barriers to accessing opportunities in the arts sector. This includes (but is not limited to) First Nations artists, artists from culturally diverse backgrounds, LGBTQIA+ artists and artists living with disability.

Are there any extra resources to help me with my application?

For extra resources on crafting a stellar application, consider attending our online workshops and information sessions or referring to the curated list of extra resources contained on page eight of the application pack.

Still have questions?

If you still have questions that aren't answered here or at the links above, you can contact us via youthpoetlaureate@thepoetryco.org

Extra Resources

Information sessions and Workshops

The Pilot Program

In 2025 and 2026, we piloted the Youth Poet Laureate program with our Youth Ambassadors. If you'd like to build your understanding of what the program entails or find out about their personal experiences, visit the resources below to learn more.

- Introducing the Youth Poet Laureate program
- Youth Poet Laureate
- Youth Ambassadors and the Meaning of Poetry for Young People

Frequently Asked Questions
- What is a Youth Poet Laureate?
- Why does Australia need a Youth Poet Laureate?
- Why a ‘laureate’? Isn’t that just an old-fashioned word/concept?
- How does this relate to the separate Poet Laureate of Australia scheme?
- How will it work?
- Will I be paid?
- How do I apply?
- When are applications due?
- Who should apply?
- What kind of opportunities will I have?
- Where do I need to be based?
- Do I need to have been published?
- How much time commitment is the program?
- Do I have to be available for the entire duration of the program?
- How are the poets selected?
- When will I hear back?
- Do you provide Alternative Submission Formats?
- What is the difference between the Youth Poet Laureates and the National Youth Poet Laureate?
- What if I don’t want to be considered for the National Youth Poet Laureate role?
- Do you prioritise any applicants?
- Are there any extra resources to help me with my application?
- Still have questions?