



Nanaimo seeks its next Poet Laureate 2027 – 2029

The Poet Laureate is a literary ambassador for the City of Nanaimo. Through their role they raise the profile of literary arts in our community by creating and presenting poetic works and activities that are relevant to our times and respond to our place. Nanaimo's next Poet Laureate will engage and inspire, bring their own unique voice and experience to collaborate and realize poetry projects for the benefit of our community.

Past City of Nanaimo Poet Laureates include Naomi Beth Wakan (2013-2016), Tina Biello (2017-2020), Kamal Parmar (2021-2024), and Neil Surkan (2024-2026).

Activating poetry through a Civic Role

The activities of the Poet Laureate will be shaped by the Poet's own artistic objectives and trajectory. They will be invited to:

- participate in the life of the city and serve as a literary ambassador for Nanaimo;
- participate in agreed upon civic events by presenting works that are relevant to life in Nanaimo. Events in the past include reciting at civic Canada Day celebrations, or at Council meetings);
- inform and participate in programming organized by the City, or by City partners, related to National Poetry Month (April);
- produce at least one new work each year that is relevant to life in Nanaimo and collaborate to disseminate that work to a broad public
- liaise with and serve as a mentor to Nanaimo's Youth Poet Laureate
- work in collaboration with City Staff and other partners as appropriate.

Term and Remuneration

The City of Nanaimo's Poet Laureate will be appointed to a two year term, to begin in January 2027. The position includes a \$2,500 annual honorarium and \$500 in project funding each year.

Eligibility Criteria

Candidates must be able to demonstrate a track record of engagement with the literary community, and a commitment to poetry as a practice. Candidates must reside in Nanaimo.

How to Apply

Create and submit a package that includes the following:

- A letter of intent that addresses why you are interested in the position and outlines a vision for the projects you may be interested to explore;
- A curriculum vitae that demonstrates your experience and engagement with the literary arts;
- Examples of published works;
- Three (3) references.

Selection Process

A panel will review applications and invite selected candidates for an interview.

Decisions will be based on the applicant's past literary work, their demonstrated ability to engage and inspire through programs and public presentation, and their clear and innovative vision for their tenure as Poet Laureate.

The panel will provide a recommendation and the Poet Laureate will be appointed by City Council.

Deadline for Applications

Submissions must be received no later than **11:59PM, Pacific Time, October 25, 2026**. There are three ways to submit your application:

1. Submit your application online using the website submission form; or
2. In-person to the Culture & Events Dropbox, located at the Bowen Complex, 500 Bowen Road. The Dropbox is located on the lower level of the building near the tennis courts (Pine Street Entrance). Please enclosed in a sealed envelope clearly marked:

Your Name, Poet Laureate Program
City of Nanaimo, Culture and Events

3. By mail:
ATTN: Poet Laureate Program
City of Nanaimo, Culture and Events
455 Wallace St.
Nanaimo, BC V9R 5J6

Questions?

cultureandevents@nanaimo.ca
250-755-4483

Should you experience challenges or barriers in this application process or require additional support, we encourage you to reach out to cultureandevents@nanaimo.ca (250-755-4483).