

## **POET LAUREATE PROGRAM BACKGROUND**

A Poet Laureate is an honorary title, originating from the ancient Greeks' practice of crowning their artists and athletes with laurels. A Poet Laureate is officially appointed by a government or conferring institution and is often expected to compose poems for special events and occasions as well as advancing the knowledge and enjoyment of literary arts through public readings, education and community events. In the 1300s, two Italians were the first to be crowned Poets Laureate and in Henry VII of England's day, he crowned the Poet Laureate.

Today more than a dozen national governments continue the Poet Laureate tradition. In the U.S., the Librarian of Congress identifies a poet he'd like to serve as Poet Laureate, confirms that the poet is willing and able to serve as Poet Laureate and then appoints the poet to the position. He often seeks suggestions from the Library's Poetry and Literature Center and other poets before he makes the final decision. Many Poets Laureate are selected by a literary group in a given country, state or city. There are other Poets Laureate in addition to those named by countries, states and cities such as the Children's Poet Laureate designated by the Poetry Foundation.

## **Draft of POMONA POET LAUREATE PROGRAM AND PROCESS**

The City of Pomona Poet Laureate would be selected for a two-year term through an open-call application process through the Pomona Public Library Trustee Board. Applications would be accepted and reviewed by a panel comprised of three Library Trustee Members, and two members of the Pomona Arts Committee, to be called the Poet Laureate Commissioning Group. The Pomona Public Library Trustees Board would be responsible for the management of the Poet Laureate Program through the Poet Laureate Commissioning Group.

### **Possible Timeline:**

- March 20, 2019: Library Trustee Board reviews this proposal  
Any necessary changes made through ad-hoc. Ask the Cultural Arts Commission to appoint two members to the Commissioning Group.
- April 20, 2019: If revised proposal accepted, Library Trustee Board Poet Laureate Program ad hoc committee with two members of Cultural Arts Commission forms and officially begins operating to create and oversee Pomona Poet Laureate Program
  - o Requests Grant monies from Pomona Public Library Foundation to be received Summer 2019
  - o Sub-committee finalizes application requirements and process
  - o Any necessary formalization through city
- May 20: Final version of the poet laureate program completed and accepted by Library Trustee Board and City of Pomona
  - o Publicly announces program; requests applications due July 10, 2019
- July 20 – September 20, 2019: Reviews applications and holds any interviews necessary.
- September 30: candidate can be appointed for a two-year term by the Mayor to begin in September/October 2019 and run through August of 2021.

### **Draft of PROGRAM GOALS/OBJECTIVES**

The City seeks to name one Poet Laureate to serve as an official ambassador of Pomona's vibrant creative scene, promoting the City's rich literary community and celebrating the written and spoken word.

The objectives of the Poet Laureate Program are to:

- Enhance the presence and appreciation of poetry and the literary arts in Pomona;
- Create an engaging access and focal point for the expression of the many types of poetry;
- Create positive connection between the diverse breadth of voices within Pomona through poetry;
- Raise awareness of the power of literature, poetry, and the spoken word;
- Inspire an emerging generation of poets, writers, storytellers, literary artists, and critical and artistic thinkers;
- Bring poetry and literary arts to people in Pomona who have limited access to read or hear poetry and literature, and who have few opportunities for exposure to creative and expressive writing;
- Encourage the reading and writing of literature and the performance of poetry in both traditional and non-traditional venues;
- Create a new poem or body of literary works that commemorate the history, diversity, uniqueness, beauty, and/or vibrancy of Pomona.

### **SPECIFIC SCOPE OF WORK**

Over the course of the two-year appointment, (renewable after the first year), the City of Pomona Poet Laureate will carry out the following duties during each year:

- Engage Pomona residents, visitors, civic and elected leaders, young people, adults, seniors, and students of all ages about the value of poetry, the written word, and creative expression through three or more public events, classes or workshops at the Pomona Public Library as well as three public events, classes or workshops at another publicly-accessible venue for the purpose of enjoyment and education about poetry. While the poet's own work may be read, other well-known or lesser-known poems that inspire or educate about poetry through hearing or reading should also be shared in each context, class, event, or workshop as well. The Poet Laureate is responsible for designing, running, and inviting to these events; they may use any of the platforms or resources the Public Library Trustee Board or other supporting organizations willingly donate to their efforts. They may also recruit volunteers for these events, classes, or workshops.
- Lead the coordination of Pomona Public Library and City of Pomona and any other interested organizations at no less than one festival-style event at the Pomona Public Library in April to celebrate National Poetry Month, with the specific goal to increase awareness and appreciation of poetry in Pomona;
- Use social media as often as possible, or work with City staff to prepare social media communications that encourage excitement about poetry, literacy and literary events, and related issues; Submit content for one poetry blog that is officially co-branded with the Pomona Public Library to be updated on at least a monthly basis. The purpose of the blog would be to excite discussion, exchange, and participation in poetry, as well as educate readers about the culture of written and spoken word in Pomona; other methods to achieve the same end may be considered;
- Write one or more commemorative poem(s) about Pomona that is appropriate for a general audience inclusive of children.

### **POET LAUREATE HONORARIUM**

The Pomona Poet Laureate will receive a \$1,000.00 annual honorarium. This honorarium will be made in three payments of approximately \$330, \$330, and \$340 based on benchmarks established in a legal contract. After the services of the first year are completed, a review of the contract will be conducted by the Pomona Public Library Foundation and the Commissioning Group to determine if the Poet Laureate

has successfully completed the terms and responsibilities of their contract. If so, a second year agreement for another \$1,000.00 contract will be considered and offered.

### **ELIGIBILITY**

Finalists for the position of City of Pomona Poet Laureate must be able to demonstrate via their professional resume:

- A residential address within Pomona (and/or a significant live/work relationship to the City of Pomona?); and,
- Five years of experience (not including years as student) in either publishing poetry or presenting poetry, or both, with a demonstrated record of being included or invited to present works within poetry journals, magazines, websites, and/or programs that are not self-curated, personal websites, or personal blogs.

### **SELECTION PROCESS**

The selection process is managed by the Commissioning Group, comprised of three Library Trustees and members of the Cultural Commission.

The Commissioning Group's guiding principles require an open nomination/application process with stated eligibility criteria, judging, and performance expectations to engender inclusiveness, transparency, and fairness.

All proposals will be reviewed by the Commissioning Group, and the Commissioning Group will select the finalists as well as Pomona's Poet Laureate from the final selected applicants

#### **Stage 1 – Request for Qualifications**

*All nominations are required to submit:*

- An application cover page with personal contact information;
- A standard certification statement, signed by the applicant; and,
- Two work samples, consisting of PDF copies of published poems and/or web links to videos of poetry readings or performances.

*All Stage 1 submissions will be reviewed and scored on the following two criteria:*

- 4 Points – Ability for the Commissioning Group to assess the candidate's prior experiences on her/his website or other means, and
- 6 Points – The quality of poetry samples in relation to the excellent talent-pool and multi-cultural nature of Pomona.

#### **Stage 2 – Request for Proposals**

*The Commissioning Group will select the top 5 candidates from Stage 1, who will be asked to submit:*

- A brief biography (7 to 10 sentences);
- A full resume or CV;
- A proposal narrative (of no more than two pages) which must describe how the applicant intends to approach the scope of work and goals of this program; and,
- Up to four additional recent work samples, consisting of PDF copies of published poems and/or web links to videos of poetry readings or performances.

#### **Stage 3 – Interview**

The Commissioning Group will interview the top two to three designates and then select the finalist.

**Stage 4 – Appointment**

Upon the recommendation of the Commissioning Group the Mayor shall appointment for the Poet Laureate for the City of Pomona for a two-year term.

**APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS**

All application materials for Stage 1 must be submitted electronically to [**Point Person for Selection Committee\_**]

**APPLICATION IS DUE ON 11:59 p.m. July 10, 2019.**

Incomplete and late submissions will be deemed ineligible and will not be considered.