

Call for Submissions – Poet Laureate

The City of Mississauga will recognize its sixth Poet Laureate in 2026. The role of the Poet Laureate is to elevate the status of poetry, literary arts and writers within their communities and beyond. This honorary position recognizes a poet who writes excellent poetry or spoken word and has written on themes that are relevant to the citizens of Mississauga.

Objectives

The Poet Laureate will serve a 24-month term beginning in April 2026 and ending in March 2028. The objectives of the position are to:

- Serve as a literary ambassador for the City of Mississauga to audiences both within and outside of the City
- Promote poetry and literary arts within the City
- Raise the profile of writers in Mississauga
- Create an artistic legacy through public readings and civic interactions

Key Responsibilities:

- Create literary work that reflects the values of the city and its citizens.
- Produce at least three original works for specific events or occasions identified by the City in each year of the term.
- Agree to perform poetry readings in person (at least once a year to City Council during National Poetry month and at minimum, at two other official City of Mississauga functions each year). Agree to send selected poems to City staff in advance of the readings.
- Attend a variety of civic events across the city to promote and attract people to the literary world.
- Act as a mentor for the Youth Poet Laureate Program by assisting the Youth Poet Laureate to create an event or project that promotes poetry and the literary arts to young people. The primary objective of the Youth Poet Laureate is to serve as a literary ambassador for youth in the City of Mississauga that complements the Poet Laureate Program.
- Provide content for the Poet Laureate section of the City of Mississauga website as required.

Term and Payment:

The Poet Laureate will serve a 24-month term beginning in April 2026 and will receive \$10,000 paid in 6 installments throughout the term. Additional project funds may be available to support Laureate activities dependent upon available financial resources.

Selection Criteria:

Candidates Must:

- Be a published poet or spoken word artist
- Be a current Mississauga resident
- Have an established body of work or have been recognized for notable contributions to the literary arts
- Have some of their work be relevant to Mississauga and/or subjects that reflect life in the city
- Have the ability to represent the values of the City of Mississauga in a professional manner

Submissions:

The application period is open from January 26 - February 25, 2026

Submission Deadline – February 25, 2026 at 11:59 PM

Eligible poets or spoken word artists are invited to submit proposals that include the following:

1. Curriculum Vitae
2. A minimum of 3 and maximum of 5 examples of published work from within the last 10 years - 1 should be an audio or video recording.
3. A new poem that would be suitable to read as part of Canada Day Celebrations at Celebration Square on July 1, 2026.
4. Confirmation of place of residence (acceptable proof of residence includes a photocopy of valid official government photo ID with current address listed).
5. The contact information for three professional references that can verify the poet's abilities in the following areas: poetry or spoken word, event or project management, public speaking and professionalism.
6. Letter of Intent (500 words maximum) detailing:
 - How the poet would represent the City of Mississauga and interact in civic life at special events or occasions
 - How the Poet would engage with the Mississauga Library System
 - The Poet's potential special civic project(s) including budget – additional funding for special projects is not guaranteed and would be determined on a case-by-case basis
 - How the Poet will use digital engagement to promote the literary arts during their term

Submissions are accepted via email.

Submissions should be one document in Word or PDF format. Audio files can be sent as a second document.

Please send email submissions to:
residency.residency@mississauga.ca

Selection Process:

Appointment will be made by a selection committee comprised of arts professionals from the community. Submissions will be reviewed using the following criteria:

- The Poet has made a significant contribution to poetry and the literary arts in Mississauga
- Artistic merit of the submission, including the relevancy to the City of Mississauga and its values
- The potential impact of the proposed civic engagement and/or poetry projects as identified in the applicant's Letter of Intent

Potential applicants may be requested to attend an in-person interview on March 9, 2026, as part of the selection process. Public information about the applicant available online (social media presence, website, media releases) may also be reviewed by committee members as part of the selection process. If selected, the candidate will be asked to provide a Criminal Records Search and Vulnerable Sector Screening at their own expense that is acceptable to the City of Mississauga.

Reserved Rights of the City of Mississauga

The City of Mississauga, at its sole discretion, reserves the following rights:

- To request clarification or additional information, as it deems necessary to evaluate submissions
- To determine suitability of the submission and capability of the prospective poet
- To select the poet that it deems most appropriate for the project
- To make no selection or to cancel this process at any time
- To issue public announcements regarding the competition

This document and any submissions in response to it by prospective poets do not create any binding obligations on the City, the prospective poet or any other party.

Any questions about the Poet Laureate Program should be directed to Recreation & Culture Division staff at residency.residency@mississauga.ca.

Personal information is collected under the authority of Section 11 of the Municipal Act, 2001 for the purpose of evaluating applicants. It will also be used to contact the individual chosen for the position. Questions about the collection of this personal information should be directed to the Supervisor, Culture Programs Visual Arts, City of Mississauga at 905-615-3200 x8182.