

Calgary Poet Laureate Program Guidelines

Term: April 2026 – April 2028

Application Deadline: February 13, 2026

Background & Program Description

On July 26, 2011, City Council approved a motion to establish a Calgary Poet Laureate position, funded by Calgary Poet Laureate Ambassadors from the private sector. Each Calgary Poet Laureate is appointed for a two-year term.

Calgary Arts Development administers the program, including:

- Appointing the selection committee
- Collecting nominations
- Managing marketing and publicity
- Overseeing all finances related to the program

The Calgary Poet Laureate program is funded by the Calgary Poet Laureate Ambassadors. As of January 1, 2026, the Calgary Poet Laureate Ambassadors include:

- Calgary Foundation
- Calgary Public Library

Eligibility Criteria

Nominees for Calgary Poet Laureate must meet the following criteria:

- Be a professionally published or presenting poet
- Be a current resident of Calgary
- Demonstrate an established career through their body of work or have made significant contributions to their community regardless of career length

Roles & Responsibilities

The Calgary Poet Laureate is an ambassador of the arts to the citizens of Calgary. The Calgary Poet Laureate produces literary work that is reflective of Calgary's landscape, cityscape and civic identity, and that may raise awareness of local issues.

The Calgary Poet Laureate is to perform the role outlined as follows:

- Compose and present poems for official City of Calgary occasions
- Make public appearances as Calgary Poet Laureate either in Calgary or as an ambassador to other cities or countries
- Make public presentations of their work at least twice a year
- Send quarterly updates to Calgary Arts Development listing past and upcoming public appearances
- Sit on the selection committee for the succeeding Calgary Poet Laureate

Honorarium

The Calgary Poet Laureate receives an annual honorarium of \$10,000, over a two-year term.

Nomination Process

Nominations open on January 13, 2026. Self-nominations are accepted. If shortlisted for the award, nominees must agree to participate in an in-person or online interview and presentation of their work for the selection committee.

Nomination packages must include:

- A letter of nomination from the nominator (in the case of a self-nomination, a support of nomination letter written by a second party), including:
 - A brief description of the nominee's contributions to the poetry or arts community
 - A brief description of how the nominee has influenced their literary peers and/or other artists
 - An explanation of why the nominee should be Calgary Poet Laureate
- The nominee's current curriculum vitae (CV)
- Support materials: One copy for each member of the selection committee of up to five (5) examples of the nominee's work. If submitting electronically, one copy of each item will suffice. If submitting hard copies, the selection committee will require six (6) copies of each item. Please contact info@birdcreatives.com. **If submitting hard copy support materials,**

please also upload a Word document or PDF indicating that hard copies will be provided by the deadline. Examples of work may include:

- Published books
- Literary anthologies, journals, magazines, chapbooks
- Links to presentation videos or MP3s
- CDs or DVDs
- A signed acknowledgement of nomination (nomination declaration form included as the final page of this document).

The deadline for nominations is Friday, February 13, 2026, at 4:30pm MT.

Nomination packages can be submitted through our **online platform**.

Selection Committee

The selection committee — appointed by Calgary Arts Development — is responsible for reviewing all nomination packages based on the criteria outlined above.

Selection Process

Following the nomination deadline, the selection committee reviews all applications and meets to discuss and shortlist nominees. Shortlisted nominees are invited to participate in an interview and presentation of their work for the selection committee the week of March 9, 2026. During these meetings, the selection committee assesses each nominee's presenting skills and aspirations for the position.

Following the interviews and presentations, the selection committee meets to choose the Calgary Poet Laureate. The announcement of the 2026 – 2028 Calgary Poet Laureate takes place during National Poetry Month, no later than April 30, 2026.

Selection Criteria

Calgary Poet Laureate nominees are assessed based on the following criteria:

- **Artistic Excellence:** The quality and artistic merit of the nominee's work.
- **Impact:** The nominee's contribution to the Calgary poetry or arts community.
- **Stature:** The nominee's reputation within their peer community.
- **Community Connection:** The nominee's presentation skills and aspirations for the position.

Contact

Please email info@birdcreatives.com for more information about the program or nomination process.

Timeline

January 13, 2026: Nominations open

February 13, 2026: Nominations close

February 16 – 27, 2026: Selection committee reviews nomination packages and determines shortlist

Week of March 9, 2026: Shortlist nominees notified and scheduled for interviews and presentations, then selection committee makes final decision

March 16, 2026: All nominees notified of final Poet Laureate decision

By April 30, 2026: Calgary Poet Laureate announced

This program is made possible by the Calgary Poet Laureate Ambassadors:



Calgary Poet Laureate Nomination Declaration Form

Term: April 2026 – April 2028

Application Deadline: February 13, 2026 at 4:30pm MT

This form must be submitted along with the nomination package. Please review the Calgary Poet Laureate guidelines and nomination package description before signing this form.

Nominee Name		
Address Line 1		Suite #
Address Line 2		
City	Province	Postal Code
Phone (<input type="checkbox"/> home, <input type="checkbox"/> work or <input type="checkbox"/> cell)	Email	

If shortlisted and/or selected, I accept full responsibility for meeting all requirements of Calgary Arts Development and the Calgary Poet Laureate program. I give full permission for my name to be placed in nomination for the position by the nominator. I certify that the nominee information is true and accurate and that the support material submitted is an accurate representation of my work. If selected, Calgary Arts Development has my permission to use my image and support material, or portion thereof, for publicity purposes.

Signature of Nominee	Date / /
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Signature of Nominator (if different from nominee)	Date / /
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