

# Oceanside Poet Laureate Program - DRAFT

## Proposed RFQ (Request for Qualifications)

### **Eligibility:**

Any artist residing in Tri-City North County San Diego (Oceanside, Carlsbad, Vista) who is able to conduct work in Oceanside and clearly explain why they are connected to Oceanside.

### **Project Description:**

The Artist selected through the competitive process will become the City's Poet Laureate, serving as an ambassador and advocate for poetry, spoken word, and the literary arts. The Poet Laureate is expected to produce engaging and conceptually rich original works inspired by and in response to Oceanside as a richly diverse community with many untold stories and new ones made each day. The Poet Laureate will elevate appreciation of the art form through public readings and civic events. They will also propose and lead a public project to celebrate the city and make poetry more available and accessible to residents in their everyday lives.

### **Scope of Services:**

- Give a minimum of two (2) public readings per year that are free and open to all, these may include visits to schools, events for young people, public presentations, poetry open mic events, etc.
- Offer a minimum of two (2) instructional workshops per year
- Create at least one original piece of literary art per year inspired by or related to a theme or topic integral to the City of Oceanside
- Schedule and serve as the point of contact and promoter for events, workshops and performances
- Collaborate with other city and state Poet Laureate when possible
- Serve on the selection panel for the next Poet Laureate

### **Term:**

The Poet Laureate will serve a two-year term, work in alignment with city staff, and collaborate with project partners during the two-year term. A Poet Laureate may not serve more than one full term.

### **Budget:**

Approximately \$10,000 (\$5,000 per year) to be allocated for Poet Laureate funded by the city. The budget is all-inclusive and must cover all costs associated with the Scope of Services, including all travel expenses.

**Application Submittal Requirements:**

- Work Sample
  - o Submit examples of past work containing a maximum of 10 original works
- Letter of Interest
  - o Submit a written narrative (one-page max) describing your passion for and comprehension of the project. Clearly explain your relationship to Oceanside and your approach to communicating the experience of the community. This narrative is your opportunity to convey your understanding of the role and why you are well-matched for the appointment.
- Professional Résumé or curriculum vitae
- Proof of residency in the Tri-City area

**Artist Selection Process:**

A panel appointed by the City will review and evaluate the Applications utilizing the selection criteria below. (City staff may prescreen each Application to verify eligibility and to evaluate responsiveness to the criteria. Applications deemed to be marginally responsive may not be forwarded to the panel for review.) The panel will be comprised of City staff, community members and literary art experts. The panel will create a shortlist of approximately three of the most qualified Artists and may interview the shortlisted Artists. Artists will be expected to discuss past approaches and working methods as well as answer questions relating to working on projects of this nature. Based on these evaluations, the panel will recommend one Artist for the contract award.

**The panel will consist of the following persons:**

- One professor specialized in poetry/creative writing to ensure the candidate can hold dialogue around the craft of poetry
- One community ambassador to evaluate the applicant's civic engagement and leadership qualities
- One librarian/library staff as a literary representative for the city
- One community expert who is familiar with publishing, the craft of writing, organizing events, and/or is an active literary citizen

**Criteria used to evaluate Artists as evidenced in Application materials include:**

- Artistic excellence, uniqueness of vision, and strength of creativity
- Originality of approaches and methodologies used to convey meaning through literary art

- Demonstrated capacities for working with concepts that are appropriate to the opportunity and sociocultural context
- Experience with public engagement in the development of art projects
- Demonstrated artistic and technical skills necessary for this project (formal education in this art form is not required to apply)
- Demonstrated interest in and understanding of the scope of services as well as capability in creating literary work and project in collaboration with the City and other project partners

**Schedule:**

- Advertise and Issue RFQ: March 1, 2026
- Last Date to Submit Questions: April 15, 2026
- Application Due Date: April 30, 2026
- Shortlist Determination: May 15, 2026
- Oral Interviews: early June 2026
- Selection and Notification: Mid-late June 2026
- Term: July 2026 – June 2028