

# CITY OF ROCKFORD POET LAUREATE

## NOMINATION GUIDELINES

### Who May Apply

The City of Rockford Poet Laureate Committee encourages all eligible candidates to self-nominate and for other members of the public to nominate eligible candidates. Poets of all subgenres and styles will be considered.

### Nomination Guidelines

All City of Rockford Poet Laureate nominees must:

- Must be at least 21 years of age at the time of nomination
- Have been a resident of Winnebago County for or at least 1 year prior to the nomination deadline and remain a resident throughout the two-year term
- Must be committed to bringing poetry to a wide range of places and people
- Must be able and available to reach City of Rockford audiences through travel or other means
- Provide evidence of achievement in the art of poetry, including having a body of publicly accessible work (books, literary magazines, and/or digital media)
- Must be prepared to undertake the public role required of the laureate

### Nomination Requirements

**The following four items are required as part of each nomination:**

1. A **completed nomination form** via the online nomination process. The online form will include:
  - (a) contact information for the nominator and the nominated poet, including mailing address, phone numbers and e-mail address, and
  - (b) if the nomination is not by the poet, a statement verifying that the nominator has contacted the nominated poet and that the poet has reviewed the expectations of the position and agrees to the nomination.

2. **Biographical sketch, résumé or curriculum vitae**, not to exceed one page, which includes any special honors, awards, fellowships, or other recognition.
3. The submission should consist of a **work sample** (published or unpublished) of up to 3 poems, not to exceed 5 pages, with no more than one poem per page. The work sample may be written or audio. If written work, the sample must include a cover sheet with name and a list of poetry titles and content. The work sample may contain information that indicates where the poem has been published or performed or if it has received any awards for merit. The poems submitted should be of the highest quality and can be from any time period.
4. If you submit an audio work sample of up to 3 poems instead of a written one, you may also submit a transcript of the poem(s) performed, not to exceed 5 pages as stated above.
5. A **narrative**, not to exceed two (2) pages, describing
  - (a) why the nominee wishes to be considered,
  - (b) what the nominee would hope to accomplish during the two years as the City of Rockford Poet Laureate, and
  - (c) the theme to be explored during the initial year of service and ideas for any special projects related to the position.

\*Please note that the items specified in Sections 2, 3 and 4 above must be in 12-point font, with 1" margins on all sides, and formatted to fit 8 1/2" x 11" paper (no photocopies from publications will be accepted).

*Recommendation letters are not appropriate and will not be considered.*

*Failure to provide all required materials results in automatic ineligibility.*

### **How to Submit a Nomination**

All nominations, including self-nominations, should be submitted via the [online application form](#) at **by 5 p.m.** on the submission deadline.

Online submissions are strongly encouraged and preferred, but in the event you are unable to submit electronically, please forward four (4) copies (or one flash drive) of your submission to:

**City of Rockford**  
**Poet Laureate Committee**  
Rockford Area Arts Council  
713 East State Street  
Rockford, IL 61104

### **Re-Nomination of Previously Nominated Poets**

A poet who has been nominated before may be re-nominated through this process.

### **Ineligible Nominees**

- Previous City of Rockford Poets Laureate
- Poets living outside Winnebago County

### **Selection Criteria**

- Have a prior record of high quality, published or documented work
- Ability and willingness to conduct the public engagement duties of the office
- Demonstration of excellence in their artistic work
- Capacity to foster public appreciation of and participation in poetry through readings, public presentations and/or teaching in diverse communities
- Ability to advance poetry in the City of Rockford region as evidenced by an established history of activity in Rockford's literary community through readings, publications, public presentations and/or teaching
- Agree to the conditions and term of appointment

### **Selection Process**

1. The City of Rockford Poet Laureate Committee will review all submitted nominations and select at least three (3) semi-finalists.
2. Each semi-finalist will be interviewed in person by the City of Rockford Poet Laureate Committee, which will make a recommendation to Mayor Thomas McNamara.
3. The City of Rockford Poet Laureate Committee will select the City of Rockford Poet Laureate, subject to approval by Mayor Thomas McNamara and the City of Rockford City Council.
4. The City of Rockford Poet Laureate will be notified when Mayor McNamara approves the selection to bring before the City Council.
5. Mayor McNamara will announce the City of Rockford Poet Laureate at the City of Rockford Arts Awards reception in October.

6. The new Poet Laureate will take his/her position on January 1 of the following year.

### **Expectations of the Position**

#### **The City of Rockford Poet Laureate is expected to:**

- Celebrate the written and spoken poetic voices of City of Rockford residents by using the appointment as a platform from which to illuminate not only his, her or their own work, but also the work of other writers in the Rockford region
- Contribute to the growth, access and awareness of poetry throughout the Rockford region
- Encourage both the reading and writing of literature
- Use the art of poetry to enlighten, educate, entertain, transform and inspire established and emerging generations of literary artists and readers of literature
- Participate in at least 4 literary events and 4 educational programs in schools in the region
- Promote poetry and the City of Rockford Poet Laureate position via official social media accounts
- Prepare and provide a written report of activities every six months to the City of Rockford Poet Laureate Committee
- Create a substantial new work commemorating the City of Rockford through works that speak to, for and of our region
- Collaborate with other city and state poets laureate (including the City of Rockford Youth Poet Laureate and the State Poet Laureate) when possible