

## LITERATURE WALES BURSARIES PANEL INFORMATION NOTE FOR APPLICANTS

Literature Wales Writers' Bursaries are well-established and have been administered by Literature Wales on behalf of the Arts Council of Wales since 2003. Literature Wales Writers' Bursaries and the Mentoring Scheme are core Writer Development activities; both schemes offer opportunities for early career writers to develop their creative and professional development. Early career writers can be of any age. The application process is administered by Literature Wales, and the applications for both schemes are assessed by the Bursaries Panel – an external peer panel.

*Literature Wales Writers' Bursaries and the Mentoring Scheme are supported by The National Lottery through the Arts Council of Wales.*

### The Bursaries Panel

Literature Wales is seeking 3 new members to join its Bursaries Panel. The Literature Wales Bursaries Panel consists of up to 6 members, including the Chair. Please refer to **Appendix 1** for the list of current Bursaries Panel members and their biographies.

The portfolio of skills and expertise required for the role are noted below.

### About the role

#### Bursaries Panel Members - Qualities required

- Overview of the literary scene in Wales
  - Knowledge of the publishing industry / writing in Wales – see genres below
  - Expertise in contemporary English language writing in Wales
- AND/OR**
- Expertise in contemporary Welsh language writing in Wales (knowledge of Welsh essential to assess Welsh language applications)
  - Experience of and ability to read large number of manuscripts and write reports
  - Professional approach
  - Critical judgement

Knowledge of at least two of the following genres required:

- Poetry
- Prose
- Creative non-fiction
- Literary criticism
- Children's literature
- Young adult fiction

- Graphic novels

### Main responsibilities of Panel Members

- Assess and report on English and/or Welsh-language Bursary applications for Writers' Bursaries and the Mentoring Scheme
- Compile written reports on individual English and/or Welsh-language Bursary applications
- Assess and report on applications for the Literature Wales Mentoring Scheme
- **Panel Meeting** – all Panel members are expected to attend the annual meeting of the Bursaries Panel. The meeting is usually held in Cardiff during November.

**Length of service** – since formation of Literature Wales in 2011, and in accordance with other Literature Wales policies regarding committee and Panel membership, Bursaries Panel members, including the Chair, are appointed initially for a three-year term. This may be extended by a maximum of one further three-year term.

### **Relationship to Literature Wales Management Board**

The Bursaries Panel is independent of the Management Board, and the arm's length principle prevails. A list of successful Bursary recipients is reported to Literature Wales Board. Literature Wales Board cannot influence or overturn the Bursary Panel's decisions.

### **Fee**

A fee of £550 is paid for the Panel Members' assessment work. A contribution towards travel expenses for attendance at the annual Panel meeting is paid in addition to the fee.

### Assessment process for applications for main Writers' Bursaries Awards

#### **Sifting**

The Bursaries Panel Chair reads all applications received; sifts and selects applications for the Bursaries long list and for the Support Fund Bursaries.

#### **Longlisted applications**

Bursaries Panel Members (including the Chair) each receive c. 20-25 scripts (depending on number of Bursaries applications longlisted) for detailed assessment, and are required to write individual reports on these applications. Panel members present their reports for discussion at the annual Panel meeting. Applications are matched according to Panel Members' expertise. Bursary applicants may be given written feedback from the assessment reports, if requested, by the Writer Development Manager.

#### **Bursaries Panel Meeting**

**All Panel members are expected to attend the annual meeting of the Bursaries Panel.**

Every longlisted Bursary application is discussed by the Panel members at the meeting. The Bursaries Panel members decide on the awards to successful applicants, within the available budget. The total budget for Bursaries Awards in 2018-19 was £60,000 for Writers' Bursaries

and £1,000 for Support Fund Bursaries. The Bursaries Panel also awards places on the Mentoring Scheme.

The meeting is chaired by the Chair of the Bursaries Panel. Literature Wales are staff in attendance to provide information, record decisions and results. Literature Wales staff do not have any part in the decision-making process. The decisions are taken by the Bursaries Panel, and Literature Wales officers are responsible for administering the Bursary awards.

### Timeline for Assessment of 2020 Bursary and Mentoring Awards

- One round of applications for Writers' Bursaries and the Mentoring Scheme per annum.
- **Wednesday 10 July 2019** applications for 2020 Bursaries and Mentoring Scheme open.
- **5.00 pm Tuesday 10 September 2019** deadline for applications for 2020 Bursaries. Application period: 9 weeks.
- **Bursaries Panel assessment period:** October – November 2019
- Mid-October -Long-listed applications sent to Bursaries Panel members for assessment.
- Early November- Panel complete reading/assessment and submit reports on long listed applications
- Mid-November - Assessment reports on all longlisted applications (including translated reports) sent to panel members to read ahead of Panel meeting
- **w/b 18 November. Provisional date: Monday 18 November - 2019 Annual Bursaries Panel meeting**

### Assessment Criteria and Conditions of Grant for Main Bursary Awards

#### Scheme parameters

Writers' Bursaries are awarded annually, and can be awarded to writers at all stages of their careers. Certain awards are ring-fenced (see below) to specifically develop new and emerging writers. With the exception of the conditions noted below, the funding is not ring-fenced in terms of genre/category; each award is decided on its literary merit. The amounts are fixed sum awards at £3,000 per writer.

Bursaries are awarded first and foremost according to excellence. However, due to the competitive nature of the scheme, and limited funds available, applications which reach this standard may then be prioritised by the Bursaries Panel according to need.

Our focus will be on talent-spotting and developing early career writers – offering the right support at the right time; we will also enable and nurture a culture of risk-taking and artistic innovation.

Bursaries will no longer be means tested; however applicants will have to demonstrate

- a) the need for the Bursary award at this stage in their career,
- b) how the Bursary will enable them to concentrate on the specific work in progress.

c) how they intend to use the Bursary award, and provide a detailed budget of projected expenditure.

Eligible costs can include: buying time out from their day job, to concentrate on the work in progress; for travel and research costs associated with the work in progress; for childcare to free up writing time.

- Each bursary awarded will be a fixed sum of £3,000 per writer. A total of 20 bursaries awarded per year (total amount to be awarded is £60,000).
- In each year, 5 bursary awards will be ring-fenced for new/emerging writers (who have not previously published a volume of their own work).
- In each year, 1 bursary award will be ring-fenced for a writer under 25 years old.
- Applicants who have previously received a bursary cannot reapply for a minimum of 3 years (e.g. if an applicant receives a 2018 bursary, the earliest he/she can reapply will be for a 2022 bursary)
- No single applicant can receive more than 3 Literature Wales Writers' Bursaries awards in total (applicable from 2011 onwards).
- An applicant for a Writer's Bursary can also apply for a Support Fund Bursary at the same time, subject to eligibility for the Support Fund (see below).

### Application Process and Eligibility Criteria (Writer's Bursary Awards)

Applicants must complete a Bursary Application form and a sample of the work in progress for which the Bursary is sought has to be submitted with the application.

5 documents to be submitted (mandatory):

- 2020 Bursary Application form to be completed
  - A sample of the work in progress for which the Bursary funding is sought
  - A synopsis/summary of the work in progress (maximum 2 pages)
  - A professional writer's CV (maximum 2 pages) or writer's biography.
  - Equality and Diversity Monitoring Form
- Exact requirements noted in the guidelines for applicants.

### Application Process and Eligibility Criteria for Support Fund Bursary

**Support Fund Bursaries** are awarded to assist writers with limited mobility or disabilities, for capital expenditure or special assistance. Up to £1,000 may be awarded to one applicant, or smaller sums to several applicants.

**Support Fund Bursary Awards** are awarded annually and can be awarded to writers at all stages of their careers. Published writers and new/emerging writers are eligible to apply for a Support Fund Bursary. The Support Fund Bursary Awards enable a writer to concentrate on developing a specific work in progress, in one of the eligible genres, over a twelve-month

period. Literature Wales can also consider applications for assistance with other issues affecting writers with limited mobility or disabilities.

Applicants for the **Support Fund Bursary** may apply for any amount up to £1,000. (Support Fund Maximum award: £1,000). The Support Fund Bursary offered may be less than the sum applied for.

Applicants will have to submit a sample of the work in progress for which the Support Fund Bursary is sought with the application form. Applicants for the Support Fund will need to submit estimated costs for expenditure e.g. capital equipment, special assistance etc.

### Eligibility for Writers' Bursaries and Support Fund Bursary

- Applicants must be resident in Wales throughout the year. Applicants resident outside Wales, whose work in progress is in the Welsh language will also be eligible.
- Applicants who have previously received a bursary cannot reapply for a minimum of three years (e.g. if an applicant received a 2018 bursary, the earliest he/she can reapply will be for a 2022 bursary)
- No single applicant can receive more than 3 Literature Wales Writers' Bursaries awards in total (applicable from 2011 onwards)
- Geographical area is all Wales; and outside Wales only where applicant's work in progress is in the Welsh language.

## LITERATURE WALES MENTORING SCHEME

The **Literature Wales Mentoring Scheme** offers writers support and practical advice to develop a specific work in progress to a publishable standard. Places are awarded to new and emerging writers at the start of their writing career. The scheme includes a bespoke Mentoring Course at Tŷ Newydd Writing Centre, individual one-to-one mentoring sessions, as well as opportunities to network with representatives from the publishing industry.

Applications are administered by Literature Wales, and the Mentoring applications are assessed by the Bursaries Panel – an external peer panel. The Mentoring Scheme was extended in 2018 and can now support up to 10 early career writers per year. Early career writers can be of any age.

### Mentoring Scheme Parameters

- Mentoring places are available for new and emerging writers at the start of their writing career, for support and practical advice with a specific work in progress, in order to bring it up to publishable standard.
- 10 mentoring places are available in total per annum:
  - 6 mentees accepted onto the mentoring programme will also be current bursary recipients. 5 of these are emerging/unpublished writers (New Writer's Bursary recipients); 1 is a young bursary recipient under 25 (ring-fenced bursary awards).
  - 4 mentees are selected from an open application process for the mentoring scheme.
- Each mentee begins the mentoring period with a week-long tailored residential mentoring course in Tŷ Newydd. This will take place from 2-7 March 2020.
- The mentoring period for all mentees will last from February 2020 – January 2021 (12 months maximum).
- The residential course is followed by up to 3 individual mentoring sessions (face-to-face and/or Skype).
- The award of a place on the mentoring scheme (for the 4 non-bursary recipients) is based on merit and takes into account the effect of critical intervention at a key point in writer's career.
- Each direct applicant to the mentoring scheme (i.e. the 4 non-bursary recipients) will need to state clearly
  - How mentoring would enhance their development as a writer at this stage in their writing career
  - What measurable outcomes are expected as a result of the mentoring (3 key goals)

### Selection Process for Mentoring Scheme

- Applications for the mentoring scheme are assessed by the Literature Wales Bursaries Panel which consists of up to 6 members, including the Chair.

Please refer to **Appendix 1** for the list of current Panel members and their biographies.

- The Chair of the Bursaries Panel reads all mentoring applications received, and draws up a longlist. In addition, when assessing and sifting Bursary applications received, the Chair may also recommend some Bursary applications for one of the 4 additional mentoring places.
- All longlisted mentoring applications (direct mentoring applications, and bursary applications recommended by the Chair) are read and assessed by the Bursaries Panel, and discussed at the annual Bursaries Panel meeting.
- Decisions and names of applicants awarded mentoring places are recorded in the minutes of the Bursaries Panel's meeting.
- The Bursaries Panel are informed how many mentoring places are available on the scheme within the available budget, and award places to successful applicants. 10 places were awarded in 2019.
- There will be 10 places available on the 2020 Mentoring scheme. See selection criteria below.
- Literature Wales staff are in attendance at the Bursaries Panel meeting to provide information, record decisions and results. Literature Wales staff do not have any part in the decision-making process.

#### Selection criteria for Mentoring Scheme

- 6 current bursary recipients (5 emerging/unpublished bursary recipients and 1 young bursary recipient under 25 (ring-fenced bursary awards)) will automatically be accepted onto the mentoring programme.
- 4 mentees will be selected from an open application process for the mentoring scheme.

The Panel's decisions will be based on a balance of factors:

- The literary quality of the work submitted.
- The strength of the application in making the case for how mentoring would enhance the applicant's development as a writer at this stage in their career (3 key goals)
- The need to encourage a range and diversity of new writing in Wales.
- For direct applicants, the weight of recommendation from a recognised publisher or a professional creative writing tutor (e.g. Tŷ Newydd, Arvon, University lecturer etc.)
- Applications from potential self-publishers will not be eligible.

## About Literature Wales

Literature Wales is the national company for the development of literature. Our vision is a Wales where literature empowers, improves and brightens lives.

We are a registered charity, and work to inspire communities, develop writers and celebrate the literary culture of Wales. Literature Wales works in Welsh, English and bilingually across Wales. We have offices in Llanystumdwy and Cardiff. Our patron is Sir Philip Pullman.

We facilitate, fund and directly deliver a literary programme across Wales. All our activities are structured into three Activity Pillars. Concentrating on these three areas will help us to ensure that all of our work is clearly linked to our mission, and enable us to use our resources most effectively:

**Participation** – inspiring some of our most marginalised individuals and communities through active participation in literature.

**Writer Development** – developing the creative and professional potential of early career writers.

**Wales' Literary Culture** – celebrating our contemporary writers and the literary heritage of Wales.

All of the pillars are inter-linked, and much of our work will flow from one to another. Projects will not be developed in isolation, but will complement and enhance each other, with clear progression and development during the three years.

## Our Priorities

Based on our understanding of the power of literature to improve and transform lives, and the need to focus our activities where they will have greatest impact, we have identified three Tactical Priorities which will cross-cut all Activity Pillars. They are not types of activity but thematic priorities which will feature in everything we deliver, and in our partnership and facilitation work:

**Representation & Equality** – by ensuring representative inclusion throughout our activity and internal structures, we will provide platforms for, and encourage, under-represented literary voices; creating a national literary culture which represents contemporary Wales.

**Health & Well-being** – by supporting and advocating the various ways literature can contribute positively to the nation's health and well-being, we will improve the lives of people in Wales.

**Children & Young People** – by increasing accessibility to, and conveying the joy of creative writing and reading, we will make a significant contribution to the well-being of the future generations of Wales



## APPENDIX 1

## LITERATURE WALES BURSARIES PANEL

**Sioned Williams – Chair (from September 2016)**

Sioned Williams was brought up in the valleys of Gwent, but has since made her home in Alltwn in the Swansea Valley. A former journalist and producer with BBC Wales, she is now Communications and Development Manager at Academi Hywel Teifi, Swansea University. She co-manages Tŷ'r Gwrhyd, the Welsh Centre for the Swansea and Neath Valleys. As a commentator and arts critic, she broadcasts on Welsh language radio and television programmes and contributes reviews for the Welsh language magazines *Barn* and *Taliesin*. She has previously adjudicated the Daniel Owen Memorial Award and has judged the competition for the Crown at the Urdd National Eisteddfod.

**Catherine Phelps**

Catherine Phelps is a literary critic and editor. She is an early stage researcher and has taught English Literature at Cardiff University and the University of South Wales. Her main academic interests are Welsh writing in English and Crime Fiction. Her research interests also include Post-colonial literature and theory; Twentieth- and Twenty-first-century literature in English; Gothic literature; and Women's writing and feminist theory. Catherine's publications include a variety of academic essays and reviews.

**Malachy Doyle (\*until 31 March 2019)**

Malachy Doyle is a writer of children's books. His first teenage novel, *Georgie* (Bloomsbury), won the 2002 Tir na n-Og Award. His picture book *The Dancing Tiger* (Simon and Schuster) won the Smarties Silver Award in 2005, and *Cow* (Simon and Schuster) won the English Association Award (non-fiction) in 2002. Malachy lived in Wales for 23 years before returning to Ireland in 2007. He has had over 100 books published, his works have been translated into 26 languages, and he tutors regularly for Tŷ Newydd and the Arvon Foundation.

**Julia Forster (\*until 31 March 2019)**

Julia Forster has worked for nearly twenty years in the publishing industry across the UK. She now works in PR for the independent poetry publishers Nine Arches Press as well as working freelance as a mentor for novelists, running workshops on professional development for authors and also serving on the executive committee of Wales PEN Cymru. She worked for two years at the literary magazine *New Welsh Review* and volunteered on the editorial committee at Honno Welsh Women's Press. Her novel *What a Way to Go* was published by Atlantic Books in 2016 and she also published a work of non-fiction, *Muses*, in 2007. She received a K Blundell Trust Award from the Society of Authors in 2016 to fund research for her third book.

**Ceri Wyn Jones (\*until 31 March 2019)**

Ceri Wyn Jones hails from Cardigan. He won the Chair at the National Eisteddfod in 1997 and 2014, and the Crown at the 2009 National Eisteddfod. He took on the role of Bardd Plant Cymru (Welsh language Children's Poet Laureate) for a year, and continues to travel throughout Wales, and beyond, leading workshops, broadcasting and performing his work. His poems have been on the curriculum for GCSE, A-level examinations and undergraduate courses. His first volume of poetry *Dauwynebog* (Gomer) was on the short list for Book of the Year 2008. A former winner of the Tir na n-Og award, he was shortlisted for the same award again in 2016, in both Welsh and English-language categories. Having previously been editor of English-language books for adults at Gomer, he now works as a freelance author.