**Representing Wales:
Frequently Asked Questions**

If you have any questions about Representing Wales, please read through our FAQs below.

If you can’t see the answer to your question, feel free to get in touch for more information.

 **Application Process**

**How do I apply?**

To apply for a place on the **Representing Wales** programme, you’ll need to submit:

**1. A completed application form**

The application form will ask for your personal details, including details which will help us assess eligibility, and information about your career as a writer so far. We’ll also ask about your ambitions as a writer and why you believe the **Representing Wales** programme could help you at the current stage of your writing career.

**2. An example of your unpublished creative writing for children and/or young adults**

The application form will ask you to upload **one** of the following options:

-the **first chapter** of your fiction manuscript, that you wish to develop on this programme (max 4,000 words) along with a **synopsis** (max 500 words); **OR**

-**5-10 poems**, along with a **summary** of the complete collection, that you wish to develop on this programme (max 500 words); **OR**

-A **chapter of your creative non-fiction** manuscript, that you wish to develop in this programme (max 4,000 words) along with a **synopsis** (max 500 words) **OR**

- if your work in progress is a graphic novel, we suggest that you upload **a summary of the story (synopsis) with your application and email a sample of completed storyboard pages** (with text and illustration) to post@literaturewales.org or send via WeTransfer.

**Creative Writing Categories**

We welcome creative writing submissions aimed at children and young adults. This includes:

* Fiction
* Poetry
* Creative non-fiction
* Graphic novels

Work should be aimed at **one** of the following age categories:

* Children’s literature for ages 5 – 8 **OR**
* Middle grade for ages 8 – 13 **OR**
* Young adult for ages 14-18

**What is Creative Non-Fiction?**

We define creative non-fiction as a non-fictional narrative where the creativity of prose is central to the nature of the work. Types of literature which could fall under such criterion include:

* Memoirs
* Biographies
* Social history
* Travel writing

If you are unsure whether your creative work is eligible or not, please contact us on **post@literaturewales.org**to chat with a member of staff.

Please note that Picture Books are not eligible

(For further information, see General Enquiries below).

**Does my background need to feature in my creative work?**

No. Every writer should feel free to write about the topics and themes which inspire them. We are eager to receive manuscripts from a variety of genres and covering a diverse range of themes, locations, and topics.

 **What support is available during the application process?**

Literature Wales is committed to making the application process as easy as possible. Dyslexia friendly documents are available, and we will endeavour to meet all our applicants’ access requirements to the best of our ability.

Literature Wales will be hosting three online creative writing workshops in the run-up to the application deadline, offering creative support to applicants and a taste of what it would be like to take part in the programme. The free online sessions, will be as follows:

* Writing Poetry for Children with Alex Wharton,

Thursday 8 September 2022

7.30-9.00 pm

* Writing Young Adult Fiction with Emma Smith-Barton,

Tuesday 13 September 2022

7.30-9.00 pm

* Ysgrifennu ffuglen ar gyfer plant a phobl ifanc/ Writing fiction for children, with Angharad Tomos, (Welsh-language session). Thursday 15 September 2022

7.30-9.00 pm

Find out more and register for these events [here](https://www.literaturewales.org/whats-on/).

Members of the Literature Wales team will be on hand at the end of each session to offer guidance on the application process and answer any questions potential applicants might have.

**When is the closing date for applications for the 2023-24 Representing Wales Programme?**

The closing date for applications for the 2023-24 programme is:
 **5.00 pm Tuesday 25 October 2022**

**Eligibility**

**Who is eligible to apply?**

We are committed to helping create a literary culture that truly represents the variety and diversity of our population in Wales.

This year, we will be welcoming applications from Wales-based writers who come from under-represented backgrounds. We are particularly looking to support writers who identify as one or several of the following:

* From a low-income background

Our criteria for low-income background include individuals who were eligible for free school meals or whose parents were in low-paid jobs, unemployed, or receiving benefits (including disability allowances) when applicants were 14 years old. Raw socio-economic data (incl. SEC assessment and self-assessment) is collected from applicants to determine eligibility for this programme.

* Gypsy, Roma and/or Traveller communities
* Deaf and/or hard of hearing
* LGBTQ+
* Neurodiverse – this includes, but is not limited to: Autism, ADHD, Dyslexia, Dyspraxia, Tourette Syndrome and OCD.
* Person of colour
* Refugees and/or Asylum Seekers
* Writers with long-standing disabilities and/or health issues – i.e., has lasted or is expected to last at least 12 months and has an adverse effect on your ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

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We appreciate that there are other individuals and communities without adequate representation in the literature sector, and there will be writers who don’t identify with the categories above, so there will be an opportunity for applicants to explain in their own words why they believe they are eligible to apply. We are committed to helping create a literary culture that truly represents the variety and diversity of our population in Wales.

Applicants must be over the age of 18 and must be resident in Wales at the time of application and throughout the 12-month programme.

We regret that the programme is not open for students nor employees of Literature Wales and its funders.

 **Do I need previous experience to apply?**

No, only an example of your best **unpublished** creative writing for children or young people, that you would like to develop during the programme. We welcome applications from those new to the world of writing, or those who may have started on their journey and need support to reach the next level. The Assessment Panel will be looking at applicants’ potential, ambition, and originality.

 **Am I too experienced to apply?**

This opportunity is mainly for new, early career, and mid-career writers.

However, as a more experienced writer you might find that there are barriers which prevent you from reaching your full potential, or you might want to experiment with a different literary form or language. Everyone will have a different definition of what early or mid-career is, and where they believe themselves to be on their journey as a writer. If you are unsure if this is the right programme for you at this stage of your writing career, please get in touch to discuss your journey.

 **Is this opportunity for young writers only?**

This opportunity is for writers of all ages (over the age of 18) who are resident in Wales.

 **In what language will this programme be delivered?**

Representing Wales is a bilingual programme, and we welcome applications from Wales-based writers who write in Welsh and/or English. Writers who are new to writing in Welsh but who are interested in getting started are very welcome, as are writers who enjoy experimenting with both languages in their creative work.

All events will be delivered through the medium of English or Welsh, depending on the language preference of the cohort. Live interpretation will be on offer where required.

If you write creatively in any other language, we will try and assist by pairing you with a suitable Mentor who is also fluent in that language.

Please note that we can only assess creative writing examples submitted for the application process in Welsh or English. If you submit original creative work in another language, you will also need to submit a translation of the work into Welsh or English.

 **I’m a past recipient of Literature Wales Bursary or Mentoring schemes, can I apply?**

Yes, you can - we want the programme to be open to as many eligible writers as possible.

 **Why is the programme focusing on Children and Young Adult literature this year?**

The Representing Wales programme has been developed to address structural and historical inequalities and improve representation within the sector. The programme is designed in consultation with writers, communities and industry specialists and its focus is determined by independent research.

[Survey of Books for Children and Young People – Final Report](https://llyfrau.cymru/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Rosser_Report_-_Survey_of_Books_for_Children_and_Young_People_-_December_2017.pdf). (ed. Siwan M. Rosser) was published in 2017. The survey and report were commissioned by Books Council of Wales.

[CLPE’s Reflecting Realities](https://clpe.org.uk/research/clpe-reflecting-realities-survey-ethnic-representation-within-uk-childrens-literature-0) reports inform us that only 9% of the children’s books published in the UK over the last four years feature characters of colour.

On a similar note, [Book Trust Represents](https://cdn.booktrust.org.uk/globalassets/resources/research/booktrust_represents_2020_report.pdf) latest research tells us that in 2019, only 8.68% of children’s book creators were people of colour.

Although research is limited, we are aware that other voices are also under-represented within children's literature.

The books children read shape their view of themselves and of the world. The children and young people of Wales should be able to identify with the books they read and find role models in their favourite authors.

Achieving representation and equality is a long-term process and our commitment to this work as a priority is ongoing. Achieving a better ecosystem of under-represented voices who will inspire young readers will be a continued effort, but we’re committed to making systemic change.

 **Which Creative Writing Categories are eligible?**

We welcome creative writing submissions aimed at children and young adults. This includes

* fiction
* poetry
* creative non-fiction
* graphic novels

Work should be aimed at one of the following age categories:

* Children’s literature for ages 5 – 8; **OR**
* middle grade for ages 8 – 13, **OR**
* young adult for ages 14-18.

 **Why are you not accepting applications by authors of picture books?**

The Representing Wales programme aims to offer in-depth and focused support based on our decade of experience developing the writers of Wales. As a primarily visual medium, picture books fall outside Literature Wales’ remit.

If you write picture books and are looking for support opportunities, you may be interested in the [AllStories](https://www.allstories.org.uk/mentorships.html#FAQs) programme, which will be accepting picture books next year.

 **I’m also an illustrator, can I submit my illustrations?**

If you are submitting a graphic novel for children or young people, you will need to submit a synopsis and a few pages of a storyboard (text and illustration).

If you are submitting any other work for children or young people, we are sorry, but illustrations will **not** be accepted with your application.

If you are an illustrator, we suggest the [Pathways into Children’s Publishing programme.](https://pathways-org.com/)

You might also be interested in Tŷ Newydd’s [Writing and Illustrating for Children](https://www.tynewydd.wales/course/writing-and-illustrating-for-children/) course.

**The Assessment Process**

**How will my application be assessed?**

Your application will be assessed by an [independent panel of experts](https://www.literaturewales.org/our-projects/representing-wales/representing-wales-3-the-assessment-panel/) who will assess:

* The creative potential and quality of the writing submitted, as well as the originality and freshness of ideas and voice outlined in your work and synopsis.
* The suitability of this programme for you as a writer at this stage of your career

**Profile screening**

Every application will be checked by the Literature Wales team to ensure that the writer is eligible for the programme.

It would be helpful to the process if you could complete every section in the Application Form.

Please not the information provided here is confidential and will be used for internal assessment purposes only.

The Panel Chair will sift the eligible applications and select a shortlist for the Assessment Panel to consider.

The Assessment Panel will assess all shortlisted applications separately and award a mark to each applicant against set criteria looking at the potential and quality of your submitted creative writing excerpt and the idea outlined in your synopsis, as well as the suitability of this programme for the needs you have articulated.

Our remit as a bilingual, national organisation commits us to make sure that a range of writers can access our opportunities. The Assessment Panel may also consider linguistic and geographical balance, and representation when selecting applicants.

**Who are the Assessment Panel?**

The Assessment Panel is made up of a range of individuals who have expertise in children and young people’s literature, creative writing, the publishing industry in Wales and beyond, and/or professional writer development. Click [here](https://www.literaturewales.org/our-projects/representing-wales/representing-wales-3-the-assessment-panel/) for more information about the Assessment panel.

**How many places will be available on the 2023-24 Representing Wales programme?**

There are **13** places available on the 2023-24 Representing Wales programme.

**If I am unsuccessful, will I receive feedback?**

As we are expecting a lot of applications, we may not be able to provide detailed feedback on each applicant. However, where possible we will provide a short, personalised line of feedback, and advise on other opportunities Literature Wales and partners may have available.

We are aware that correspondence regarding unsuccessful applications can have a negative impact on your health and well-being. We give our pledge to respect and value each individual application, giving it due consideration and attention.

All applicants will be invited to an online session in April 2023.

A small team of Literature Wales staff members will have access to your submitted creative work. In line with our talent-scouting and signposting strategy, we may get in touch in the future with personalised opportunities, based on your work and your expertise.

To enable Literature Wales to comply with data protection law (GDPR), please complete the relevant section at the end of the application form to let us know if you don’t want to be contacted by Literature Wales about offers in the future.

 **When will I hear if my application for the 2023-24 Professional Development Programme has been successful?**

All applicants will be informed of the Assessment Panel’s decision by early February 2023.

 **The Programme**

**What is Representing Wales?**

Representing Wales is a 12-month programme which aims to help writers achieve their long-term ambitions. Each year, we provide a bespoke development programme to writers who are under-represented in Wales’ literary culture.

The first edition of the Representing Wales programme focused on Writers of Colour. The second edition of the Representing Wales programme is focusing on individuals from low-income backgrounds. The upcoming round of the programme will be open to writers who come from an under-represented backgrounds and who write for children and young people.

The successful cohort will take part in:

* 12 workshops on professional development
* 6 writing rooms to share and critique creative work
* 4 masterclasses on writing techniques and
* Every writer in the cohort will receive one-to-one mentoring sessions throughout the duration of the programme.

They will also attend occasional events and activities to network and engage with the sector in Wales and beyond.

Representing Wales development programme for writers is funded by the National Lottery through the Arts Council of Wales.

 **How much of my time do I need to use for the programme? Can I apply if I have employment and/or caring responsibilities?**

Absolutely. We will work alongside the cohort to identify convenient times and dates for all.

Most of the activities will be delivered virtually in the evenings or weekends. All sessions are recorded and shared in confidence with the cohort.

We’ll expect every member of the cohort to attend all events, but if something urgent prevents a writer from attending, these recordings will be available to watch later.

The team at Literature Wales are always on hand to support the writers and help ensure that all members of the cohort benefit from the programme.

We estimate that we will organise activities and set tasks that will require between **10-13 whole days** of your time during the year, but many of these events will be scheduled to avoid interfering with office hours.

It’s up to you how many extra hours you will then be able to allocate towards developing your own writing projects during the year.

**When will the programme take place? Do you have more details and dates for events?**

The Programme will take place over 12 months from the beginning of March 2023 until the end of February 2024.

At least one event per month will take place.

Programme participants will schedule one-to-one sessions with their personal Mentor to meet face-to-face (where safe to do so) or virtually.

 **What will happen after the programme ends?**

After the 12-month programme, we will continue to offer support to the cohort by checking in, offering advice, and inviting the writers to further networking and training opportunities. This is a long-term investment in the writers’ development.

 **Will I be required to travel for events?**

Most of the programme’s core activity (e.g., workshops, writing rooms) will be delivered online to ensure everybody can attend, regardless of their location.

The programme will also include two residential weekend masterclasses at Tŷ Newydd Writing Centre – our national writing centre.

You’ll have access to a ticket budget to spend on travel to Tŷ Newydd, and on tickets for additional courses, literary events and festivals of your choice.

 **I have a disability or an illness that might make it difficult to take part, can you help?**

Of course. The Literature Wales team are available to discuss any concerns and requirements before and throughout the programme. Please get in touch with us. An Access Fund is available to enable full participation in events for writers with disabilities or illnesses who may have additional access requirements.

For information about the accessibility of Tŷ Newydd Writing Centre, [please click here](http://www.tynewydd.wales/the-house/access/).

 **Will I be required to submit a finished piece of work at the end of the 12-months?**

We will work with you to set achievable goals at the beginning of the programme, and help you achieve them. One of your aims should be related to developing your current work in progress during the programme.

The monthly writing rooms will give you the chance to share your work with the cohort and you may wish to use these informal meetings as a personal goal to produce work each month.

There will also be an opportunity to check in and catch up with a Literature Wales staff member each quarter, to discuss your progress.

 **General Enquiries**

**I am not eligible for this opportunity, but I am interested in developing my career as a writer. How can you help?**

Our [website](https://www.literaturewales.org/) provides information about the opportunities we have available to help writers develop their craft and careers. Alternatively, please contact us to discuss your individual needs. Where possible, we will signpost writers to other opportunities within the literature sector.

**Are Literature Wales’ Bursaries for Writers and Mentoring Scheme running this year?**

We want the literary culture of Wales to truly represent the diversity of our population. We will continue our focus on developing and platforming people who are under-represented and who have experienced historical and structural inequalities, racism, ableism, and discrimination.

We have adopted a proactive approach to creating change within the sector. During 2020 we revised and remodelled our Bursaries and Mentoring Scheme to develop Representing Wales, our new 12-month writer development programme which includes a financial award and mentoring sessions.

Our Representing Wales programme is an important development for Literature Wales, as we aim to diversify Wales’ literary landscape and help ensure fair and equal access to the sector.

Achieving equality and a better ecosystem of under-represented voices who will inspire others is a long-term process, but we’re focusing our efforts on making systemic change and our commitment to this work as a priority will be ongoing.