



An Essential Guide
by Literature Wales

The Writers of Wales Directory – how to write a good biography

The Writers of Wales Directory is an online resource featuring profiles of the writers and creative writing facilitators of Wales. The profiles are created and updated by the individuals themselves, in their chosen language (English or Welsh). This guide will help you determine the best way to write a clear, concise and memorable author's bio for your profile on the Writers of Wales Directory.

What is an author biography?

An author biography provides a quick and concise overview of you and your writing, your professional experience and highlights of your career as a writer so far. Your biography may be the first thing someone sees about you.

You're likely to need an author bio when you submit to an agent or publisher, publish a story in a magazine, publish a book, or when you receive an award, so it's well worth taking the time to craft a good one.

Even for experienced writers, an author's biography can be difficult to write. What should you include? How much detail is appropriate?

Write in the third person

Write in third person. It makes you sound more professional. For example, instead of, "I've published stories in...", consider writing "Jane Jones has published stories in..."

Use clear and simple language

You need to clearly communicate who you are and what you do in simple terms. Write it, then strip it back. Then simplify it again.

Proofread your copy

Don't forget to check and proofread your copy before submitting. Make use of online grammar and spell-checking services.

How long should the biography be?

Biographies can range in length depending on its purpose (e.g. submission for an agent or publisher, press pack for a news release etc). For the Writers of Wales

Directory, we recommend **200 – 300 words**. The reader wants a snapshot of you and your work.

What to include

To begin, write down the key facts about yourself as a writer. These are essential things to communicate to those who don't know you. Start with your name, where you are based (be as specific as you're comfortable to be – see **Only include information that you are comfortable sharing** below), and your main area of expertise (e.g. poetry, fiction, creative non-fiction, writing for children and young people).

Awards and Prizes

It's important to include information about any awards or prizes you have won, or any notable longlists and shortlists you've reached. List publications, projects, residencies, or creative workshops that you have run or can offer, and anything you've been doing that potential readers, publishers or event organizers might be interested in. e.g. if any of your books were shortlisted or won the Wales Book of the Year Award.

If you're an early career writer then you should include your most significant published material to date, which could be work that's appeared in magazines or a pamphlet-length publications. You could also include information about your current work in progress.

Not all author bios will be the same. The combination of elements that make you the author you are will be unique to you. That's the story a reader, publisher, editor or event organizer will want to read.

Only include information that you are comfortable sharing

In the narrative in your biography, you can decide how specific or vague you wish to be. Each profile has a regional area tag which will help schools, libraries, arts organisations and community groups who are searching for authors in their local area, to book for events or creative writing workshops. You can decide if you want to reveal more in the narrative e.g. noting the county or the city where you live.

Examples of the most specific to most vague:

"She lives in Carmarthen with her partner and children."

"She lives in Carmarthenshire with her family."

"She lives in West Wales."

Update your profile regularly

Try not to use phrases that could quickly become outdated. For example, instead of saying "In 2025 she tutored a fiction course at Tŷ Newydd Writing Centre", try "She recently tutored a fiction course at Tŷ Newydd Writing Centre".

If you include forthcoming publications or current activity, remember to update your profile after your book has been published, noting title, publisher etc. e.g. If you note "Is currently writer in residence at...", remember to update your profile afterwards.

Example: `John was writer in residence in [location] during 2024-2025` instead of `John is currently writer in residence.`

Writers of Wales Directory Tags

The Writers of Wales Directory can be filtered by name, genre, geographic region, and language.

Before submitting your profile, please remember to tick any relevant tags for the genres in which you write.

It's also important to ensure that you have selected the relevant location (e.g. north-east), so that users searching for writers in a specific area of Wales can find you.

This enables users such as event organisers, festival organisers, and publishers who search by category to view selected profiles which include the relevant tag. E.g., if a user searches for 'poetry' only the profiles of writers who have ticked this category will appear in the search results.

Literature Wales will add any relevant tags for writers we have worked with, e.g. shortlisted for Wales Book of the Year, Literature Wales Mentor, Tŷ Newydd Course Tutor, Representing Wales recipient etc.

Links to your social media profiles

You can add links to your website, Instagram, Facebook or LinkedIn profile.

Profile image

We encourage writers to include a recent hi-res photo of themselves which can be added to the profile. Briefly, pictures should be in 'landscape format' and less than 1MB in size.

The quality of an image could make a difference; think about investing in a professional profile photo.

If you have any questions regarding creating your profile please contact us on post@literaturewales.org

Resource content by Literature Wales