



Writers in the Schools (WITS) Writer-in-Residence Position Posting (2022-23 School Year)

Position Description: Writers in the Schools (WITS), a literary arts education program of Seattle Arts & Lectures (SAL), places professional local writers in public schools throughout the Puget Sound region, as well as Seattle Children’s Hospital, for extended creative writing residencies during the school day. WITS empowers young people to discover and develop their authentic writing and performance voices as they build skills and self-confidence. Through WITS, students become the authors of their own lives. We believe each student can thrive when developing the social-emotional tools that writing provides.



For the coming 2022-23 school year, WITS is hiring a paid Writer-in-Residence—a practicing writer in the community—who will work as an independent teaching artist in a creative writing residency in a public school K-12 classroom. We are looking for poets, prose writers, playwrights, and cartoonists / graphic novelists, and for writers who can bring varied interests, passions, and play to a classroom. WITS Writers collaborate directly with public school teachers to create environments that foster a sense of inquiry, creativity, and inclusion.

We especially encourage Black writers, Indigenous writers, writers of color, writers from the LGBTQ+ community, bilingual writers, and writers from interdisciplinary backgrounds to apply. WITS Writers must show a demonstrated commitment to anti-racist pedagogy and practice.



WITS Staff will work with the WITS Writer to make a school placement in an elementary, middle, or high school that is compatible with their schedule. We do the majority of our hiring and placements during the fall, but anticipate some residencies to still be determined as the year progresses. School placements vary and may be either extended weekly residencies, or take place over a shorter window of time, as a multi-day per-week intensive.

Writers in the Schools (WITS) has three primary goals:

- Inspire students to engage in the writing process, build social emotional learning skills, increase their self-confidence, and find joy and belonging.
- Invigorate the teaching of writing by providing teachers with innovative lessons and literature, fresh techniques, and the time and encouragement to join their students in writing.

- Support and sustain a positive culture of reading and writing at each school.
 - *Learn more about the program and current WITS Writers at: lectures.org/youth-programs/wits/*

Required Qualifications:

- A demonstrated commitment to anti-racist pedagogy, disability justice and access, social-emotional learning, and a vested interest in making classrooms a space for joy and belonging for all students; WITS Writers should have a student-centered approach.
- 1-2 years of teaching or mentoring experience with elementary, middle, or high school students.
- Desire, ability, and flexibility to collaborate with public school teachers.
- Reliability in all scheduled time in schools.
- Excellent written and oral communication skills and a willingness to grow, learn, and adapt.
- A sense of humor, flexibility, and responsiveness to differing student needs within a public school classroom setting.
- Positive attitude; friendly and respectful manner when working with students, WITS Writers, staff, teachers, and other school partners.
- Outstanding organizational skills and meticulous attention to detail.
- Established record of community engagement (e.g. through record of publications, performances, or other community events). WITS Writers actively work on their own writing and are eager participants in the Seattle literary community.
- Availability to complete every session of a scheduled residency—either throughout the academic year or in an intensive, 1-2 week multi-day session (October – June). All placements to be determined in coordination with WITS Staff.

Desired Qualifications:

- Bilingual
- Experience with English Language learners or Special Education students

Expectations:

- Guide students through exciting and innovative creative writing lessons.
- Provide regular (at least 2x per residency) written feedback to your students on their writing, depending on appropriate developmental stage (elementary, middle, high).
- Attend a half-day Writers Retreat (*September 15, 12:30-4:30 p.m.*).
- Attend Writer Cohort Meetings (4 over the course of the school year).
- Attend a residency planning meeting with WITS Staff and Classroom Teacher(s) at the beginning of each residency.
- Prepare and circulate to teachers and WITS Staff an abbreviated syllabus, taking into account your classroom teachers' curriculum and goals (knowing things might change!).
- Be observed by WITS Staff 1-2x throughout the year, and participate in one-on-one debrief sessions.
- Collect student permissions and excellent student work throughout the year and submit to WITS Staff on deadline for online and print publications.
- Coordinate end-of-residency culminating events for your classes.
- Choose and champion Year-End Reader students for an annual student reading in May.
- Complete an annual self-evaluation and review with WITS Staff at the end of the year.
- Maintain confidentiality about all student work.
- Actively participate in WITS Writer Cohort events (e.g. Writer Potluck lesson sharing, Local Voices readings, and other celebrations throughout the year); have a vested interest in building community among WITS Writers.

Compensation & Opportunities:

- Compensation for a full residency (approximately 84 teaching hours, but varies) starts at \$90 per contracted teaching hour. This rate assumes outside-of-class time spent on preparation and feedback.
- Writers are paid in monthly installments. Partial or greater residencies are scaled accordingly.
- Free tickets to all SAL events in the 2022-23 Season (lectures.org/events).
- Some funds are available for ongoing professional development; other professional development is provided by WITS for free throughout the year.

Reports to: Director of Youth Programs

Application Deadline: Monday, August 15th, 2022

Please submit:

1. A cover letter.
2. A resume.
3. Names, phone numbers, and email addresses for three professional references, at least one of whom should be familiar with your teaching.
4. One page describing (3) specific writing goals you would have for a WITS residency, and why these goals feel essential to you.
5. An idea for a pairing of a mentor text (a poem, one-page work of prose, or comic by a writer you admire) and a suggested writing prompt inspired by that piece.
 - Optional: a 1-page creative or work-related writing sample of one's own writing.

***Application guidelines:** please save all materials as **one pdf document**, and label:

Firstname.Lastname_WITS2022-23

Include: **WITS 2022-23 Application** as the email subject line

Send application materials to: wits@lectures.org

Hiring Timeline & Process

- Applications due: Monday, August 15th, 2022
- Phone interviews: August 22nd – August 26th
- In-person interviews: August 29th – September 1st
- Writer retreat (*attendance required*):
 - Thursday, September 15th, 12:30 - 4:30 p.m. at the Frye Museum