



Writers in the Schools (WITS) Writer-in-Residence Position Posting (2024-25 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 K-12 schools throughout the Puget Sound region, as well as Seattle Children’s Hospital, for extended creative writing residencies during the school day. Last year, we partnered with 36 public schools. WITS strives to empower young people to discover and develop their authentic writing and performance voices. Through WITS, students become the authors of their own lives.



For the coming 2024-25 school year, we are hiring 1-2 WITS Writers—practicing writers in the community—to join our cohort of literary teaching artists and work within our partner schools’ classrooms. We welcome applications from writers of diverse mediums; we are looking for poets, prose writers, playwrights, cartoonists/ graphic novelists, and memoirists. 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.

SAL’s youth programs staff will work with WITS Writers to place them 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 four primary goals:

- Inspire students to engage in the writing process, build writing skills, and increase self-confidence
- Bring a race and equity lens to the teaching of creative writing with the goal of cultivating a sense of belonging for all, while centering students most impacted by structural racism
- Build a positive learning community that amplifies and celebrates student voices.
- Support teachers and students by providing opportunities for meaningful connection with local writers

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.
- At least 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.
- 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, meticulous attention to detail, and a high degree of reliability.
- 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 (especially Spanish, Amharic, Arabic, Vietnamese, Mandarin)
- Experience with Multilingual Learners or Special Education students

Expectations:

- Guide students through exciting and innovative creative writing lessons.
- Provide written feedback to your students at least once per residency.
- Attend a half-day Fall Writers Retreat (*September 11, 9:30am-12:30pm*).
- Attend paid (\$25/hour) 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.
- Responsiveness to communication from partner teacher(s) and SAL staff.
- Coordinate end-of-residency culminating events for your classes.
- Choose and champion Year-End Reader students for an annual student reading in early June.
- 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, public readings, and other celebrations throughout the year); have a vested interest in building community among WITS Writers.

Compensation & Opportunities:

- Compensation for in-class teaching time begins at \$90 per contracted teaching hour. This rate assumes outside-of-class time spent on preparation and feedback. Compensation for administrative meetings is \$25/hour.
- Writers are paid in monthly installments. Partial or greater residencies are scaled accordingly.
- Free tickets to all SAL events in the 2023-24 Season (lectures.org/events).
- Participation in a 3-night, collective writers residency at Rockland Woods in the fall of 2024.
- A \$150 professional development stipend that can be put towards observing other WITS writers or other mutually determined things.

Reports to: WITS Program Manager

Application Deadline: July 26, 2024 at 9pm

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. Your general availability/schedule for the upcoming school year
 6. 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.
- **Note:** Please save all application materials as one PDF and label it
Firstname.Lastname_WITS2024-25

Send application materials to: wits@lectures.org, subject line: WITS 2024-25 Application

Hiring Timeline & Process

- Applications due: July 26, 2024
- In-person interviews: August 5-14
- Writer retreat (*attendance required*):
 - Wednesday, September 11 from 9:30am-12:30pm