

Don Bank Museum Writer in Residence

Program Guidelines 2025



Penguin
Random House
Australia

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Background

North Sydney Council offers writers a unique opportunity to pursue their inspiration in the tranquil and historic Don Bank Museum, a heritage building in a garden setting located in the heart of North Sydney CBD.

The aim of this program is to support writers at all stages of their career and enhance the cultural enrichment and vitality of the North Sydney community.

North Sydney Council invites writers of poetry, fiction, non-fiction, memoir and plays to apply for this wonderful opportunity to complete a creative project in the Don Bank Writer's studio whilst contributing to the cultural life of the North Sydney community.

Eligibility requirements

Who can apply?

- This program is open to individuals or groups from Metropolitan Sydney
- Writers at any stage of their career i.e emerging, mid-career and established writers are encouraged to apply
- All types and genres of storytelling will be considered, including writers of fiction, non-fiction, poetry, children's literature, memoir, script and screenwriting for stage and film
- North Sydney Council encourages applications from local writers who are members of culturally and linguistically diverse, LGBTQI+ communities and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

What is offered by Council

Council will support writers in their creative pursuits by providing a low-cost working space in the historic Don Bank Museum.

Nestled in a tranquil garden in the heart of North Sydney's CBD, Don Bank Museum offers a peaceful retreat from the surrounding hustle. As part of the residency, the writer will have exclusive use of a dedicated studio within the heritage house.

The studio offers a comfortable office setup with Wi-Fi, fully equipped kitchen and bathroom as well as outdoor space and access to a veranda with leafy garden views.

The successful writer will benefit from:

- a one-hour consultation with a publisher from Penguin Random House
- opportunities to contribute to North Sydney's cultural life through writing workshops
- networking with the local writing community and Council's Arts and Events initiatives
- access to Stanton Library's collections and services.

What is required of the successful applicant

The successful applicant will be required to contribute to Stanton Library's schedule of public programs by delivering two workshops or activities that promote writing, conversation, and creative engagement.

Some suggestions include:

- A public presentation of their work at the end of their residency
- Writing or storytelling workshops and tutorials
- Author talks or readings at Stanton Library or a Council-delivered cultural event
- Participation as a judge in Stanton Library's writing competitions.

The successful writer will be required to sign a license agreement with Council for the duration of the residency and pay a \$500 bond to be returned upon completion.

Application process

Applications must be submitted online via North Sydney Council's online application portal. No printed applications will be accepted. Applicants may submit a maximum of one entry.

Residency dates

The residency will be for a six-month term.

Applications open	1 February 2025
Applications close	14 April 2025
Result notification	May 2025
Residency period	August 2025 – February 2026

All applicants are encouraged to read the guidelines thoroughly before applying.

Applications are to be submitted online via Council's website:

www.northsydney.nsw.gov.au/writer-in-residence



Applicants are asked to submit

- A summary (500 words or less) of your creative project and how a residency in the Don Bank Museum Writer’s Studio in North Sydney would benefit your writing practice.
- A proposal (250 words or less) of two community engagement activities or workshop ideas that you would be interested in facilitating as part of Stanton Library’s schedule of public programs.
- A selection of published or unpublished work; minimum 20 pages of fiction or non-fiction (including theatre or film scripts), or 6 poems.
- A single page biography outlining their writing experience and CV, with two referees included.

Proof of identity will be required from the successful applicant only.

Selection process

Council is committed to ensuring that the assessment of all applications is coordinated in a fair and transparent manner. The selection process will therefore be as follows:

- An officer from the Arts, Library and Events team will assess and shortlist eligible applications
- Applications will be considered by a panel consisting of two members of the Arts, Library and Events team and one industry professional
- A report from the panel with recommendations will be made for final endorsement
- Applicants must meet the selection criteria below. Unpublished work may be submitted and can include works in progress.

Assessment criteria

Council is interested in applications that illustrate how a residency might directly benefit the author’s writing, as well as enriching the North Sydney community.

Each application will be assessed and scored by the assessment panel according to the below criteria:

Assessment Criteria	Score	%
Professional benefit: Demonstrated benefit and impact of the residency for the applicant’s professional development.	Out of 10	20
Artistic merit: Based on examples of previous work and proposed project	Out of 10	20
Capacity: Achievability of the residency, ability to demonstrate planning, development and delivery of the project as links to an existing project or publisher.	Out of 10	20
Community benefit: How the project will benefit the Community and suitability of programs proposed (audience, subject, method of delivery, etc.)	Out of 10	20
Alignment: Alignment of proposed programs and writing project with Library and Historical Services Strategy outcomes (see next page).	Out of 10	20
Total	Out of 50	100

Library and Historical Services Strategy

The full Library and Historical Services Strategy can be found on the North Sydney Council website.

Elements of the strategy which may be relevant to applicants for the Writer in Residence program include:

- Initiatives that demonstrate the Library's commitment to diversity, cultural safety, access and inclusion.
- Programs that support literacy, writing and literary engagement for all ages and abilities.
- Sharing stories of North Sydney's history and people.
- Programs that connect the community to the rich history of the local area.
- Programs that encourage increased participation and build new audiences for Library activities.
- Programs to support cultural celebrations and festivals in the community.
- Activities to support wellbeing, mental health and community connection.

Further information

For more information or if you would like to discuss your ideas or application, please contact Amanda Hudson, Community Development Librarian on 9936 8425 or amanda.hudson@northsydney.nsw.gov.au

