



Kentucky
Foundation for Women

KFW Writers Prize Guidelines

Overview

The KFW Writers Prize, established through a generous gift from the Kentucky Women Writers Conference, honors Kentucky women writers whose work demonstrates artistic excellence, aligns with feminist values, and advances social change through literature. This award continues the shared vision of KFW and the Kentucky Women Writers Conference to support women and marginalized voices in the literary arts, center feminist perspectives, and amplify voices that challenge oppression.

Each year, three writers will be awarded \$1,000 each.

Genre Rotation

Each year will highlight a different literary genre: poetry, fiction, and creative nonfiction. The selected genre for the upcoming award cycle will be announced on KFW Day.

The current cycle is for **POETRY**.

Eligibility

- Open to women and gender non-conforming writers age 18 and older.
- Must be a Kentucky resident at time of application.
- Submitted work may be previously published or unpublished, but published work must be from within the last five years.
- Current KFW staff and board members are not eligible.
- Current and former students of the final judge are not eligible to enter. A “former student” is defined as anyone who has completed a semester-long creative writing course taught by the judge at any educational institution.
- Previous KFW Writers Prize recipients are ineligible to apply.
- This is an individual award. We do not fund groups for the KFW Writers Prize.
- The following categories are ineligible: film, video, theatre, dance, music, performance projects, scripts, and musical compositions.
- We do not award work that is generated by AI.

Application Period

- Applications open: KFW Day - September 28, 2025
- Deadline: October 31, 2025, 5 pm ET / 4 pm CT



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Application Materials

- Completed online application form
- A writing sample:
 - Poetry: 10–15 poems (up to 20 pages) in **one file**
 - **No identifying information should appear on the writing sample!**
- A brief bio (150 words)

Selection Criteria

The prize recognizes writers whose work:

- Centers feminist perspectives, amplifying voices, stories, or ideas that challenge oppression and uplift marginalized communities.
- Demonstrates artistic excellence, craft, originality, and innovation.
- Contributes to positive social change, through content, community engagement, or the work's impact.

Selection Process

- Applications will be reviewed by a panel of 3 reviewers with relevant expertise in the cycle's genre.
- A final judge will select three recipients from the reviewers' shortlist.
- All reviewers and judges must adhere to a clear conflict-of-interest policy and recuse themselves where appropriate.

Award Notification Timeline

- Application open for one month.
- Application review by reviewers: Completed within 3 weeks of the application deadline.
- Final judging: Completed within 1 month after shortlist reviewer recommendations are submitted.
- Recipients notified shortly thereafter and publicly announced by KFW.

Award Expectations

- Awardees will be invited to give a reading either at KFW Day or as part of a KFW-hosted event within the following year.
- Each awardee must submit a brief reflection within 12 months describing the impact of the award on their writing and feminist work.