



# City of El Segundo Arts & Culture Advisory Committee

## August 2021

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### CALL FOR ARTISTS

### EL SEGUNDO CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

### SEEKS POET LAUREATE



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**I. INTRODUCTION**

The City of El Segundo Cultural Development Program seeks applications from interested and qualified Artists to provide literary art services for its Poet Laureate initiative. The Artist selected through this competitive selection process would become El Segundo’s first Poet Laureate.

Funding for the Poet Laureate is provided by the El Segundo Cultural Development Program Fund. The City’s Arts and Cultural Development Program staff will administer the Artist selection process and oversee the Artist during the two-year Poet Laureate term. The objective of this program is to promote the literary arts and encourage greater literary awareness by the public. The program seeks to engage diverse voices and perspectives in shaping and furthering the literary arts, culture, and creative expression.

**II. BACKGROUND**

The City of El Segundo, known as the “Aerospace Capital of the World,” is a coastline community in the South Bay region of Los Angeles County. The City, coined by Standard Oil Company for its second oil refinery in California, was incorporated on January 18, 1917. El Segundo, 5.46 square miles in area and with a current population of 16,504, is renowned for maintaining a quaint, small town atmosphere as well as a thriving business environment that caters to some of the world’s most prestigious entities. It is home to the Los Angeles Lakers, Los Angeles Kings, Raytheon Technologies, Boeing, Los Angeles Air Force Base, Mattel, Beyond Meat, and Los Angeles Times.

The mission of the El Segundo Cultural Development Program (ESCDP) is to expand the City’s artistic, cultural, and creative resources by enhancing the environment and quality of life. The intent is to achieve high-quality and site-specific artwork and art experiences, increase public access to the arts, encourage civic engagement, help drive tourism and revenue to local businesses, contribute towards realizing cultural equity and inclusion, create opportunities for artists and art organizations in the region, and to transform people, places and communities. For more information, visit <https://www.elsegundolibrary.org/about-us/cultural-development-program-268521>.

The El Segundo Cultural Development Program works with established and emerging artists from all disciplines to create permanent artwork, creative place keeping projects, public engagement activities, temporary art exhibitions and event-based programming.

**III. PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND SCOPE OF SERVICES**

The selected Artist will become the City’s first Poet Laureate, serving as a liaison, advocate, and leader for poetry, spoken word, and the literary arts. The Poet Laureate will leverage their artistic excellence and literary achievements to inspire El Segundo’s diverse residents to have a greater appreciation of the literary arts. The Poet Laureate is expected to create engaging and conceptually driven, original works stimulated by and in response to the local communities, and cultivate critical thinking, connection, and appreciation of the literary arts through public readings, in-person literary workshops, and civic events.

The Artist’s responsibilities include the following, but are not limited to:

- promote the literary arts, particularly poetry, as an art form

- increase the accessibility of the art form to residents in their everyday lives
- mentor the City’s next generation of poets and writers (possibly the ESUSD students)
- speak at school assemblies
- read original writing aloud at city-wide public events
- lead writing workshops for community stakeholders at local cultural venues (e.g. El Segundo Public Library, Park Vista, Joslyn Center, El Segundo Museum of Art, etc.)
- explore the City and get to know the community
- compose at least one commemorative poem about El Segundo
- partner with the Library and Historical Committee to tell the City’s stories
- write prose celebrating the City’s geography, cultures, and histories
- collaborate with the Arts and Culture Advisory Committee (ACC) and City staff to create in-person opportunities to encourage interest and excitement about poetry, literacy, literary events, and related subjects, etc.

The position will last two years from the time of contract completion. A Poet Laureate may not serve more than one full term (January 2022 to December 2023).

#### **IV. ARTIST STIPEND**

To honor the Poet Laureate’s accomplishments, the El Segundo Cultural Development Program will award the Poet Laureate a stipend of \$8,000 total (\$4,000 per year of the two-year term). The stipend is all-inclusive and must cover all costs associated with the Scope of Services, including all travel expenses.

#### **V. ELIGIBILITY**

Only one application per Artist will be accepted.

An eligible applicant must:

- Live or work in Los Angeles County and be authorized to work in the United States.
- Be 18 years of age or older. No preference will be given to race, color, religion, national origin, gender, military status, sexual orientation, marital status, physical or mental disability.
- Have a demonstrated history of community involvement.
- Have the ability to engage the public.

#### **ELIGIBILITY RESTRICTIONS**

Individuals with conflicts of interest are not eligible for contract award under this solicitation. Elected officials, commissioners, board members, committee members, agents, officers, and employees of the City of El Segundo and their business partners and their immediate family members are not eligible for a contract award under this RFP.

#### **VI. APPLICATION SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS**

**Required Submission Materials (Letter of Interest, Résumé, Samples of Past Work, & References in one MERGED PDF format document):**

1. Letter of Interest shall include full contact information and contain information for the selection panel that may not be conveyed through the resume or work samples.

Submit a written narrative (**1000 words maximum**). Please consider the following questions when writing your Letter of Interest:

- Why are you interested in serving as Poet Laureate?

- Describe your passion for the literary arts and comprehension of the project.
  - How do you see the Poet Laureate’s relationship to El Segundo?
  - Explain your methodology/approach for conceptualizing and creating art.
  - What do you envision doing during your tenure, and how does this vision align with the program goals?
  - How will you inspire and engage El Segundo’s unique public?
2. Professional Résumé or Curriculum Vitae. The résumé may include literary activities and achievements such as, publication history, awards, performances and readings, past public poetry projects and education.
  3. A maximum of FIVE original poems and/or videos of original performed spoken word may be included. [Please note: that’s NOT 5 poems and 5 videos for a total of 10 examples. Submit a maximum of 5 total examples]. Any videos as work samples shall be accessible to the selection committee via weblink(s). Applicant must provide an annotated and detailed work sample list and/or a list of weblinks with an annotated description of each performance as an additional document in the PDF format.
  4. References. Submit the names, addresses, current telephone numbers and/or email addresses for three authorities on your work. Do not submit letters of recommendation. We do call references, so please double-check to ensure that the contact information for your references is correct.

**Submission materials must be submitted as one MERGED PDF format document. Submittal is due no later than 4:00pm, Friday, September 17, 2021. Please email submission to Cultural Arts Coordinator Sam Lee at [slee3@elsegundo.org](mailto:slee3@elsegundo.org). Any submissions received after the deadline will be rejected and not considered.**

## **VII. SELECTION CRITERIA**

A panel of three members, comprised of community members and literary art experts selected by the ESCDP staff, will convene to review the Poet Laureate applications. The selection panel will recommend a finalist as well as an alternate to the full Arts & Culture Advisory Committee.

Each application will be reviewed for aesthetic quality, community involvement, and capacity for public engagement in the literary arts, all weighted approximately equal.

### Aesthetic Quality

- Do the written or recorded work samples convey strong aesthetic merit?
- Are the works consistently strong (demonstrating a freshness of vision, mastery of language, clarity of form)?

### Community Involvement

- Does the applicant demonstrate a history of community collaboration and involvement?

### Potential for Public Engagement

- Does the proposal support the poet’s ability to engage El Segundo’s residents in meaningful ways to further the literary arts in its communities?

## **VIII. ADMINISTRATION**

The selected Poet Laureate must enter into an agreement with the City. The Poet Laureate must coordinate their schedule with the ESCDP staff, be the point of contact for all programming inquiries from the public, arrange details for their programs and coordinate press releases and events with the City's staff.

The contract agreement is also contingent upon the selected Poet Laureate's successful completion of a thorough background review, including being fingerprinted by the El Segundo Police Department and a medical exam for TB (tuberculosis), additional reference checks and verifying proof of the Poet Laureate's right to work in the United States.

The selected Poet Laureate may be asked to obtain, at the Poet Laureate's sole cost and expense, all insurance required by the City. The Poet Laureate may be asked to refrain from working until such insurance has been approved by the City.

The selected Poet Laureate may be asked to obtain, at the Poet Laureate's sole cost and expense, a City of El Segundo business tax license.

If a poetry reading at an official City occasion is one item on the agreed scope of work, the ESCDP reserves the right to review the proposed poem(s) beforehand. The proposed poem may be either the Poet Laureate's own or the work of another poet(s).

ESCDP reserves the right to terminate the Poet Laureate's agreement at any time, with or without cause.

## **IX. ADDITIONAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS**

- For questions about the Request for Proposals: Sam Lee; [slee3@elsegundo.org](mailto:slee3@elsegundo.org); Office: 310-524-2771.
- El Segundo Cultural Development Program (ESCDP) reserves the right to accept or reject any applications or portions thereof without stated cause. In selection of a finalist, the ESCDP staff shall attempt to negotiate and reach a final agreement with the finalist. If the ESCDP, for any reason, is unable to reach a final agreement with the finalist, the ESCDP then reserves the right to reject such finalist and negotiate a final agreement with another finalist who has the next most viable proposal. The ESCDP may also elect to reject all proposals and re-issue a new RFP.
- ESCDP is not responsible for the loss or damage of any submitted materials. All information contained herein does not constitute either an expressed or implied contract and these provisions are subject to change without notice at any time and for any reason in the sole discretion of the ESCDP.
- ESCDP is committed to fostering a diverse and inclusive workforce. Diverse applicants are encouraged to apply.

**X. TENTATIVE SCHEDULE**

Issuance of Request for Proposals (RFP)	August 2021
Application Deadline	September 17, 2021
Review of Applications (Selection Panel & ACC)	October 26, 2021
Final Selection of Poet Laureate	November 30, 2021
Agreement Executed with Final Scope	January 1, 2022

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**XI. SIGNATURE BLOCK**

Please return this page with your application or duplicate the information in your cover letter.

The undersigned hereby certifies:

- ( ) familiarization with all terms, conditions, and specifications herein stated,
- ( ) artist/organization is qualified to perform work and services as proposed,
- ( ) that the application submitted is valid until \_\_\_\_\_(date).

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Authorized Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mailing Address

\_\_\_\_\_  
Email Address

\_\_\_\_\_  
City, State, Zip

\_\_\_\_\_  
Phone Number