

HUNTER WRITERS CENTRE

2026/27 Newcastle Poetry Prize Terms and Conditions

The Newcastle Poetry Prize is a project of the Hunter Writers' Centre Inc. By entering the Newcastle Poetry Prize, you agree to be bound by the following terms and conditions:

Submission Deadline

1. The closing date for submissions is Sunday 6 December 2026, 8 PM (AEDT).

Prizes

2. All prizes are cash except voucher awards where indicated.
 - First Prize - \$10,000
 - Second Prize - \$5,000
 - Third Prize - \$2,500
 - Highly Commended - \$500
 - Harri Jones Memorial Prize - \$1,500 (for poets under 36 years)
 - Jan Dean Members Prize - \$1,000 (awarded to a Hunter Writers' Centre member)
 - Kade Fenwick Prize - \$500 (recognising poetry from First Nations and trans voices)

Who can submit?

3. Entrants must be aged 18 years or over.
4. Submissions are open to Australian citizens or permanent residents of Australia residing anywhere in the world.
5. The 2026/27 Newcastle Poetry Prize judges, Hunter Writers' Centre staff and Board members and their immediate families are ineligible to enter.
6. Entrants must provide their own name on the entry form for administrative purposes. If an Entrant prefers to be published under a pseudonym, they must note both their pseudonym and real name on the entry form.
7. Entrants do not have to be a Hunter Writers' Centre member to enter.

Submission fees and charges

8. Submission fees are \$30.25 (\$27.50 + GST) per poem submitted for Hunter Writers' Centre Members and \$35.80 (\$32 + GST) per poem submitted for non-members.

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9. All entries must be accompanied by payment of the relevant submission fee at the time of entry. Payment is accepted by credit or debit card via Stripe.
10. Submission fees are non-refundable if a submission is withdrawn from the Newcastle Poetry Prize.

How to submit

11. Entry is online only and must be submitted via the Hunter Writers' Centre's Newcastle Poetry Prize webpage.
12. There is no limit on the number of poems that can be entered.
13. One poem = one entry = one submission fee.
14. The entry form contains a maximum of ten (10) submissions.
15. Submissions entered into previous Newcastle Poetry Prize competitions and not selected in the short-list, anthology, or for prizes may be re-entered.
16. Each submission will receive a Confirmation of Entry email. If you have not received a confirmation email, please check:
 - the entry fee has been deducted from your bank account, and
 - If the Confirmation of Entry email is in your spam or junk folder. COVID-19 resulted in increased malware and spam attacks and some email hosts may block emails generated from websites.
 - If you still have not received your Confirmation of Entry email, please contact us on contact (@) hunterwriterscentre.org

Submission Format

17. We accept Word document (.doc, .docx).
18. We prefer entries to be presented in a standard font, such as Times New Roman or Arial, 12pt font, 1.5 spacing.
19. Each entry must include the title of the poem at the beginning of the document, above the first line of the poem. The title must not be placed in the header. The title forms part of the line count. Entries submitted without a title will be ineligible. Title of piece to be included at beginning of document, not in the Header.
20. The line limit is 200 maximum.
 - a. Titles and subtitles are included in the line count.
 - b. There is no minimum line count.

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- c. For the purposes of this prize, a 'line' is considered a single row of text as it appears on the page as submitted. Where a line of the poem runs over onto a second row, each row must count as a separate line.
 - d. Numbers used to identify stanzas or sections (e.g. 1., i.) are considered sub-headings and are included in the line count.
 - e. Citations are not included in the line-count.
 - f. Entries that exceed the maximum line count as details above, will be
 - g. Only lines of text are included in the maximum 200-line count, not spaces between lines.
 - h. Symbols used to indicate breaks, (e.g. ***) are not included in the line-count.
 - i. For print presentation, Hunter Writers' Centre reserves the right to alter white space between lines.
21. Entries that exceed the maximum line count as detailed above, will be considered ineligible
22. Submissions that contain images will be considered ineligible
23. Judging is conducted blind. A poem will be considered ineligible if either of the judges have read part or all the entry prior to submission.
24. Entries that include the author's name either within the written work, or in the entry's filename will be determined ineligible.
25. Do not include personal dedication in entries. Poems containing dedications will be considered ineligible. If the poem is considered within the shortlist, a dedication may be included within the publication.

Submission Conditions

26. Entries must be original work, written by the entrant.
27. Entries may be subject to an academic integrity check.
28. Eligible entries using or referring to Aboriginal content must be in accordance with the Indigenous Peoples' rights to their heritage ([ICIP](#)) guidelines and to the Aboriginal protocols of the region where they have been produced. If a piece includes the lived experience of minority persons or communities, we may contact the entrant to clarify this out of respect for cultural safety.
29. Entrants must acknowledge any quotes or text from other sources used within entered stories.

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Use of AI tools

30. The Newcastle Poetry Prize values the authenticity of lived experience and human creativity. Submissions must be the original work of the entrant.
31. Submissions must be the original work of the entrant and not generated wholly or substantially by artificial intelligence (AI) tools. While standard digital aids (e.g. spell-checkers or grammar correctors) may be used, generative AI tools (such as ChatGPT, Sudowrite, or similar) must not be used to compose or significantly alter the creative content.
32. Entrants must disclose any AI assistance used during the writing process. Submissions that are substantially generated by AI, or where AI use is not disclosed, may be deemed ineligible.

Warranties

33. By entering the Newcastle Poetry Prize, the entrant warrants that:
 - they have all necessary rights to submit their entry and the material submitted has not been previously published or licensed for publication in any form;
 - their manuscript is their original creation;
 - to the best of their knowledge, their manuscript is not defamatory;
 - their manuscript does not infringe any existing copyright or license or any other third-party rights.
34. Hunter Writers' Centre reserves the right, at any time, to verify the validity of entries and entrants (including the entrant's identity, age and place of residence) and to disqualify any entrant who tampers with the entry process. Failure by the Hunter Writers' Centre to enforce any of its rights at any stage does not constitute a waiver of those rights.

Exclusivity

35. Entries must not be published in any form (print or electronic) or currently offered for publication.
36. During the judging period, stories may be entered into other competitions. If a story is short-listed for the Newcastle Poetry Prize, the author will be given a 24-hour period to decide whether they want to withdraw their story from the Newcastle Poetry Prize or from the other competition/s. Exclusivity is essential for the Newcastle Poetry Prize short-listed poems.
37. If, during the judging period, a story is published or longlisted in another competition, the author must immediately notify the Hunter Writers' Centre and withdraw their entry from the Newcastle Poetry Prize or withdraw from the other competition. Entry fees are not refundable.

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Judging

- 38. All entries are provided for judging without reference to the author.
- 39. The judges' decisions are final. No correspondence will be entered into with either the judges, the staff or the Board of the Hunter Writers' Centre.
- 40. We unable to provide feedback on individual entries.
- 41. The Harri Jones Memorial Prize is awarded to the best poem written by an Author under the age of 36 years.
- 42. The Jan Dean Members Awards is awarded to a Hunter Writers Centre member.
- 43. The Kade Fenwick Prize is awarded to a poem written by a LGBTQI+ poets and/or First Nations poet.
- 44. The judges, in their absolute discretion, may disqualify any entrant or entries if they reasonably suspect any unlawful or improper conduct, such as infringing a third party's intellectual property rights, or if there has been a breach of these terms and conditions.

Media and Communications

- 45. Prize winners may be required to participate in media-related events associated with the competition.

Publication

- 46. By entering the Newcastle Poetry Prize, the entrant gives permission to Hunter Writers' Centre to publish their work in the anthology if selected by the judges. The copyright to the work is retained by the author.
- 47. A \$100 publication fee will be paid to the author for each non-award winning piece selected to be published in the Newcastle Poetry Prize anthology.
- 48. As publisher of the anthology, Hunter Writers' Centre has First Publication Rights to all submitted works and may use any title or phrase from any entry for the purpose of promoting the competition and the anthology.
- 49. Any collection or publication after the Newcastle Poetry Prize that includes the author's story should acknowledge the poem was first Pub
- 50. Copyright in the shortlisted stories resides with the author. The short-listed author grants the Hunter Writers' Centre an exclusive license to publish the poem in relevant Hunter Writers' Centre print and online publications for three months after the date of first publication, and thereafter a non-exclusive license indefinitely to publish the stories whole or in-part online or in print.

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51. All poets with shortlisted poems printed in anthology will be posted one (1) copy of the print anthology. Entrants residing overseas will be asked to contribute to postage costs.
52. Hunter Writers' Centre's publications are printed in 6 x 9 inch format. If selected for publication, poems may appear differently than submitted. Hunter Writers' Centre takes all care to adjust poems in consultation with the authors but cannot guarantee an exact replication.

Notifications

53. Authors whose stories have been selected to be published in the Newcastle Poetry Prize anthology will be notified in early February 2027.
54. Authors selected to be published will be contacted directly. We do not contact entrants who are not successful.
55. Shortlisted stories and authors will be announced on the Hunter Writers' Centre's website and social media channels in early February 2027
56. The Newcastle Poetry Prize Winners will be announced at a public awards presentation at the Newcastle Writers Festival on Saturday 3 April 2027.
57. The Newcastle Poetry Prize Anthology will be available on Saturday 3 April 2027.

Indemnity

58. To the full extent permitted by the law, Hunter Writers' Centre will not be liable for any delay, death, injury, damages, expenses, or loss whatsoever (whether direct or consequential) to persons or property as a result of any person entering into the competition or accepting or using any prize, including without limitation non-receipt of any prize or damage to any prize in transit and the Prize winner's failure to comply with the terms and conditions (if any) specified by any third party.
59. The entrant agrees to indemnify Hunter Writers' Centre against any loss or damage resulting from any breach of the terms and conditions above and acknowledge that Hunter Writers' Centre may, in its absolute discretion, not award any prize to entrants for breach of the warranties above.