

{Literary[Arts\Fund]}

LITERARY ARTS FUND GENERAL OPERATING GRANT APPLICATIONS 2026 GUIDE

BACKGROUND

The [Literary Arts Fund](#) was established in 2025 to dramatically increase funding for and the visibility of the nonprofit literary arts field toward ensuring a healthy and more robust U.S. literary culture in support of creative writers. The fund will award at least \$10 million in grants to the nonprofit literary arts field in each of the next five years, concluding in 2031. The first open call is for 2026 general operating grant applications.

KEY DATES

- November 10, 2025: [Start of open call for general operating grant applications.](#)
 - November 13, 2025: Information session on general operating and innovation project grants. [Interested applicants are encouraged to attend.](#)
 - December 19, 2025: Deadline for general operating grant applications.
 - By May 30, 2026: General operating grant applicants and recipients are notified via their Submittable account and email.
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ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Literary arts nonprofits (including fiscally sponsored literary arts organizations, presses, and publications) based in the U.S. and whose primary mission directly supports creative writers and their artistic work in any one of the following ways are eligible to apply for the Literary Arts Fund's general operating and innovation project grants:

- Present them at public events such as festivals, readings, open mics, spoken word performances, lectures, or conversations;

- Publish their work in print or digital publications such as books, chapbooks, literary journals, magazines, or websites;
- Provide them with writing residencies, retreats, mentorships, or workshops;
- Build their readership through digital or print feature articles, interviews, reviews, online archives, or podcasts; and,
- Recognize their artistic achievement through awards, fellowships, or prizes.

Additionally, to be eligible to apply, literary arts nonprofits must:

- Serve adult creative writers and audiences;
- Have been established for three years or more, based on the year of incorporation or contracted partnership with a fiscal sponsor (as of December 19, 2025, for 2026 general operation grant applicants);
- Have an executive director who has served in their role for at least twelve consecutive months (as of December 19, 2025, for 2026 general operation grant applicants); and
- Have an annual operating budget of at least \$50,000, in excess of in-kind (i.e., non-cash) revenue.

The Literary Arts Fund’s grantmaking strategy does not currently prioritize applications from the following:

- Nonprofit organizations and publishers whose primary mission is not focused on the literary arts and creative writers of poetry, fiction, creative nonfiction (distinguished from journalism or scholarship), or hybrid works.
- Literary arts nonprofits, publishers, initiatives, and projects that are part of and funded by a college or university.
- Nonprofit literary organizations and publishers whose primary mission is to present, publish, or support young writers.
- Arts education organizations that focus on increasing K-12 students’ access to the arts and learning through the arts, in or out of school.
- Literacy organizations that focus on developing or strengthening youth or adult reading and writing skills and abilities.
- Academic, school, and public libraries.
- Trade and service organizations whose mission is focused primarily on serving other literary arts nonprofits.

PURPOSE OF GENERAL OPERATING GRANTS

General operating grants provide unrestricted funding to support a literary arts nonprofit’s mission, activities, and administrative needs. Grants awarded will be issued in a single payment, intended for use over a five year period.

APPLICATION PROCESS AND GUIDELINES

The Literary Arts Fund values your time and recognizes the commitment needed to complete a grant application. All interested applicants must first complete an **eligibility quiz** on Submittable. This is a series of “yes” or “no” questions based on the eligibility requirements listed above.

Literary arts nonprofits that are eligible to apply must submit an application form on Submittable by the deadline: **December 19, 2025, at 8:59 p.m. PST / 9:59 p.m. MST / 10:59 p.m. CST / 11:59 p.m. EST.**

Literary arts nonprofits wishing to modify their application must withdraw their initial submission on Submittable and reapply before the deadline.

The Literary Arts Fund is not responsible for applications not received by the deadline due to user error. Applicants may visit the [Submitter Resource Center](#) or [contact Submittable](#) for questions about using the platform and technical support.

Grant applicants and recipients will be notified about the results by May 30, 2026. The Literary Arts Fund's decisions regarding eligibility are final.

For questions, visit the Literary Arts Fund's [grants page](#) or [FAQ page](#), or email grants@literaryartsfund.org.

MATERIALS NEEDED TO APPLY

Before you apply, it will be helpful for you to have gathered the following documents for your literary arts nonprofit:

- ☐ Board list with affiliations [if fiscally sponsored, fiscal sponsor's board list]
- ☐ IRS determination letter [if fiscally sponsored, fiscal sponsor's IRS determination letter]
- ☐ Fiscal sponsorship agreement [if applicable]
- ☐ Current annual operating budget [if fiscally sponsored, organization's, press's, or publication's current annual operating budget, not fiscal sponsor's]
- ☐ Most recent audit or an unaudited financial statement, including an income statement and balance sheet [if fiscally sponsored, fiscal sponsor's most recent audit or unaudited financial statement]
- ☐ Most recent Form 990 or 990-EZ [if fiscally sponsored, fiscal sponsor's Form 990 or 990-EZ]

And—as there is no character or word count in the following related fields—to have ready to cut and paste (see full questions below in “Application Questions”):

- ☐ Mission statement
- ☐ History with notable contributions
- ☐ Description of ongoing programs
- ☐ How programs are evaluated

And, finally, the following that may be applicable to your literary arts nonprofit:

- ☐ Total social media followers at present
- ☐ Total newsletter subscribers at present
- ☐ Unique web traffic last year
- ☐ Number of events presented last year
- ☐ Event attendance last year (in-person and online)
- ☐ Writers fees/payment policy
- ☐ Number of paid members
- ☐ Paid circulation
- ☐ Unpaid circulation
- ☐ Number of writers presented, published, and/or supported

Please note: in the application literary arts nonprofits that have a secondary and tertiary type of work (e.g., a book publisher that also presents live events and gives prizes) will have an opportunity to share information about each type of work.

APPLICATION QUESTIONS

Below please find the application questions that literary arts nonprofits eligible to apply for a 2026 general operating grant will be asked, which will be presently with slightly different formatting in Submittable.

Section 1: General Information

- ❖ Name of literary arts nonprofit organization, press, or publication:
- ❖ Website:
- ❖ Address:
- ❖ Year of incorporation or contracted partnership with a fiscal sponsor: [if applicable]
- ❖ Name of executive director: [If your literary arts nonprofit does not have an executive director, provide the name of the person with an equivalent title.]
- ❖ Length of service (in years) as executive director:

- ❖ List of board of directors and their affiliations: [If your organization, press, or publication is fiscally sponsored, upload your fiscal sponsor's board list.]
- ❖ How many published creative writers currently serve on your board of directors?

Section 2: 501(c)(3) Status

- ❖ Does your organization, press, or publication have its own 501(c)(3) designation from the IRS?
 - If "yes" you will need to supply the EIN and IRS determination letter
 - If you have a fiscal sponsor, you will need to supply their:
 - ❖ Name:
 - ❖ EIN:
 - ❖ Address:
 - ❖ Website:
 - ❖ Contact name:
 - ❖ Contact title:
 - ❖ Contact email:
 - ❖ IRS determination letter:
 - ❖ Sponsorship agreement:

Section 3: Financials

In this section, you will be asked to share information and documents based on your literary arts nonprofit's most recent financials.

- ❖ Current annual operating budget: [If you are fiscally sponsored, please share the budget for your organization, press, or publication, not your fiscal sponsor.]
- ❖ Total revenue from current annual operating budget:
- ❖ Total expenses from current annual operating budget:
- ☐ Most recent audit— or if your literary arts nonprofit does not have an audit statement— an unaudited financial statement, including an income statement and balance sheet: [If you have a fiscal sponsor, upload your fiscal sponsor's most recent audit.]
- ☐ Most recent Form 990 or 990-EZ: [If you have a fiscal sponsor, upload your fiscal sponsor's most recent Form 990 or 990-EZ.]

Section 4: Mission, History, Activities, and Audience

- ❖ Which category below **primarily** describes your literary arts nonprofit and its mission?

☐ **Presenter:** literary arts nonprofits that present creative writers in public events, including festivals, readings/reading series, conversations, lectures, panels, and/or spoken word performances

☐ **Publisher:** literary arts nonprofits that publish poems, works of fiction and creative nonfiction, and/or hybrid works in books, journals, magazines, or podcasts (in print, digital, and/or audio). Select all that apply to best describe your publication(s):

___ Novels, novellas, short story collections, full-length and/or chapbook-length poetry collections, and/or anthologies

___ Literary journals or magazines (in print, digital, and/or audio)

___ Podcasts

☐ **Supporter:** literary arts nonprofits that support creative writers by providing awards, fellowships, mentorships, prizes, residencies, retreats, writing workshops, and/or other means of direct support for creative writers and their artistic work

- ❖ Mission statement:

- ❖ In 1 to 3 paragraphs, briefly describe the history of your literary arts nonprofit, including unique or notable contributions.

- ❖ In 1 to 3 paragraphs, briefly describe your literary arts nonprofit's ongoing activities, publications, and/or programs directly serving and supporting creative writers and their artistic work.

- ❖ In 1 to 3 paragraphs, briefly describe how your literary arts nonprofit evaluates its work (i.e., how do you assess whether its programs, publications, and other offerings are successful?)

- ❖ Does your literary arts nonprofit have an annual plan that describes its specific goals and objectives for the year?

- Yes

- No

- ❖ Does your literary arts nonprofit have a strategic or long-range plan that describes its specific goals and objectives for the next three years or more?

- Yes

- No

- ❖ In 1 paragraph, describe the payment policy for the creative writers your literary arts nonprofit publishes, presents, or supports:
- ❖ If your literary arts nonprofit publishes, presents, or supports creative writing in translation, in 1 paragraph, briefly describe the payment policy for literary translators.
- ❖ How many newsletter subscribers does your literary arts nonprofit have?
- ❖ How many unique visitors did your literary arts nonprofit's website have last year?
- ❖ How many total social media followers does your literary arts nonprofit have?
- ❖ If your literary arts nonprofit has paid members (distinct from subscribers), how many does it have in total?

Section 5: Staffing and Volunteers

In this section, please enter "o" if a question does not apply to your literary arts nonprofit.

- ❖ How many published creative writers currently serve on your literary arts nonprofit's staff?
- ❖ How many paid full-time staff (excluding contract workers) does your literary arts nonprofit have?
- ❖ How many paid part-time staff (excluding contract workers) does your literary arts nonprofit have?
- ❖ How many contract workers does your literary arts nonprofit have?
- ❖ How many volunteers does your literary arts nonprofit have?

Section 6: Additional Information — Activities and Audience

In this section, your literary arts nonprofit will have an opportunity to share information about its primary activities, as well as secondary and tertiary activities if you indicate it has them.

Please enter "o" if a question does not apply to your literary arts nonprofit.

FOR PRESENTERS:

- ❖ Which genres does your literary arts nonprofit present in public events? Select all that apply.
- Creative nonfiction

- Fiction
- Poetry
- Hybrid

- ❖ How many total literary events did your literary arts nonprofit present last year, including both in-person and online?
- ❖ What was the total number of creative writers your literary arts nonprofit presented in literary events last year, including both in-person and online?
- ❖ How many total individuals attended your literary arts nonprofit's in-person literary event(s) last year as audience members?
- ❖ How many total individuals attended your literary arts nonprofit's online literary event(s) last year as audience members?

FOR PUBLISHERS OF BOOKS:

- ❖ As a publisher of books, which genres does your literary arts nonprofit publish? Select all that apply.
 - Creative nonfiction
 - Fiction
 - Poetry
 - Hybrid
- ❖ How does your literary arts nonprofit publish its books? Select all that apply.
 - Print
 - Ebook
 - Audiobook
- ❖ How many titles did your literary arts nonprofit publish last year?
- ❖ What was the average print run of the titles published last year?
- ❖ How many individual creative writers did your literary arts nonprofit publish last year?
- ❖ How does your literary arts nonprofit make the books it publishes available to readers? Select all that apply.
 - Through a distributor
 - Directly through bookstores
 - Directly through an online bookseller

- Directly through an app
- Through a membership or subscription program
- On its website
- In its newsletter
- In its space/venue
- At public events
- Other - briefly describe

FOR PUBLISHERS OF LITERARY JOURNALS OR MAGAZINES:

- ❖ As a publisher of literary journals or magazines, which literary genres does your publication include? Select all that apply.
 - Creative nonfiction
 - Fiction
 - Poetry
 - Hybrid
- ❖ How does your literary arts nonprofit publish its literary journal or magazine? Select all that apply.
 - Print
 - Digital edition (apps, e-readers)
 - Audio edition
 - Website
- ❖ How many issues did your literary arts nonprofit publish last year?
- ❖ What was the total paid circulation of your literary arts nonprofit's publication last year?
- ❖ What was the total unpaid circulation of your literary arts nonprofit's publication last year?
- ❖ How many individual creative writers did your literary arts nonprofit publish in its journal or magazine last year?
- ❖ If your literary publication included interviews with creative writers, how many individual creative writers were featured last year?
- ❖ If your literary publication included reviews of poetry collections, works of fiction or creative nonfiction, or hybrid works, how many individual titles were included last year?

- ❖ How do you make the literary journals or magazines your literary arts nonprofit publishes available to readers? Select all that apply.

- Through a distributor
 - Directly through bookstores
 - Directly through an online bookseller
 - Directly through an app
 - Through a membership or subscription program
 - On its website
 - In its newsletter
 - In its space/venue
 - At public events
 - Other - briefly describe
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FOR PUBLISHERS OF PODCASTS:

- ❖ Which genres does your literary arts nonprofit feature in its podcast? Select all that apply. Select all that apply.
 - Creative nonfiction
 - Fiction
 - Poetry
 - Hybrid
 - ❖ How many followers does your literary arts nonprofit's podcast have?
 - ❖ What is the average number of unique listeners per podcast episode?
 - ❖ How many individual creative writers were featured in the podcast last year?
 - ❖ If your podcast included reviews of poetry collections, works of fiction or creative nonfiction, or hybrid works, how many individual titles were included last year?
-

FOR SUPPORTERS:

- ❖ Which genres do the creative writers your literary arts nonprofit supports (through awards, fellowships, mentorships, prizes, residencies, retreats, or writing workshops) work in? Select all that apply.
 - Creative nonfiction
 - Fiction
 - Poetry
 - Hybrid

- ❖ If your literary arts nonprofit provided awards, fellowships, prizes last year, what was the total number of creative writers it honored?
 - ❖ If your literary arts nonprofit provided mentorships, residencies, or retreats last year, what was the total number of creative writers it hosted?
 - ❖ If your literary arts nonprofit provided writing workshops last year, how many did it offer?
 - ❖ If your literary arts nonprofit offered writing workshops last year, how many creative writers attended?
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Thank you for your interest in the Literary Arts Fund.

literaryartsfund.org