

Writer in Residence Program

Information & Expressions of Interest

February – June 2026

**“I wrote
my first
novel
because I
wanted to
read it.”**

— Toni Morrison

Woollahra
Libraries

Introduction

The Woollahra Libraries Writers in Residence Program is an opportunity for writers to research and develop new work, or build on existing work, within a lively, green space public library.

The program offers applicants one non-residential residency opportunity per year, over a four month period. The residency can be completed in the following time period:

- 23 February 2026-14 June 2026

Future opportunities will be available:

- October 2026-February 2027
- February 2027-June 2027

In return for use of a writing space, the support of the library, and promotion of the writer's work, writers will be required to engage with the community in two of the following three ways:

- develop new work connected with the Woollahra LGA
- deliver or participate in a public program eg. workshop, performance or author talk
- develop and lead a Community Engagement Project (more information page 2)

To support these engagements, Woollahra Libraries pays each Writer in Residence **\$2,000**.

About Woollahra Libraries

Woollahra Libraries serves a vibrant and engaged community just 5 km from Sydney's CBD. The area covers 12 km of mostly residential streets, with pockets of commercial spaces, scenic parklands, and a National Park. Home to 54,660 people, Woollahra is one of the most educated communities in New South Wales, with library visits and loans per resident consistently among the highest in the state.

The library service operates three locations, each with its own unique appeal. Woollahra Library at Double Bay is a modern space surrounded filled with greenery, providing a peaceful setting to explore new ideas. Watsons Bay Library, with its harborside location, offers flexible member access hours, perfect for those enjoying the bay views. Paddington Library, housed in the historic Town Hall on Oxford Street, is a community hub that brings people together with a variety of programs, making it an essential part of the local area.



Woollahra Writer in Residence Program

Eligibility

The Woollahra Libraries Writer in Residence Program is open to applicants with a writing practice within wide range of genres and mediums, including poetry, fiction, non-fiction, memoir, plays, screenplays and childrens' literature.

Applicants must be aged over 18 and have the right to live and work in Australia.

Applicants must hold a Working with Children Check for the period of their residency.

Applicants must be able to interact with Woollahra Libraries and provide a face to face to program and/or visit the LGA if they do not reside here - Sydney based applicants are encouraged to apply for this non-residential opportunity, but the program is open Australia wide.



Selection Process

A selection panel chaired by the Library Experience Coordinator and comprised of judges from the Woollahra Digital Literary Award will review and assess applications in November 2025 with consideration given to:

- Literary merit, and experience
- Capacity for a proposed Public Program to meet strategic goals of Woollahra Libraries, and/or
- Capacity for a proposed Community Engagement Project to meet strategic goals of Woollahra Council (including connection to the local community)
- The perceived benefit of the residency to the applicant's practice

Shortlisted writers recognised by the Woollahra Digital Literary Award are encouraged to apply.

Interviews may be conducted with applicants.

Public Program or Community Engagement Project

Public Programs that encourage writer development and creative participation within the local community are a key deliverable of the Residency program, and support Woollahra Libraries strategic objective to encourage a thriving reading culture in Woollahra and offer support to local writers.

Applicants may want to consider the unique features of the Woollahra LGA in their proposal, and should consult the Woollahra Arts and Cultural Strategy and Action Plan 2024 – 2028 for further information.

A Public Program or Community Engagement Project proposed, such as a public workshop, talk, performance, or activation of a library space must do one (or more) of the following:

- Encourage truth-telling about First Nation's culture, language and history following appropriate cultural and intellectual property protocols, and/or
- Encourage cultural exchange, shared compassion and community cohesion, and/or
- Enable the community to build a strong reading culture and/or cultural literacy (encourage reading and conversations about reading and the written word and/or introduce people to and increase their understanding of diverse cultural forms), and/or
- Enhance the engagement of children, youth, families and schools.

Applicants are encouraged to specify any community groups or organisations that they wish to involve in their programming.

For detailed information on how a community project can reach or involve the local community, please contact the Library Programs Team on 02 9391 7994 or libraryevents@woollahra.nsw.gov.au.

Woollahra Municipal Council offers Sponsorships and Grants that may support your project. More information can be found at woollahra.nsw.gov.au/grants or by contacting the Grants Team at grants@woollahra.nsw.gov.au.

The Library can provide letters of support to authors applying for external grants to assist with the costs of participating in the Residency program.

Responsibilities of Residency

It is the responsibility of the appointed Writer in Residence to:

- Make their own travel and accommodation arrangements (this is a non-residential opportunity).

- Secure and finance their own Working with Children Check.
- Prepare or source any materials and equipment required throughout the Residency.
- Self-fund the material and labour components of a Public Program or Community Engagement Project.
- Participate in publicity activities related to the Residency organised by the Library, Gallery or Council.
- Provide images and give interviews to promote the program. The writer retains copyright of their images and creative work at all times and will be credited in any promotional or marketing materials.
- Before the formal commencement of the Residency, Writers in Residence and Woollahra Libraries will enter into an agreement that covers all relevant provisions detailed within this document. The agreement formalising the Residency will outline the obligations and expectations of both the Writer, Library and Council. A copy of this agreement may be obtained upon request.

Application Form

Interested writers should complete this Application Form before 5pm on Thursday 30 October 2025.

Writing spaces available as part of Residency

The spaces provided under this program are non-residential, are available during the public operating hours for each building and come with power and WiFi.

Please consider the following options and if they would suit your writing practice:

1. Woollahra Library at Double Bay

An open space (table and chair) in the public part of the library reserved for the Writer in Residence – dedicated signposted space that can be used by the writer during opening hours over the course of the Residency.

Access to Woollahra Local History Collection. Access to a meeting room as required. Access to kitchenette.

Hours of Access: Monday-Friday 9am-8pm, Saturday-Sunday 10am-4pm

2. Paddington Library

An open space (table and chair) in the public part of the library reserved for the Writer in Residence – dedicated signposted space that can be used by the writer during opening hours over the course of the Residency.

Access to a meeting room as required. Access to kitchenette.

Hours of Access: Monday-Friday 9.30am-6pm, Saturday-Sunday 10am-4pm

3. EJ Ward Community Centre (Paddington)

Exclusive use of a lockable office space (12 square meters) on the western side of this arts and community centre.

Access to a meeting room as required. Access to kitchenette.

Hours of Access: Monday-Sunday 8am-9pm




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For any enquires please contact the
Library Events and Programs team:

 libraryevents@woollahra.nsw.gov.au

 02 9391 7994

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