FORWARD ARTS FOUNDATION

The UK charity behind National Poetry Day and the Forward Prizes for Poetry
WHO WE ARE

We’re campaigners. Fighting to give established, underrepresented and up-and-coming poets a platform and the resources to build a career.

We’re healers. Working with schools, libraries and a range of partners to help more people feel better through reading and writing poetry.

We’re facilitators. Finding world-class poetry and amplifying it so the world can hear.

The most coveted awards in British poetry.

The Daily Telegraph
THREE MAIN PROGRAMMES

01 National Poetry Day
our flagship event, an annual nationwide celebration of poetry

02 Forward Prizes for Poetry
the annual “Oscars of poetry”

03 Forward Books of Poetry
the best poetry of the year and the decade, collected in beautiful anthologies
A nationwide celebration of poetry in early October. You’ll see it everywhere, from schools and libraries to cultural venues and across the national media.

- Recommended reading, packs and teaching resources delivered to institutions across the UK – 24% of UK schools participate in National Poetry Day
- 1.5 million live encounters with poetry every year
- 46% of children and young people turn to poetry in their free time as readers, listeners, writers or performers
Taking part in national events helps build a sense of pride, self-worth... For students with SEN, poetry is a way of expressing their feelings and creativity in a short accessible way, without the intimidating target of pages of text.

Teacher, specialist SEND school, Hertfordshire
WHAT WE DO

FORWARD PRIZES FOR POETRY

For 30 years we have supported poets from the start to the peak of their careers with our prizes.

The Forward Prize for Best Collection (£10,000)
The Felix Dennis Prize for Best First Collection (£5,000)
The Forward Prize for Best Single Poem - Written (£1,000)
The Forward Prize for Best Single Poem - Performed (£1,000)

The Forward Prizes for Poetry have established themselves as the major awards for contemporary poetry in the UK and Ireland.

The Guardian

www.forwardartsfoundation.org
A NEW SPOKEN WORD PRIZE

The UK is home to a thriving network of grassroots poetry communities working in performance and the spoken word.

Traditionally, spoken word poetry is less well-funded than its on-the-page equivalent. But right now, somewhere on a stage near you, performance poets like George the Poet, Warsan Shire and the Mercury Award-nominated Kae Tempest are changing public perceptions of what poetry can be.

Spoken word is democratic and accessible – performance poets are younger, more metropolitan and more likely to be from underrepresented backgrounds. It’s raw – a place for unfiltered emotional expression. It’s exciting – invigorating live performances that employ audience interaction and draw on the energy of music genres like rap or grime.

That’s why, for the first time in Forward’s 30-year history, we’re introducing a new Prize for performance/spoken word poetry.
WHAT WE DO
FORWARD POETRY ANTHOLOGIES

Each year we bring together the best poems published in the UK and Ireland, creating a book that reflects the world today.

Finding a complicity with how you feel, expressed more elegantly than you could ever express yourself, can be the most helpful way of making sense of your emotions and helping you to process them.

William Sieghart CBE
JOIN US AT THE HEART OF A THRIVING POETRY SCENE WITH REAL SOCIAL IMPACT

Help grass roots spoken word bounce back after the pandemic

Join poets at world class events

Bring poetry books to a diverse mass audience

Contribute to the wellbeing of children in 24% of UK schools
We’re proud to be working with Warsan Shire, a rising star of the British poetry scene. A British-Somali poet from Wembley, north-west London, her work deals with themes of race, refuge and womanhood.

2014 Selected as London’s first Young Poet Laureate 2015 A judge for the Forward Prize for Poetry 2016 Hand-picked by Beyoncé to collaborate on her album Lemonade

2022 Released her debut poetry collection Bless the Daughter Raised by a Voice in Her Head, shortlisted for a Forward Prize for Best First Collection

No one leaves home unless home is the mouth of a shark you only run for the border when you see the whole city running as well your neighbours running faster than you breath bloody in their throats the boy you went to school with who kissed you dizzy behind the old tin factory is holding a gun bigger than his body you only leave home when home won’t let you stay

Excerpt from Home, by Warsan Shire
WE’VE GOT BIG IDEAS FOR THE FUTURE. AND WE’RE LOOKING FOR NEW PARTNERS TO HELP US REALISE THEM.

We want to work with brands that share our mission and our values.

**Sponsor National Poetry Day.** Either the whole day, or an aspect of it – the events and celebrations take place across the country, and we’ll be partnering with organisations from the charity sector to create educational resources for schools.

**Sponsor our Poetry Prizes or anthologies.** Help us develop poets from underrepresented backgrounds and raise the profile of our world class writers.

**Work with our poets on bespoke projects.** We are open to discuss unique branded content development opportunities featuring poets in our network. Think adverts, scripts, commissions, performance, site-specific activations... the possibilities are endless.

www.forwardartsfoundation.org
WHAT WE HAVE ACHIEVED WITH PARTNERS

124m reached through National Poetry Day social channels in 2022. Social media activity from ambassadors including the **Royal Family, Amanda Gorman, Michael Rosen and Cerys Matthews.**

Over **30** anthologies published since 1994. **8000** English A Level students a year study our Poems of the Decade book. Forward Prizes for Poetry makes headlines, tours literature and music festivals and supports **20** shortlisted poets each year.

PRESS COVERAGE →

FUNDERS AND SPONSORS
CONTACT US

We would love to hear from you, with any ideas or questions.

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