

FORWARD ARTS FOUNDATION

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



Forward
Arts
Foundation

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

WHAT WE DO NATIONAL POETRY DAY

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



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.



Kae Tempest, poet and musician

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

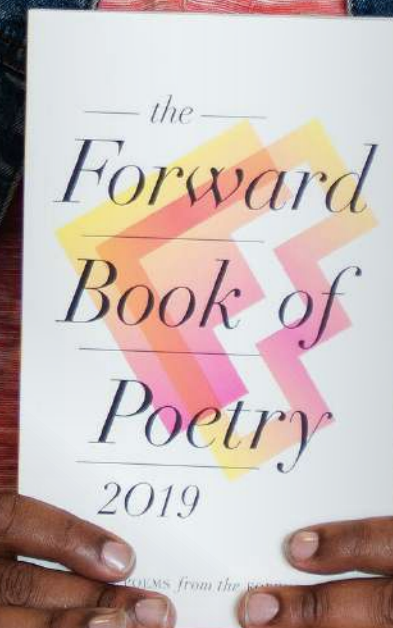


Photo: Danez Smith, Best Collection 2018

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

RISING STAR WARSAN SHIRE

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.



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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