

**About the Youth Poet Laureate Program**

Founded in New York City in 2008 by Urban Word NYC, the Youth Poet Laureate program and movement honors and celebrates city's most exceptional youth poets, who not only have a commitment to writing and literature, but who also have a track record of leadership, civic and community engagement, social justice, youth leadership and extra-curricular participation. We created this platform to honor these young poet-leaders and have committed each city to identifying youth poet laureates who uphold these program values.

What we are looking for in a YPL

We seek applications from young people who demonstrate both artistic excellence in poetry, *and* a commitment to civic engagement and social justice (as exemplified through a CV). We welcome poets of all creative dispositions and aesthetics and of all backgrounds to apply. We want the YPL program to reflect the diversity of voices and experiences in the world. Traditionally, Youth Poet Laureates are students who have matriculated through writing programs, have achieved various levels of success, and are embedded in the youth leadership of various organizations.

What we mean by Civic Engagement and Social Justice

We seek applications from young people who are committed to the growth and development of their local communities. By "Civic Engagement," we mean any regular activity, formally or informally sponsored, whereby the YPL applicant can strengthen and promote the quality of life in his or her community or school. By "Social Justice," we mean any examples of praxis, commitment to equity and inclusiveness, activism and the fundamental right of youth to be outspoken. Examples include efforts in political activism, organizing, school participation, and volunteerism, as well as various educational and artistic initiatives. We require the submission of a CV, which is judged and scored, to add value to the mission and goals of this program.

What we mean by Literary Excellence

We seek applications from young people who excel in the literary arts, using poetry as a tool not only for self-expression but civic engagement as well. We define literary excellence as any literary work that employs the tools of poetic craft—music, image, metaphor and simile, traditional forms (sonnet, villanelle, ghazal, and so on)—combined with a passionate artistic vision concerned, thematically, with matters of the heart, spirit, and mind; politics; identity; family and relationships; history; love in its many iterations; other art forms; or any aspect of the human experience, often at the intersection of any of the aforementioned, in order to explore and deepen our common humanity. Literary excellence is assessed via the poetry portfolio submission, and also merited in the CV with any history of awards/accolades for writing.

How to Score

Each Regional Youth Poet Laureate Applicant aggregate score will be a combination of their:

POETRY PORTFOLIO = up to 25 points

CV/RESUME = up to 25 points

Total Score= ___/50

Regional Youth Poet Laureate Judging Rubric

	Distinguished	Proficient	Apprentice	Novice
CV/Resume	(25) -Demonstrates national, local, and regional awards, service, and leadership experience -Served as founder, president, or key leader of a civic or social justice initiative -Demonstrates 4+years of service, leadership, and skill development in community, school, or national civic engagement activities	(15) -Demonstrates local and regional awards, service, and leadership experience -Serves as an active member of a civic or social justice initiative -Demonstrates 3+years of service, leadership, and skill development in community, school, or local civic engagement activities	(10) -Demonstrates local awards, service, and leadership experience -Evidence of support for civic issues or social justice concerns -Demonstrates less than 2 years of service, leadership, and skill development in community, school, or local civic engagement activities	(5) -Demonstrates interest in civic issues and social justice -Earned 1 or less award for service or leadership - Demonstrates little service and leadership experience
Poetry Portfolio	(25) -Portfolio has significant and diverse content/themes (emotional, intellectual, philosophical) -All or Most Poetry effectively uses original figurative language, connotations, denotations, and voice -All or Most uses Line breaks, enjambment, caesurae, and rhetorical techniques effectively reinforce structure of the poetry	(15) -Portfolio has some significant somewhat diverse content/themes (emotional, intellectual, philosophical) -Some of the poetry effectively uses original figurative language, connotations, denotations, and voice - Some of the line breaks, enjambment, caesurae, and rhetorical techniques effectively reinforce structure of the poetry	(10) -Portfolio has significant content/themes but offer a small range of the same types of content -Poetry inconsistently uses original figurative language, connotations, denotations, and voice -Line breaks, enjambment, caesurae, and rhetorical techniques are used inconsistently.	(5) -Portfolio has 1-2 repeated topics/themes or -Poetry is cliché -Poetry lacks or ineffectively uses original figurative language, connotations, denotations, and voice -The uses of line breaks, enjambment, caesurae, and rhetorical techniques are used ineffectively
Total	_____ /50			

Notes:

- **Use numbers as a range; Assign values that fall in between the rubric values such as 22, 13, 7.**
- **Decimals are encouraged.**
- **When your scores are complete please email me with a quick note stating you're done.**
- *Feel free to share/email camea@urbanwordnyc.org with suggestions on how to make this judging process more efficient for you.*

More Detailed Rubrics- *optional use but can be used to give more clarity on what we're seeking in the regional finalists' materials.*

Poetry Portfolio Grading Rubric

Skill	Exemplary	Average	Weak	Total
Creativity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Writer utilizes ambiguity and suggestiveness appropriately -Effectively uses original figurative language (simile, metaphor, personification) -Effectively uses observation and detail to convey a novel way to see -Effectively uses connotations and denotations to make words perform on many levels -Effectively uses sound (assonance, alliteration, consonance, hard and soft sounds) to enhance the meaning of -The attempt to "get a rhyme" does not impede the poem's development --Poetry avoids direct "preaching," letting the reader draw his or her conclusions from the details provided 	<p>Some (5/9) of the poems in the portfolio meet the creativity exemplary criteria Or several poems have only a 1-2 attributes</p>	<p>Very Few (3 or less) of the poems in the portfolio meet the creativity exemplary criteria Or several poems have only 0-1 attributes</p>	
Points	5	3	1	
Topics/Content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Poetry has significant content/themes (emotional, intellectual, philosophical) -Content goes beyond the apparent or "surface" meaning: What is it <i>really</i> about? -Poetry is unified around a clear focus/theme -Poetry shows sufficient development of theme -Poetry explores the complexity of human emotion and experience, avoiding oversimplification, sentimentality, and surface treatment -Poetry has an impact on the reader 	<p>Some (5/9) of the poems in the portfolio meet the topics/content exemplary criteria</p>	<p>Very Few (3 or less) of the poems meet the topics/content criteria</p>	
Points	5	3	1	
Form/Structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conventions of the form/type are handled with skill -Form of the poem on the page (use of stanza breaks, margins, and "white space") is appropriate to the ideas expressed -Parts of the poem are in the best possible order -The poem leads to a "narrative climax" -Line breaks, enjambment, and caesurae are used effectively -Rhetorical techniques (such as anaphora—repetition of a word or phrase) are used effectively to reinforce structure 	<p>Some (5/9) of the poems in the portfolio meet the form/structure exemplary criteria</p>	<p>Very Few (3 or less) of the poems meet the form/structure criteria</p>	
Points	5	3	1	
Overall	<p>Strong collection of poems Together the collection demonstrates skill, diverse use of literary devices and themes</p>			
	5	3	1	
Total	20	12	4	

Resume Grading Rubric

Poet: _____

Evaluator: _____

Strong history of Civic Engagement or Extracurricular Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 2 or more years of community service history ▪ 2 or more years of extracurricular activities ▪ Volunteered with 1 or more organizations ▪ A member of 1 or more school clubs in their history 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 1 year of community service history ▪ 1 year of extracurricular activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ less than a year of community service history ▪ less than a year of extracurricular activity 	
Ranking Points	6	3	1	
Awards or Honors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Earned distinction from an independent organization ▪ earned distinction from their school ▪ publication ▪ featured reader/ performance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ earned distinction from their school OR ▪ featured reader/ performance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Earned no distinction 	
Ranking Points	4	2	1	
Additional Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Extra information given to enhance resume 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Minimal extra information given to enhance resume 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ No extra information given to enhance resume 	
Ranking Points	3	2	1	
SPELLING & GRAMMAR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ No spelling errors ▪ No grammar errors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 3-4 spelling errors ▪ 3-4 grammar errors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 5-6 spelling errors ▪ 5-6 grammar errors 	
Ranking Points	2	1	0	
TOTAL SCORE:				