

Author Opportunities

The following pages contain an unofficial list of opportunities for authors. These may include opportunities to sell your book, speak to an audience, teach, and more. If there's an opportunity you'd like to add to this list, email us at info@CarnegieCenterLex.org.

Please note that this list is non-comprehensive and subject to change. We cannot verify any events that are not Carnegie-sponsored. For additional resources in Central Kentucky, check out the [Authors Guild resource list](#).

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Kentucky Writers Hall of Fame

About the Kentucky Writers Hall of Fame

The Kentucky Writers Hall of Fame was created to recognize Kentucky writers whose work reflects the character and culture of our commonwealth and to educate Kentuckians about our state's rich literary heritage. For a writer to have been eligible this year, they must be 1) published; 2) someone whose writing is of enduring stature; and 3) someone connected in a significant way to the Commonwealth of Kentucky. Inductees are chosen by committees at the Carnegie Center and the Kentucky Arts Council that include some of Kentucky's well-known writers. Nominations are accepted from the public.

[To nominate a writer or learn more, please click here.](#)

Teaching and Mentoring

Teaching and Mentoring at the Carnegie Center

Become a Carnegie Instructor

Is there a class that you would like to teach at the Carnegie Center? Tell us about it! We send out a call for proposals three times per year.

[Click here to learn more about becoming a Carnegie instructor.](#)

Writer Mentoring

This one-on-one, pay-as-you-go, mentoring service is scheduled one hour at a time. Mentoring sessions may involve brainstorming, problem-solving, and informal discussions about chunks of a work-in-progress. Writers have the option to schedule more meetings, if desired, at the end of each meeting.

[Click here to learn more about our Writer Mentoring services.](#)

If you are interested in becoming a mentor, [email Z Valentine](#).

Manuscript Review Services

Manuscript Reviews provide content-focused, big-picture feedback on an entire manuscript (not copy editing). Feedback is sent via email through the Program Director and is provided as a summary and comments written directly on the manuscript. There is no back-and-forth emailing with the reviewing consultant and no face-to-face mentoring (unless the reviewer agrees to meet as part of the Hourly Mentoring Service). The turnaround for this service is usually less than a month. A typical reading rate is 12 double-spaced pages/hour (depending on the commentary requested/required).

[Click here to learn more about our Manuscript Review services.](#)

If you are interested in reviewing manuscripts, [email Z Valentine](#).

Youth Writer Mentoring

The Carnegie Center will soon launch writer mentoring services for youth. This opportunity would work well for writers interested in mentoring students in middle and high school. We will share more information about this service when it becomes available.

If you are interested in becoming a mentor, [email Z Valentine](#).

Author Academy - On Hiatus

The Carnegie Center Author Academy is a 10-month student-driven certificate program that provides writers with the support to grow rapidly in their craft and to prepare their work for publication.

The Author Academy is open to adult writers of all genres and experience levels. The study year runs from August 15 to June 15 and is led by Author Academy Coordinator Tracee de Hahn.

The Author Academy is currently on hiatus.

[Click here to learn more about the Author Academy.](#)

Reading

Reading at the Carnegie Center

Kentucky Great Writers Reading Series

The Kentucky Great Writers Reading Series gives Kentucky writers with recently published works an opportunity to share their voices with the broader community. This event is free and open to the public.

[Click here to learn more about Kentucky Great Writers.](#)

Hosting a Book Launch or Literary Event

The Carnegie Center offers rentals for local writers promoting their work. If you are interested in hosting a book launch, poetry reading, or another literary event with your original work, our Stuart Ballroom may be available for you!

If you would like to host your book launch or literary event at the Carnegie Center, zvalentine@carnegiecenterlex.org.

Burn the Mic Poetry Slam

Burn the Mic is an open-mic event hosted at the Carnegie Center on select Thursdays. Bring your poetry, prose, and other works to read! Signups for the open mic are first-come, first-serve. These events sometimes feature local poets and writers; check [our website's events page](#) for more up-to-date information about featured readers.

In 2025, Burn the Mic will be held on March 20, April 17, May 15, October 16, November 20, December 18. These dates are subject to change; check our website for the most recent updates.

If you would like to learn more about Burn the Mic, email claudialove@carnegiecenterlex.org.

Other Reading Opportunities

Café Luigart

Café Luigart offers writers and artists opportunities to heighten their event production skills to produce inclusive events for readings and performing, launching books, and facilitating discussions and panels that explore the diversity of our community.

To see upcoming Café Luigart events, [click here to view Laverne Zabielski's website](#).

Poetry at the Table

Poetry at the Table is a monthly poetry series that meets the first Wednesday of every month from 6-8 p.m. at Kenwick Table in Lexington, Kentucky. Sign ups for Open Mic begin at 5:30 so please arrive early to get something to eat, to drink, to find a good seat. Each month, we feature two poets from the region.

[Click here to learn more about Poetry at the Table.](#)

For more information, [email Elizabeth Beck](#).

Bespoke Karmic Experience

Bespoke Karmic Experience (BKE) is an open mic event at BK's Cookies in Lexington, taking place on the second Sunday of every month. The goal of BKE is to establish a community event for artists and performers from different cliques to come together and inspire each other with their different modes and mediums in their creative endeavors. The open mic is open to many forms of performance art, including music and comedy. Each performer has a five-minute block to perform their material.

For more information, you can [click here to visit their Instagram profile](#). You can also [visit the BKE Facebook group by clicking here](#).

Kentucky State Poetry Society Reading Events

KSPS hosts a variety of reading events in Lexington and online. These include open mics, readings with featured poets, and KSPS member-exclusive events.

[Click here to learn more about upcoming reading events with KSPS.](#)

Last Monday Reading Series at Michler's

Join us on the last Monday of each month for an evening of literature at the Kentucky Native Café, where featured writers share words that invite listeners into new and interesting landscapes. In the warmth of summer, we gather under the trees and fairy lights in the café garden; in winter, we meet in the Michler's historic greenhouses. Doors open at 7:30 p.m., and readings begin at 8:00 p.m.

The Kentucky Native Café is typically closed on Mondays but opens specially for these gatherings to serve wine, beer, and a special cocktail for our community audience. Free parking is available at 446 E High St; limited parking at 417 E Maxwell.

[Click here to learn more about the Last Monday Reading Series.](#)

[Click here to access the application for prospective featured authors.](#)

Author Interview Opportunities

Interview Opportunities through the Carnegie Center

Prompt to Page Podcast

This podcast is a collaboration between the Carnegie Center and the Jessamine County Public Libraries (JCPL).

A JCPL librarian interviews published writers about their favorite writing prompts—exercises that can help inspire, focus, and improve your creative writing. Whether you're a beginner or a pro, a novelist, essayist, or poet, you'll find ideas and advice to motivate you to keep writing.

[Click here to learn more about the *Prompt to Page* podcast.](#)

If you would like to be the featured writer, [email Z Valentine](#).

Black & Lit Book Club

From the event organizer, Claudia Love Mair: "Thank you for your interest in having your book featured as a Black & Lit Book Club selection. Black & Lit highlights the work of Kentucky's most accomplished writers as well as emerging voices. We've featured traditionally published, indie published, self-published and hybrid books, in order to give opportunities to a variety of published authors.

While Black & Lit centers Black voices, we have on occasion interviewed other writers from marginalized groups. If you would like yours to be featured as a guest on Black & Lit, please [let us know]. Writers must have a connection to Kentucky, i.e., former or current Kentuckian, etc.

Keep in mind that Black & Lit is a bimonthly book club. Meeting only 6 times a year could mean authors interested in being featured may have to wait for quite awhile before we can get to them. We appreciate your patience.

Thank you for your inquiry. If you are selected we will contact you."

If you are interested in being featured in the Black & Lit Book Club, email [Claudia Love Mair](#).

Other Interview Opportunities

Kentucky Writers Roundtable on RadioLex

Kentucky Writers Roundtable engages literary folk from around the commonwealth in freewheeling conversation about their books, the writing process, and how their work reflects current events and the world around us. We cover all genres of books - poetry, fiction, and nonfiction.

Join panelists Linda Bryant, Jay McCoy and Kevin Nance at 8 p.m. Wednesdays on RadioLex.

[Click here to access the *Kentucky Writers Roundtable* episode archive.](#)

If someone has a book coming out, they can send the hosts a message through [the Facebook page](#). They may also [email Jay McCoy](#) or [Kevin Nance](#).

Signing and Selling Books

Signing and Selling Books through the Carnegie Center

Youth Meeting Authors

This program is designed to inspire careers in the literary arts by having students meet authors working in Kentucky.

Interested authors should [contact Brandon Hatfield](#).

Home Grown Authors

Homegrown Authors is a summer collaboration between the Lexington Farmers' Market, Carnegie Center for Literacy & Learning, and Kentucky Humanities to highlight Kentucky Authors.

[Click here to view the Home Grown Authors website.](#)

[Click here to learn how authors can get involved.](#)

Family Fun & Learning Night

During Family Fun & Learning Night (FFLN), kids and their families come to the Carnegie Center for food, activities, and free books. Most children in attendance are preschoolers and early elementary students. We try to give away books written by local authors that match the FFLN theme for a given event.

Interested authors of children's books should [contact Brandon Hatfield](#).

Other Opportunities to Sign and Sell Books

Kentucky Book Festival

The 44th annual Kentucky Book Festival will be held on Saturday, November 1, 2025, in Lexington, KY. Author participation will be by invitation only. To be considered for inclusion in our lineup, all authors must complete and submit this online application and a finished copy of the featured title book.

For additional information, [email Jay McCoy](#).

Lexington: Downtown Art on the Town Carts

Art on the Town provides free mobile art carts for eligible local artists to sell, demonstrate, or display their artwork in downtown Lexington. Artists participate

in ongoing downtown events such as Thursday Night Live, Farmer's Market, monthly Art on the Town at Tandy Park events, and a variety of downtown festivals and events.

Interested artists should review the program eligibility and guidelines, then fill out and submit the application.

[To learn more about the Downtown Art on the Town Carts in Lexington \(or to submit an application\), click here.](#)

Lexington Legendary Book Bash

The 2025 Lexington Legendary Book Bash will take place at the downtown Hyatt Regency on September 6th. Author tables with refreshments cost \$200. From the organizers' website: "This author signing event has been going strong since 2017 and we want to keep our readers and authors happy!"

[Click here to view the interest form for authors \(Google Forms\).](#)

Contests

Kentucky State Poetry Society

Grand Prix Poetry Contest: Open to all U.S. poets aged 18 and above, this contest welcomes poems on any topic and in any form, with each poem limited to 30 lines. Entrants can submit up to three poems per entry for a \$10 fee. The 2024 competition saw a wonderful turnout, with Silas House, the current Poet Laureate and nationally bestselling author, serving as the judge.

Chaffin/Kash Poetry Prize: Exclusive to KSPS members, this annual contest celebrates outstanding poetic works. The 2024 competition saw a record number of submissions, with Melissa Helton, Literary Arts Director of Hindman Settlement School, serving as the judge.

Student Contest: KSPS has one contest that students, grades 3-12, are eligible for. Winners are invited to share their poems at the Annual KSPS Conference in October. First-place winners will have their work published in Pegasus, the Literary Journal of the Kentucky State Poetry Society.

[Click here to visit the webpage for all current KSPS writing contests, including submission guidelines and other requirements.](#)

James Baker Hall Book Award for a Short Story Collection

Accents Publishing is pleased to continue the partnership with the James Baker Hall Foundation for the prestigious yearly James Baker Hall Book Award. In 2025, the award will recognize an unpublished collection of short stories by a Kentucky author. We define Kentucky author as someone who lives in Kentucky, has lived in Kentucky, has strong ties to Kentucky or whose work features a prominent Kentucky theme. The author of the winning manuscript will receive a \$3000 award and the manuscript will be published the following year by Accent Publishing, with the standard Accents Publishing contract.

[Click here to learn more about the James Baker Hall Book Award from Accent Publishing.](#)

Publications

Pegasus

Pegasus is the official poetry journal of the Kentucky State Poetry Society, dedicated to showcasing the diverse voices of poets across the Commonwealth and beyond. Published bi-annually in Spring and Fall, Pegasus features selected works highlighting a range of styles from traditional forms to free verse and experimental poetry.

Committed to fostering literary expression, Pegasus seeks poetry that is evocative, thought-provoking, and rich in language. Each issue reflects the depth and creativity of our poetry community, offering a space for both emerging and established poets to share their work.

Submissions are open to all, and detailed guidelines ensure a smooth process for contributors. We believe that the open submission policy increases the scope of Pegasus and highlights the widest possible range of voices. Whether capturing moments of nostalgia, exploring nature, or delving into contemporary themes, Pegasus continues the society's mission to inspire, encourage, and develop poets in Kentucky and beyond.

[Click here to learn more about *Pegasus* or submit your writing.](#)

Untelling

Untelling, the literary and arts magazine of the Hindman Settlement School, will be a print publication much like a standard literary journal in that it will be full of poems, stories, and essays, but will also feature full-color art and photography throughout.

There will be two issues a year, released in summer and winter, and while we won't limit the magazine to writers and pieces from Appalachia, the region will be our main heart.

[Click here to learn more about *Untelling*.](#)

Yearling

Yearling is a publication of Lexington-based Workhorse, an organization that also hosts Lexington Poetry Month (LexPoMo). *Yearling* publishes unsolicited poetry, and poetry from our community of working writers, once a year in December. Submissions are open year round and each submission receives feedback from editors. *Yearling* encourages simultaneous submissions for previously unpublished work. We do not consider sharing your poem on a blog, social media account, or online group as published. If your work is accepted by another online or print publisher, journal, or

magazine please withdraw your submission through Submittable. If you are withdrawing one or more poems from a group in a submission, you do not have to withdraw the entire submission, rather, notify us in a note through Submittable.

Contributors will receive 1 copy of the journal upon publication. Workhorse hopes to be able to pay poets by the end of the third year of publication.

There will be two issues a year, released in summer and winter, and while Workhorse won't limit the magazine to writers and pieces from Appalachia, the region will be their main heart.

[Click here to learn more about *Yearling* or submit your writing.](#)

Screen Door Press

Dedicated to discovering unique, exceptional, and varied voices within Black literary traditions, the Screen Door Press imprint will celebrate the very best in fiction across a broad range of categories. Its goal is to publish thought-provoking books that use relatable characters, strong narratives, and beautiful language to champion diverse views from throughout the Black diaspora. The Screen Door Press Imprint is sponsored by the Thomas D. Clark Foundation.

Two authors will each receive a publishing contract and a \$5,000 prize.

Screen Door Press is edited by Kentucky Writers Hall of Fame inductee Crystal Wilkinson.

[Click here to learn more about Screen Door Press and view the submission criteria.](#)

Fireside Industries

Fireside Industries, an imprint partnership of the University Press of Kentucky and Hindman Settlement School, exists to provide stability to the Appalachian literary tradition by publishing new works and reissues of classics that greatly contribute to the region.

As the publisher of a number of groundbreaking works about—and for—Appalachia, one of our goals is to place Appalachian dynamics in the context of global change and to show why place-based and regional studies still matter. Our topics of interest range from diversity and social inequalities to geography and political economy—from efforts to confront regional stereotypes to literature, the arts, and the ongoing social construction and re-imagination of Appalachia. We are pleased to join with Hindman

Settlement School to encourage, support, and nurture the diverse and rich voices of Appalachia.

[Click here to learn more about *Fireside Industries*.](#)

Retreats and Workshops

Appalachian Writers' Workshop

Make plans to join us for the 48th annual Appalachian Writers' Workshop. This week-long residency welcomes published and unpublished writers alike, all learning alongside one another in a supportive environment guided by the region's unique tradition.

The Workshop provides an opportunity to study craft in structured workshops, attend special topic sessions, and enjoy captivating readings by our award-winning faculty. This historic gathering is known for providing rigorous instruction in a family-like atmosphere, where writers of place come together at the banks of Troublesome to meet a year-round community. Beginning, emerging, and established writers are all encouraged to apply.

[Click here to learn more about the Appalachian Writers' Workshop.](#)

Troublesome Creek Writers Retreats

Troublesome Creek Writers Retreats offer a time each fall and spring for folks to gather in community with each other, work with a respected and published facilitator, and work independently on their writing projects.

[Click here to view upcoming events and register for a retreat.](#)

The Makery Online Writing Studio

The Makery at Hindman Settlement School is an online studio designed to nurture your imagination in a neighborly, supportive community.

Inside The Makery, you'll find opportunities to study with Guggenheim Fellows, Yale's Younger Poets, Poets Laureate, Weatherford and Chaffin Award recipients, acclaimed editors, intrepid journalists, and New York Times bestsellers—and at The Makery all of them are devoted to you: offering clear syllabi, accessible readings, and one-on-one or peer-to-peer workshops that share high standards in an encouraging atmosphere.

[Click here to learn more about upcoming three-week intensive online writing courses through The Makery.](#)

Ironwood Writers Studio

Ironwood Writers Studio at Hindman Settlement School is a week-long gathering of high school writers in the mountains of southeast Kentucky to explore various genres, grow their love of writing, and build a creative community of their peers. Students

study craft and practice fiction, poetry, and non-fiction with published authors and poets.

[Click here to learn more about the Ironwood Writers Studio.](#)

Winter Burrow

Winter Burrow is a great opportunity for many of our Hindman families to come together, such as our creative writers, our artists, our musicians, our community organizers, our teachers, and our scholars. We can share expertise and ideas across disciplines and genres and see how all our interests weave together and overlap.

In dreaming of this conference, we settled on the name Winter Burrow because we wanted to have an event that brought our Hindman family together at a time when campus is usually quiet, like calling the critters back into the den during those cold, darker months. It's a feeling of safety, rest, connection, dreaming, and learning.

It's the time of year of mind-work and heart-work before we emerge to the body-work of spring and summer. It's a pause of warmth and hunkering down with our kin. It's beautiful as a noun and a verb.

[Click here to learn more about Winter Burrow.](#)

Oak Ledge Writing Residency

Sometimes writers need to be in community, and sometimes they need a little isolation to focus. The Oak Ledge Writing Residency offers writers the opportunity to come to this historic campus and work on their own stories, poems, and projects.

Oak Ledge is a mecca for Appalachian writers looking for a retreat to pursue their craft in the footsteps of Appalachian literary giants.

Lucy Furman had Oak Ledge built in 1924 after the publication of *The Quare Women*. Young Albert Stewart and other children lived in the house with her for several years. After she left, James Still, who is well known for his work *River of Earth* and one of the founders of the Appalachian Writers' Workshop, moved in and lived there for decades until his death in 2001, which is why most often this building is referred to as Mr. Still's house. It was renovated in 2020 and the decision was made to leave his personal office as it was when he lived there.

The house itself has 1 bedroom with a queen bed, a full kitchen with a dining table, a full bath, laundry facilities, a living room, and Mr. Still's office. The office walls and other bookshelves throughout the house are filled with his personal library collection. Oak

Ledge has wifi available, is across the street from the main campus, and has a scenic view from its perch on the hillside.

[Click here to learn more about the Oak Ledge Writing Residency.](#)

Grants

Kentucky Foundation for Women

The Kentucky Foundation for Women (KFW) offers two annual grant programs: Artist Enrichment and Art Meets Activism.

The Art Meets Activism (AMA) grant supports feminist artists and organizations in Kentucky. Grantees must lead community members in participatory art making that directly advances positive social change. At KFW, we believe that active engagement in creativity and the arts, not passive observance, is what facilitates mind and body changes and creates lasting social change impact.

Applicants must demonstrate their commitment to feminism, their ability to lead community members in art making, and have a concrete plan for positive social change through arts-based activities. kfw.org, has Arts Meet Activism and Artist Enrichment grants and more

[Click here to learn more about the KFW Art Meets Activism grant.](#)

The Artist Enrichment (AE) grant provides opportunities for feminist artists and arts organizations to further their artistic development to create art for positive social change. Applicants may request funds for a range of activities including: artistic development, artist residencies, the exploration of new areas or techniques, or to build a body of work.

Applicants to the AE grant program should show high artistic quality in the art sample and should be able to demonstrate their commitment to feminism and their understanding of the relationship between art and social change. The grant program is arts-based and feminist in nature.

[Click here to learn more about the KFW Artist Enrichment grant.](#)

Kentucky Arts Council

The Kentucky Arts Council offers several funding opportunities. Of particular interest to writers are the Al Smith Individual Artist Fellowship Award and the Emerging Artist Award.

[Click here to learn more about Kentucky Arts Council grants.](#)