



# write around™

## PORTLAND

### **Volunteer Writing Workshop Facilitator Information**

Please read the following information prior to completing your application. If you have any questions about facilitation, the training or application, give us a call – 503.796.9224.

#### **Write Around Portland**

Write Around Portland runs volunteer-facilitated eight-ten week writing workshops for people affected by HIV/AIDS, people in prison, survivors of domestic violence, senior citizens in foster care, individuals recovering from addictions, people with physical and/or mental disabilities, teen parents, low income adults and those who might otherwise be unable to participate in writing workshops, because of income, isolation or other barriers. Our workshops are based on respect, writing and community. We also organize readings where participants share their writing with each other and with the greater community and publish anthologies of participants' writing.

#### **Our Workshops**

Write Around Portland's high quality, creative and unique workshops are generative, participant-centered, and they are based on experiential learning. The workshops foster connection and community-building through writing. Our workshop curriculum focuses on both generating new writing and developing the writing or revision and supports flexibility to meet the particular needs and interests of a given workshop group.

In our workshops, facilitators write alongside participants through a series of timed freewrites and positive, strength-building feedback. Workshop participants write stories, poems, memoirs, letters, essays while experimenting with imagery, character development, writing in different voices, dialogue and poetry/line breaks. Participants have the opportunity to share their writing and give and receive positive feedback to grow as writers and build respectful community. You can learn more about our workshop model and program on our website: [http://www.writearound.org/what/what\\_we\\_do.html](http://www.writearound.org/what/what_we_do.html).

#### **Volunteer Workshop Facilitators**

The success and quality of our writing workshops, readings and anthologies is made possible by a talented, trained, corps of volunteer workshop facilitators dedicated to building community through writing. Volunteers are central to our program's success and act as "the face of Write Around Portland" to workshop participants, to our partnering agencies/organizations and to the greater community. We provide ongoing support to facilitators throughout the workshop to ensure that it is a positive experience for both participants and facilitators.

Volunteer facilitators typically give approximately 4-5 hours of time per week during the workshop period, including the 2 hour workshop session. Our three seasonal workshop networks run in the Spring (February – April), Summer (June – August) and Fall (September – November).

#### **Facilitator Training**

Write Around Portland provides two high quality, 27 hour intensive trainings per year (usually seven weekday evenings and one weekend day over a three-four week period) for volunteers who are interested in facilitating our community writing workshops. We train 12 volunteers per training for a total of 24 per year.

The experiential trainings allow participants to gain a deep and practical understanding of our organization's values and philosophies and key concepts of facilitation, including how to create and sustain a safe community in which to write and share. The training also gives volunteers the opportunity to practice modeling successful, creative workshop facilitation.

## Training Applicants

We are looking for applicants who reflect the full diversity of our community and who have the ability and commitment to work respectfully with people who are low income, socially isolated or may otherwise face barriers to writing in community such as physical or mental disabilities. Individuals with experience in writing groups or workshops, a history of community involvement and volunteerism and/or group facilitation are encouraged to apply, although these are not requirements.

Applicants must have the time, commitment and ability to actively participate in the 27 hour training and facilitate a full eight-ten week/two hours per week Write Around Portland community writing workshop.

### Please note:

- We strongly encourage people who are interested in applying to the training to volunteer with Write Around Portland in another capacity *before applying* for the training. We have many volunteer opportunities throughout the year, which you can learn more about on our website or by giving us a call ([http://www.writearound.org/involved/get\\_involved.html](http://www.writearound.org/involved/get_involved.html) or 503-796-9224).
- Write Around Portland is grateful for the significant interest in our workshops and the large numbers of individuals who apply to be trained as workshop facilitators each year. We are, however, limited in the number of applicants we are able to accept into our trainings because of our commitment to provide high quality trainings and the capacity of an organization our size. We try to make the best possible matches of facilitators and specific workshops, and therefore, our selection process may reflect less upon a specific applicant than the needs of our organization, agency partners, participants or workshops.
- Write Around Portland needs a large pool of previously-trained and newly-trained volunteers to run our nearly 50 workshops per year. *Therefore, we are limited to training individuals who are strongly interested in and capable of facilitating workshops for Write Around Portland.* We are unable to train individuals who do not intend to or do not have the time to facilitate workshops with our organization. Because of the careful choices we must make as a small nonprofit organization, we ask that those interested take the same care in choosing whether or not to apply for our training.
- We genuinely appreciate every applicant's interest, and we welcome and encourage you to participate in other volunteer activities in our organization, whether or not you are accepted into the facilitator training.

Thank you so much for your interest in Write Around Portland! We look forward to receiving your application, and we will contact you about next steps in the application process at that time.

- Write Around Portland

# Write Around Portland

## Volunteer Writing Workshop Facilitator Training Application

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Daytime Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Evening Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_ Apt. # \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_

1. Are you at least 21 years of age?  Yes  No
2. Are you willing and able to commit to a minimum of 4-5 months of volunteer work with Write Around Portland - one intensive 27 hour training, then 2 hours per week for a 8-10 week writing workshop, prep time, two follow-up meetings, and to attend community reading?  Yes  No
3. Do you have your own transportation or ready access to public transportation?  Yes  No
4. Do you have written and verbal fluency in a language other than English? [Specifically, would your level of fluency allow you to comfortably facilitate a 8-10 week, 2 hour per week workshop in a language other than English?]  
 Yes\*  No \*If Yes, which language(s)? \_\_\_\_\_
5. How did you hear about Write Around Portland? \_\_\_\_\_  
*[If a person told you about our program, please write the individual's name above.]*
6. What, if any, is your previous experience with Write Around Portland? [Check all that apply.]  
 Volunteer  Workshop Participant  Donor  Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please attach your answers to the following questions, rewriting/retyping questions #7 through 12 before each answer:**

7. Why are you interested in being a volunteer workshop facilitator with Write Around Portland?
8. Briefly describe your current or previous volunteer and/or professional social service experience.
9. What does the phrase "safe space for writing" mean to you?
10. Briefly describe the role that writing plays in your life, including your interest in writing. You may wish to include descriptions of your writing practice and/or any past/current writing projects.
11. What experience have you had in writing workshops or groups as a participant?
12. What experience have you had as a facilitator of writing workshops or other sorts of groups?

*(continued on next page)*

13. With which of these groups are you most interested in working? (Please note that the groups we work with change each season. The following list does not represent all of the populations with which we have worked or will work.)

- Adults/seniors living on a low income
- Lesbian/gay/bisexual/transgender/queer youth/seniors
- Adults living with disabilities
- Adults in recovery from drug/alcohol addiction
- Adults living with mental illness
- Adult women in domestic violence situations
- Adults affected by HIV/AIDS or chronic illness
- Men in jail/prison
- Women in jail/prison
- Non-English-speaking adults - must have verbal and written fluency in participants' language
- "At risk" youth, including teen parents, youth in the juvenile justice system
- Adults who are homeless
- Youth who are homeless

14. Of the above groups, which would be your top choice and why?

15. When would you most likely be able to facilitate a 2 hour workshop? [Check all that apply.]

- Weekday mornings
- Weekday afternoons
- Weekday evenings
- Weekends
- February – April
- June – August
- September - November

16. Please list two references who can speak to your work with volunteerism, social service or any other field you feel is relevant. Please do not list a family member or partner/spouse.

Name:	Relationship to you:	Phone:
_____	_____	(____)_____
_____	_____	(____)_____

17. Is there anything else you would like us to know about you, your interest or your experience as part of this application?

18. Please include your resume with this application.

**Send your completed application and resume to:**

Thomas Cordova, c/o Write Around Portland, 917 SW Oak St. #406, Portland, OR 97205-2838  
Fax: 503.295.7767 or email: [tcordova@writearound.org](mailto:tcordova@writearound.org)  
Feel free to also call us at 503.796.9224 with questions.