



Volunteer Writing Workshop Facilitator Information & Training Application

Please read the following information prior to completing and submitting your application. If you have any questions about facilitation, the training or this application, call 503-796-9224.

Write Around Portland

Write Around Portland amplifies under-represented voices and builds community through our writing workshops, books and community readings. Our work is grounded in our values: respect, writing and community. Our mission is to change lives through the power of writing.

Our Workshops, Books and Readings

Since 1999, Write Around Portland has held volunteer-facilitated, ten-week writing workshops for adults and youth in hospitals, schools, treatment centers, prisons, low-income housing buildings, homeless shelters, senior centers and social service agencies. Our writing workshops are generative, participant-centered and are based on experiential learning. Our workshop curriculum focuses on both generating new writing and developing or revising that writing. The curriculum and our workshop model are flexible to meet the particular needs and interests of a given workshop group. At the end of every season of workshops, we publish anthologies of participants' writing, and we organize readings where participants share their writing with the greater community.

Workshop Facilitator Role and Requirements

The success 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, our Agency Partners and the public. We provide ongoing support and mentorship to facilitators throughout the workshop to ensure that it is a positive experience for both participants and facilitators.

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 and essays, while experimenting with imagery, character development, writing in different voices, dialogue and poetry. Participants, including the facilitator, share their writing and give and receive positive feedback to grow as writers and build a respectful community.

Once trained, facilitators volunteer approximately 5-6 hours per week during the workshop period, which includes facilitating the two-hour workshop session, weekly workshop prep and follow-up time, and weekly check-ins with staff. In addition, volunteers attend facilitator meetings and the book release party and reading at the end of the workshop. Our seasonal workshop networks run in the Spring (February – May) and Fall (September – December).

Facilitator Training

Write Around Portland's facilitator training has been refined over 20 years of experience. This professional, high-quality training is free to trainees. Each year, we hold two, 27-hour trainings for qualified volunteers who

are interested in facilitating our writing workshops. The trainings are typically held on evenings and weekends over a 4-week period. We train up to 12 volunteers per training.

The experiential trainings allow volunteers to gain a deep and practical understanding of our values and philosophies. Volunteers learn tools and strategies of successful facilitation, including how to create and sustain a respectful community in which to write and share, managing group dynamics and adapting the workshop to meet the needs of individuals and groups. Volunteers also practice modeling successful workshop facilitation.

Commitment to Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Access (DEIA)

Write Around Portland is committed to understanding and changing historical legacies of inequity and patterns of oppression, especially as applied to communities of color. We recognize that working towards equity requires active investments in changing structures and practices to be more culturally responsive. We are committed to advancing racial equity as a foundational element of all aspects of our work, which we believe will also inform our work addressing other inequities in our organization and our community.

We encourage applications from individuals reflective of the full diversity of our community, including people of color, native Spanish speakers, people with disabilities and people living on low incomes. Additionally, to meet the demand for our workshops in Spanish and other languages, we are especially interested in applicants who are bilingual.

Training Applicant Requirements

We are seeking applicants who believe in Write Around Portland's mission, share our values and reflect the full diversity of our community.

Applicants must:

- complete a volunteer application (separate from the facilitator training application) and orientation
- volunteer and/or demonstrate meaningful involvement with us prior to applying to the facilitator training. Our strongest applicants have demonstrated commitment to Write Around Portland's work through volunteering, attending readings and events, writing with us, and/or hosting writing workshops as an agency partner contact.
- have the time, commitment and ability to actively participate in the full 27-hour facilitator training, as well as facilitate a full 10-week Write Around Portland community writing workshop.
- follow all Write Around Portland policies and procedures.
- be able to meet deadlines, turn in paperwork, and follow-through on commitments.
- be able to manage workshop materials and transport multiple bags weighing as much as 20 pounds.
- be able to acquire weekly snacks for the workshop (with Fred Meyer gift cards or reimbursement from Write Around Portland).
- pass a criminal background check annually.
- be at least 21 years old.
- have the following qualities and characteristics:
 - warmth, friendliness and genuine interest in the well-being of others;
 - flexibility and ability to adapt to changing needs or circumstances (e.g. in workshops, with agency partners, with Write Around Portland staff, etc.)

- ability to adapt to groups' and individuals' changing moods, energies and needs, while also maintaining professional boundaries and within the construct of the Write Around Portland workshop model;
- openness and ability to work respectfully with new people and people with diverse backgrounds, health statuses, income and education levels, experiencing isolation, or those who may otherwise face barriers to writing in community;
- ability to create and maintain personal, professional and organizational boundaries; and
- represent our organization well to our participants, our partners, and our community.

Our strongest applicants have also:

- demonstrated a solid connection to Write Around Portland as a volunteer, donor, participant, partner; commitment to continuing that connection in a substantial and meaningful way, ideally for the long term.
- shown an aptitude for facilitation, including a good sense of how to engage and lead groups respectfully and sometimes through awkward or unexpected situations.
- been able to “read a room,” interpret physical cues, body language, and interpersonal and group dynamics.
- handled a significant amount of paperwork, with an attention to detail.
- experienced a Write Around Portland workshop, for example as a volunteer scribe or workshop participant (in our community writing workshops, workshops at HOTLIPS Pizza, *Prompt* at Powell's, etc.).

Important notes regarding the training application process:

- 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. However, we are limited in the number of applicants we are able to accept. We try to make the best possible matches of facilitators and specific workshops; therefore, our selection process may reflect less upon a specific applicant and more on the needs of our organization, agency partners, participants or workshops.
- To run up to 50 workshops per year, we need a large pool of previously-trained and newly-trained volunteers. Therefore, we are limited to training only those individuals who are strongly interested in and capable of facilitating workshops with and for Write Around Portland. We are unable to train individuals who do not intend or do not have the time to facilitate workshops with and for our organization. Because of the careful choices we must make as a small nonprofit organization with limited resources, we ask that potential applicants take the same care in choosing whether or not to apply for our training.
- We 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.
- If selected for our training, trainees must attend and be on time for every training session. Active participation in every training session is mandatory to successfully complete the training. Please contact us for training dates and times to compare your schedule and ensure your availability.
- Completed applications are due in our office by the specified application deadline. Applications received after that time will not be considered. If the applicant requests, we may consider the late application for the next training. We accept applications by email, US mail, fax or in our office.

Thank you 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.



Volunteer Workshop Facilitator Training Application

Name:			Date:			
	<i>First</i>	<i>Last</i>				
Address:						
	<i>Street Address</i>				<i>Apartment/Unit #</i>	
	<i>City</i>				<i>State</i>	<i>Zip Code</i>
Phone:	() -	Email Address:				
Birthday:	/ /	Occupation:		Employer:		

<p>1. When and how did you first learn about Write Around Portland?</p>	<p><i>[If an individual told you about us, include that person's name.]</i></p>
<p>2. Are you willing and able to commit to a minimum of 5 months of volunteering with Write Around Portland, which includes active participation in our 27-hour training, passage of a criminal background check, approximately 5-6 hours/week for a 10-week workshop (including facilitation, weekly workshop prep and follow-up time, and weekly check-ins with staff), three facilitator meetings, and attendance at the community reading at the end of the workshop?</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>
<p>3. When would you most likely be able to facilitate a workshop? <i>[Check all that apply.]</i></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> February – May <input type="checkbox"/> June – August <input type="checkbox"/> September – December</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Weekday mornings <input type="checkbox"/> Weekday afternoons <input type="checkbox"/> Weekday evenings <input type="checkbox"/> Weekends*</p> <p><i>*We rarely hold weekend workshops. If this is your only availability, this role may not be the best fit for you. Please call us to discuss other volunteer options.</i></p>
<p>4. If selected as a workshop facilitator, what form of transportation will you use to travel to and from the workshop location? <i>[Check all that apply.]</i></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Car <input type="checkbox"/> Bike <input type="checkbox"/> Bus/MAX <input type="checkbox"/> Other:</p>
<p>5. Do you have written and verbal fluency in a language other than English? <i>[Specifically, would your level of fluency allow you to comfortably facilitate a 10 week, 2 hours/week workshop in a language other than English?]</i></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes – language(s):</p>
<p>6. Do you have some level of experience in a language other than English that is less than the fluency described above?</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes – language(s):</p>
<p>7. What is your previous experience with Write Around Portland? <i>[Check all that apply.]</i></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Volunteer <input type="checkbox"/> Donor <input type="checkbox"/> Agency Partner Contact <input type="checkbox"/> Workshop participant [Which one(s)?] <input type="checkbox"/> Other:</p>

8. Where are you able to facilitate workshops? <i>[Check all that apply.]</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Washington County <input type="checkbox"/> Multnomah County <input type="checkbox"/> Clackamas County <input type="checkbox"/> Other:
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Essay Questions 9-14:

- Provide details and use *as much space as you need* to fully answer these questions.
- **If you are typing directly into this document:** The spaces after these questions expand as you type.
- **If you printed this document and are completing it by hand:** Do not write your answers in the spaces below. Recopy these questions onto a separate sheet of paper to give yourself space to complete these essay questions.

9. Why are you interested in being a volunteer workshop facilitator with Write Around Portland?

10. Describe your current or previous volunteer and/or professional social service experience.

11. What makes an environment comfortable for writing and sharing? Include specific qualities, actions, or tools in your answer.

12. What role does writing play in your life? Please describe that role and your interest in writing. You may wish to include descriptions of your writing practice and/or any past or current writing projects.

13. What experience, if any, have you had as a facilitator or leader of writing workshops or other groups?

14. Since 1999, we have partnered with more than 200 agencies, schools and organizations to hold workshops for the adults and youth they serve. Populations we have worked with include: adults and seniors living on a low income; LGBTQ youth and seniors; adults with disabilities; adults in recovery from addictions; adults living with mental illness; women who are survivors of domestic violence; adults living with chronic illness; men in jail or prison; women in jail or prison; “at risk” youth, including teen parents and youth in the juvenile justice system; and adults and youth who are experiencing homelessness. For a list of our agency partners and populations, visit our website, writearound.org.

Do you have a particular interest in or experience working with any of the above (or other) populations? List the population(s) and explain. *[Note that we cannot guarantee volunteers will be paired with a specific agency or population.]*

15. Provide two professional references who can speak about your experience, skills and qualifications for this particular role. Professional references do not include partner or spouse, friends or family members.

1. Name: _____ Relationship to you: _____ Phone: () - _____

2. Name: _____ Relationship to you: _____ Phone: () - _____

16. Include a current copy of your resume with this application.

Submit your completed application and resume by 5pm on the deadline date one of the following ways:

1. Email as an attachment to: volunteer@writearound.org with “Workshop Facilitator Application” in the subject line
2. Mail or drop off your application: Write Around Portland, 133 SW 2nd Ave, Suite 304, Portland, OR 97204
3. Fax to: 503-295-7767

Signature:	<i>Your electronic signature indicates that you have read and understand the facilitator information and application and that the information you provided is true and accurate.</i>	Date:	/ /
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