**Emerging Writer Commissions information**

Spread the Word is pleased to announce that applications are now open for London-based emerging writers to apply for Spread the Word’s Emerging Writer Commissions, as part of our 30th Anniversary commissioning programme.

The deadline for applications is: **1pm on Monday 7th October 2024**.

These commissions aim to showcase new work by three London-based emerging writers, and provide a developmental and profile-raising opportunity.

We also have commissioning opportunities available for London-based deaf and disabled writers. For more information visit: spreadtheword.org.uk/anniversary-commissions. If eligible, writers are welcome to apply for both commissions.

**Who are the commissions for?**

London-based emerging writers who are aged 18+, writing poetry, fiction or narrative non-fiction.

Writers should be unpublished and unagented. We consider this to mean:

* You do not currently have a literary agent representing you
* You do not have an existing book contract with a publisher
* You have not previously published a full-length work (i.e. a work of fiction or non-fiction over 30,000 words, or ten or more short stories published either in a collection or individually, or twenty or more poems either in a collection or published individually, or a full-length theatre script, screenplay, or radio play that has been professionally produced and/or broadcast)

Previously self-published writers can apply with a currently unpublished work.

Writers should be from underrepresented backgrounds. By this we mean:

* Black, Asian, or Global Majority
* D/deaf and Disabled
* LGBTQIA+
* Having had a Working Class upbringing
* On a low income (i.e. writers whose income is through benefits or paid on or below the London Living Wage hourly rate, and whose savings do not exceed the amount needed to pay for three months of living costs (rent, gas and electricity, food etc.)
* Care experienced

One of the three commissions will be awarded to a writer living in the borough of Lewisham.

The commissions are for writers who are committed to developing their writing and to taking forward their writing careers.

**For full eligibility criteria, please see our Terms and Conditions on the commission webpage**

**About the commissions**

Three writers will be commissioned to create a short original piece of written work. This work must be entirely new, rather than a development of pre-existing work.

The commissions have an open brief and there is no theme which the work has to respond to. We invite you to be bold with your ideas, and encourage you to experiment and take risks in your approach to style and content. Commissions can focus on your individual interests and creative lines of enquiry. Your lines of enquiry and creativity can draw on history, or look to the future or the present.

Mentoring and development support will be given to support writers to realise their ideas.

The commission development period will run from November 2024 to February 2025. The commissioned work will be launched both in print and live at the 2025 Deptford Literature Festival on Saturday 29 March 2025.

An access fund is in place to make reasonable adjustments for writers who require this.

We are looking to commission writers who can show a clear idea of what they want to do for this piece of work, that is realistic to deliver within the timeframe and resources available.

**Commissioned writers will each receive:**

* £2,000 commission fee
* Three sessions with a mentor
* One to one development support from Spread the Word
* Publication of their work in the Deptford Literature Festival magazine
* A platform to showcase their work to an audience at Deptford Literature Festival and online

**Commissioned writers will be expected to:**

* Produce a new piece of commissioned writing
* Meet project deadlines, including a deadline for print publication
* Showcase the commissioned work at an event as part of the 2025 Deptford Literature Festival on Saturday 29 March 2025
* Take part in a panel discussion as part of the Festival about your work, creative practice and the process of being commissioned
* Support the promotion of the completed commissions

**Commission judges**

The commissions will be judged by Joelle Taylor and Olumide Popoola

**Joelle Taylor**

Joelle Taylor is a queer, working class author of six plays and four collections of poetry, most recently *C+nto and Othered Poems*, winner of the TS Eliot Prize and Polari Prize for LGBTQ+ literature. Her debut novel, *The Night Alphabet*, was published by Riverrun in 2024. A fellow of the Royal Society of Literature and the Royal Society of Arts, Taylor is the host and co-curator of Out-Spoken, the UK’s premier poetry and music club, currently resident at the Southbank Centre. She has featured regularly on BBC radio and television, and as a performer has toured the UK with Neil Bartlett’s stage adaptation of Derek Jarman’s *Blue*.

**Olumide Popoola**

Olumide Popoola is a Nigerian German writer. Her publications include a novella, short stories, poems, essays, creative nonfiction, a play, and the critically acclaimed novel *When We Speak of Nothing*. She holds a PhD in creative writing and has lectured in creative writing at various universities. She is the creator and leader of ‘The Future is Back’, a development scheme for emerging LGBTQ+ writers. She is currently touring her latest novel *Like Water Like Sea*, which was published in May 2024.

**Commissions timeline:**

**Mon 7 Oct, 1pm** - Applications close

**By Fri 25 Oct** - All applicants are notified with the outcome of their submission

**Monday 4 Nov**- shortlisted writers are invited to short online interview

**Sat 29 Mar** - commissions launched at the Deptford Literature Festival event and in the festival magazine (in print and online)

**Preparing to apply**

If it is useful for you, you can view the application form questions and prepare your responses by downloading the [draft application form](https://www.spreadtheword.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/EWC-Postal-Entry-Form.docx)

**How to apply**

**Online**

Please submit your application via [this Submittable link](http://spreadtheword.submittable.com/submit): [spreadtheword.submittable.com/submit](https://spreadtheword.submittable.com/submit)

Written, video or audio responses can be given to any narrative questions. You will need to submit a sample of your work in written English.

Please note you will need to create a Submittable account to make your online application. This is free to do. If you are having any issues with this, please contact: [hello@spreadtheword.org.uk](mailto:hello@spreadtheword.org.uk)

OR

**Post**

To enter by post, please [download the postal entry form](https://www.spreadtheword.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/EWC-Postal-Entry-Form.docx). Send your completed postal application form along with your sample of your work to: Disabled Writers Commissions, Spread the Word, The Albany, Douglas Way, London, SE8 4AG.

**Postal entries need to reach us by 1pm on Monday 7th October 2024.**

Please note we cannot return your writing sample so please make sure this is a copy of your work. We will email you to acknowledge receipt of your application.

**What happens after you’ve applied**

We will read every submission and invite up to six writers to a short online interview on **Monday 4 November**.

**Who to contact if you have questions**

If you have any questions about the commissions, please contact: hello@spreadtheword.org.uk.

If you have any questions about access, please contact: Tom at Spread the Word, tom@spreadtheword.org.uk