



London Writers Awards Self-Care Brief

Spread the Word are seeking a UK-based professionally qualified counselling or psychology practitioner registered with a relevant professional organisation accredited by the Professional Standards Authority, (e.g. BACP, RCD, HCPC, NMC, UKCP, NCS, BPC), with experience of delivering workshops or talks to groups in person or online, and, ideally, who is themselves a writer or artist or has experience of working in the creative industries to run the self-care strand of our London Writers Awards¹ programme.

This Brief outlines our work, the London Writers Awards programme, the context in which it is operating alongside the details of the work in hand.

Spread the Word particularly welcomes and encourages applications from practitioners with lived experience and/ or an understanding of the issues most affecting the communities we work with and for. All reasonable adjustments will be made for shortlisted candidates.

Please note: this a freelance contract open to UK based practitioners only.

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1. Who We Are

Spread the Word is London's Writer development agency, which means we are here to help London's writers make their mark – on the page, the screen and in the world.

We do this by kick starting the careers of London's best new writers, and energetically campaigning to ensure that publishing truly reflects the diversity of the city. We support the

¹ <https://www.spreadtheword.org.uk/projects/london-writers-awards/>

creative and professional development of writing talent, by engaging those already interested in literature and those who will be, and by advocating on behalf of both.

Spread the Word is committed, collaborative and adventurous. Operating in one of the most diverse and creative cities in the world, our work is focused on:

- Writers having the time, space and money to produce quality work and live as a writer;
- Readers and audiences experiencing a greater range of writing produced by London writers;
- More diverse writers being published by publishing houses and other media.

We act as a dynamic broker between writers, producers, agents, publishers, arts, and non-arts organisations. We manage a number of projects to support us to achieve our vision, including:

- a) London Writers Awards
- b) Young People's Laureate for London
- c) Life Writing Prize

Spread the Word has a national and internationally recognised expertise and track record in the development and management of schemes for diverse writers and has led the literature and publishing sectors in commissioning research into diversity that has both ground-breaking and change making.

Our *Writing the Future* Report² (2015) provided the evidence base for a range of initiatives across the publishing industry. We are a partner with *The Bookseller* on the recently launched *Rethinking 'Diversity' in Publishing* Report³ (June 2020) led by Dr Anamik Saha and Dr Sandra van Lente, Goldsmiths, University of London and the first academic study in the UK addressing the lack of diversity in the UK publishing industry.

Spread the Word is a charity and a National Portfolio Organisation of Arts Council England.

2. About the London Writers Awards

Set up in 2018, the London Writers Awards is a highly regarded annual development scheme for talented writers from communities and backgrounds currently under-represented in publishing: Black, Asian, minority ethnic writers, disabled writers, lesbian, bisexual, gay, trans-sexual and queer writers and working-class writers.

The Awards aim to support writers to complete their manuscripts and to get agented. Thirty writers are selected each year from open submission. The Awards are free to participate in

² <https://www.spreadtheword.org.uk/writing-the-future/>

³ <https://www.rethinkingdiversity.org.uk>

and offer bursaries and an access fund. The genres covered by the Awards are: literary fiction (including short stories); commercial fiction; narrative non-fiction and children's/YA.

It is an intensive scheme for advanced, un-agented writers, offering critical feedback groups, introductions to and contact with the publishing industry, 1-2-1 feedback and professional development sessions and creative and career masterclasses.

3. Context for the 2021 London Writers Awards

Due to Covid-19, the 2021 London Writers Awards will take place predominantly online using Zoom and Slack. Subject to government guidance, activity may move to in person towards the end of this year's programme (October 2021).

The programme places demands on each of the writers in terms of progressing with their work in progress alongside balancing and managing: their self-perceptions as a writer (many of the writers have little experience of being part of a structured development programme) and day to day life, relationships and work. We know from feedback from participants that building self-care and wellbeing into their practice and day to day life can support the writers to maintain and progress their work and their ambitions as a writer.

We also know from running the Awards over the past two years that being part of a supportive writing community is critical not only to writers progressing with their work but also to their mental health and wellbeing. Running the programme online presents challenges in not only creating a shared supportive space but also in the cohort building relationships both within their own critical feedback groups and across the wider cohort.

4.The Brief

a. Primary Task

Spread the Word is seeking to engage a professionally qualified counselling or psychology practitioner registered with a relevant professional organisation accredited by the Professional Standards Authority (e.g. BACP, RCD, HCPC, NMC, UKCP, NCS, BPC) with experience of delivering workshops or talks to groups in person or online, and, ideally, who is themselves a writer or artist or has experience of working in the creative industries to run the self-care strand of our 2021 London Writers Awards programme.

b. Objectives

Spread the Word is looking for support with creating and delivering a self-care package for the writers participating in the in the 2021 London Writers Awards.

The main objective of the self-care strand of work is to: help writers identify and respond to their self-care needs and to help foster a supportive and constructive environment in which writers can pursue their creative practice and ambition.

c. Outputs

The Counselling Practitioner will provide four online talks or workshops and a resource pack as part of the mental well-being and self-care strand of the 2021 programme.

The postholder will develop their plans for the workshops and resource pack in consultation with the Spread the Word team and will attend preparatory and debrief meetings.

d. Timeline and Delivery

The London Writers Awards 2021 will run from January to June and September to October 2021. The self-care workshops are currently scheduled to take place at key points across the programme. Please note that we are open to being flexible about when they take place in response to the needs of the cohort.

December 2020	Counselling Practitioner appointed
January 2021	Preparatory meeting with Spread the Word team
23 January	Short introductory session with 2021 cohort at WritersLab
February	Resource pack developed and distributed to participants First self-care workshop takes place (date tbc)
June (date tbc)	Second online workshop delivered
September (date tbc)	Third online workshop delivered
October (date tbc)	Fourth online workshop delivered
October (date tbc)	Debrief meeting with Spread the Word team

e. Budget

The fee for the work is £4,000 inclusive and offered on a freelance basis.

f. Project management

The work and contract will be managed by Bobby Nayyar, programme manager for the London Writers Awards.

The work will have input and oversight from Ruth Harrison, director, and Eva Lewin, writer development manager.

6. How to apply

Please note that this contract is for UK based practitioners only.

Please email the following to hello@spreadtheword.org.uk by the deadline of: **9am, Monday 23 November 2020**:

- Your cover letter (no longer than two sides of A4) outlining your understanding of the brief, how you would approach the role and your relevant experience;
- Your CV;

- Details of two referees;
- Evidence of registration (scans are fine).

Shortlisted candidates will be interviewed online on Monday 7 December 2020. Please confirm if you can attend in your application email. If you cannot make this date, please let us know your availability.

Please let us know of any reasonable adjustments that will need to be made, if you are invited to be interviewed.

Please make your application email subject heading: London Writers Awards Self-Care

If you would like further information or to talk about what's involved prior to applying, please email eva@spreadtheword.org.uk to arrange a call.