



**APPLICATION GUIDELINES FOR  
NATIONAL ARTS COUNCIL – INTERNATIONAL WRITING PROGRAM FALL RESIDENCY 2026  
AT THE UNIVERSITY OF IOWA**

The National Arts Council is pleased to partner with the University of Iowa’s renowned International Writing Program (IWP), to offer a fully-paid, 11-week residency for up to two Singapore writers in 2026.

The residency is open to writers who write in any one of Singapore’s official languages: English, Chinese, Malay and Tamil. The selected candidate will be required to be conversant in English. The final candidate to be selected and funded every year is subject to the merits of the candidates who apply and the competitive assessment criteria as outlined by IWP.

<b>NAC-IWP Fall Residency 2026</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 19 August to 28 October 2026</li> <li>• In-person residency at Iowa City, USA</li> <li>• Fully paid for (this includes airfare, housing, visa fees, insurance, domestic travel, and meals and incidental expenses)</li> </ul>
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**1. OBJECTIVES OF THE PROGRAMME**

This initiative is part of the National Arts Council’s ongoing efforts to:

- Support Singapore’s literary talent in developing their craft and capabilities; and
- Enable networking opportunities and cultural exchange with international counterparts, through the established and influential IWP, which has a long history of connecting well-established writers from around the globe.

The IWP Fall Residency aims to provide visiting writers with the time and space to write, while developing meaningful and productive relationships as they take part in the vibrant social and academic literary scene in Iowa. It is for these reasons that there are four key components of the residency:

- (a) Residents stay in downtown Iowa City, for 11 weeks.
- (b) Residents have to participate in at least one public reading.
- (c) Residents have to participate in at least one discussion in the IWP Panel Series.
- (d) Residents have to participate in the mid-residency travel period, and the final travel period<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> The IWP will arrange group travel periods to cities like Chicago, Washington D.C., and New York City, in the middle of the residency and near the end of the residency. The purpose of these trips is to introduce IWP writers to different, important, and diverse American literary communities. Activities will include city tours, visits to sites of important cultural or historical significance, public events, community engagement, and educational outreach.

For detailed information on the residency's programme for participants, and their optional activities and further opportunities for collaboration, please see [Annex A](#).

## 2. ELIGIBILITY

Applicants eligible for this residency should:

- a) Be Singapore Citizens or Singapore Permanent Residents who are actively engaged in the literary arts industry and are published writers in any of Singapore's four official languages: English, Chinese, Malay or Tamil.
- b) Possess a record of past achievements (at least one published book or volume, or a sizable number of works in anthologies, journals, or literary magazines), strong artistic merit, wide recognition among their industry peers, commitment towards advancing the art form, and contribution to the Singapore arts scene.
- c) Be in the process of creating a new, original work.
- d) Be inclined to learn, explore different perspectives and share their own knowledge and perspectives on creative writing.
- e) (For writers working in Malay, Chinese or Tamil) Have sufficient fluency in English to benefit from an 11-week writing residency where intensive discussion of literary and cultural issues forms a vital part of the experience.
- f) Be comfortable with cross-cultural dynamics and interested in close interaction with artists from diverse cultures and backgrounds through numerous IWP-led outreach and engagement events.

## 3. ASSESSMENT

Applications will be assessed competitively according to the following criteria:

- a) Whether the applicant has a strong literary background demonstrated through published works, recognition through awards or positive reviews, and ongoing productivity in creating new literary content.
- b) Whether the proposed manuscript idea shows originality, creativity, and literary merit while aligning with the applicant's demonstrated potential and capabilities.
- c) Whether the residency will effectively support both the applicant's creative growth and manuscript development, by providing the appropriate structure, resources, and opportunities that match their literary level and project needs.
- d) Whether the applicant has a clear post-residency plan and possesses the necessary expertise and resources to continue developing and potentially publish their work beyond the residency period.

## 4. TERMS OF AWARD

The selection process is highly competitive and up to two Singapore writers will be offered the residency in 2026.

The selected participant will receive a stipend to cover meals and other incidentals, and have their airfare, visa fees, housing, transport and insurance costs covered while they attend the residency.

Note: The Award excludes any additional costs incurred by the participants.

## 5. CONDITIONS OF AWARD

The applicant shall inform NAC of their acceptance of the offer within 14 days from the day of the notification, failing which the award will be deemed to have been withdrawn.

The successful applicant:

- a) Should devote their whole time to the residency and apply themselves to the residency to the best of their ability and to the satisfaction of the supervisors, tutors and instructors associated therewith;
- b) Participate significantly in the residency's offerings;
- c) Comply with the rules and regulations in force at, and the directions of, the university and the place of training to which they may be attached;
- d) Expect to be involved in any NAC publicity (across a variety of media) regarding the International Writing Program at any time before, during or upon completion of the residency;

To help NAC in the evaluation and management of the programme, the successful applicant should provide NAC with the following within two months upon completion of the residency:

Written Evaluation Report detailing:

- new creative project/s accomplished during the residency;
- summary of key learning points and residency experiences;
- short and long-term initiatives for employing ideas and skills gained;
- visual supporting documents (such as pictures) and;

Evidence of Work accomplished during the residency period:

- Copy of new creative project or writing developed during the residency programme, including draft manuscript/s of new work/s.

These reports and draft manuscripts are for archival purposes only and will not be published and/or circulated publicly.

NAC also reserves the right to review or withdraw the programme award should any of the following occur:

- a) The proposed project receiving the funding is changed significantly without the prior written consent of NAC. NAC must be informed in writing of any changes to the proposed project.
- b) The selected participant is not able to deliver the proposed project.
- c) The funding is not used for the purpose for which it was awarded.
- d) Wrong and/or misleading information is provided in the application form, either deliberately or otherwise.
- e) Participation in any illegal or negligent acts during any point of the programme.

## 6. APPLICATION PROCEDURE

All applications are to be submitted via [FormSG](#) by **15 June 2026 (Monday), 2359hrs.** Late or incomplete applications will not be accepted. The application must include the following documents:

- a) Detailed curriculum vitae of applicant, focusing on applicant's literary works; and
- b) Representative sample of a past work in English (between 10 to 15 pages long);

For enquiries, please contact Ms Gladys Chua (email: [gladys\\_chua@nac.gov.sg](mailto:gladys_chua@nac.gov.sg)).

### **About the [International Writing Program \(IWP\)](#)**

Administered by the University of Iowa, the IWP is the oldest and largest multinational writing residency in the world. Since 1967, over 1,600 writers from more than 160 nations have taken part in the Fall Residency. The goal of the IWP is to provide authors a one-of-a-kind inter-cultural opportunity and the time and space to write, read, translate, study, conduct research, travel, give readings, stage work, and become part of the vibrant literary and academic community at the University of Iowa and in Iowa City, the first American city designated a UNESCO City of Literature.

## NAC-IWP Fall Residency 2026 Requirements for Participants

The selected participants will need to fulfil the following requirements:

### In-Person Residency Programme (19 August to 28 October 2026)

#### Compulsory Activities

- Attend a 11-week long, in-person residency in downtown Iowa City. Writers will have their own private rooms, which include a private bathroom, mini-fridge, water kettle. As part of campus life, IWP writers are also given visiting scholar privileges, which provides access to the University of Iowa library system.
- Work on a new creative project or writing developed during the residency programme, including draft manuscript(s) of new work.
- Participate in at least one public reading. The IWP sponsors a well-attended Friday afternoon reading series in the IWP's own Shambaugh House. In addition, numerous readings are scheduled through the sponsorship of foreign-language departments, civic entities, or other groups.
- Participate in at least one discussion in the IWP Panel Series. These weekly panels take place each Friday at noon at the Iowa City Public Library, and present discussions on literary issues and on the influences and forces shaping writing around the world.
- The presentations are streamed live and archived online. Topics in the past have included "Writing Across Languages," "Teaching Writing," "The Migrant as Figure in Literature Today," "What Matters Now: Social Change in the World," "Spectral Gender," "Freedom's Limits," and many others. These discussions draw audiences from across the University and local community.
- Participate in the mid-residency travel period, and the final travel period. The IWP will arrange group travel periods to cities like Chicago, Washington D.C., and New Orleans. The purpose of these trips is to introduce IWP writers to different, important, and diverse American literary communities. Activities will include city tours, visits to sites of important cultural or historical significance, public events, community engagement, and educational outreach.

#### Optional Activities

Participants are strongly encouraged to tap on the opportunities afforded to them where possible.

- Participate in the International Translation Workshop, *if possible*. For residents who are *not* writing in English, graduate-level students of literary translation and creative writing at the University will work one-on-one with IWP writers in a workshop format to create polished English translations of Fall Residency participants' materials. The class meets to discuss the translations in progress on Friday afternoons throughout the semester.

- Participate in IWP Cinematheque, *if possible*. IWP writers may be invited to introduce, screen, and lead a discussion of a film of their choice. This series is an opportunity to bring little-known works to the attention of local film audiences, film scholars, and University of Iowa undergraduate students.
- Participate in a theatre collaboration, *if possible*. The IWP arranges opportunities for the works of writers-in-residence to be read dramatically, and for collaborations between writers and performance artists. One venue for this is [Global Express](#), an evening of dramatic readings of 10-15 minute excerpts and pieces written by IWP writers by actors from the University's Division of Performing Arts. Other opportunities may arise through the University, local venues, or the [Portland Stage Company of Maine](#).
- Participate in dance collaborations, *if possible*. A long-standing collaboration, similar to Global Express, IWP writers work with choreographers and dancers in the University's Department of Dance, culminating in a public performance that brings the writers' words off the page and onto the stage.
- Participate in cultural activities and field trips, *if possible*. Residents will receive complimentary tickets to occasional events including concerts, performances and regional activities. In recent years these have included a trip to the historical Amana Colonies, nature hikes, and more. Performances and lectures by American and international performers, academics, writers, and public figures of note are held almost nightly at the University of Iowa and in Iowa City.
- Participate in community interactions, *if possible*. A particular benefit of the programme involves invitations to interact more deeply with a wide range of local community members, including individual and group visits or dinners in the homes of faculty members and IWP supporters; talks given by IWP writers for area groups (including the [Iowa City Foreign Relations Council](#) and [UI Senior College](#)); classroom visits to local elementary, middle, and high schools and colleges; and trips to speak and/or read across the state of Iowa.
- Participation in other IWP projects, *if possible*. Residents are encouraged to lend their expertise to the various initiatives at the IWP, including [Digital Learning Courses](#) and [Between the Lines](#). Possibilities include recording interviews or talks about the craft of writing, facilitating creative collaborations, and mentoring young writers.