



Partnership Agreements

Poetry Out Loud Component

Information Sheet

Poetry Out Loud is a national arts education program that encourages the study of great poetry by offering free educational materials and a dynamic recitation competition for high school students across the country. This program helps students master public speaking skills, build self-confidence, and learn about literary history and contemporary life. It is a component of the State Arts Agencies (SAA) Partnership Agreement with the National Endowment for the Arts (Arts Endowment). For additional information about Poetry Out Loud, please visit www.poetryoutloud.org.

BASICS:

Poetry Out Loud (POL) starts at the classroom/school or at the local level with an area organization. Winners then may advance to a regional and/or state competition, and ultimately to the national finals. Awards and placements are determined solely by the judges' scores based on the Poetry Out Loud Evaluation Criteria.

SAA's recruit schools and/or organizations to implement the Poetry Out Loud curriculum. Schools and organizations hold local-level poetry recitation contests and identify a champion to move on to the next stage of competition. SAA's are responsible for holding a state final Poetry Out Loud competition. All activities should be supported by a comprehensive program planned by the SAA and any contracted partners.

ELIGIBILITY:

For the most up-to-date rules and eligibility requirements, please visit,

<https://www.poetryoutloud.org/about-poetry-out-loud/rules-eligibility/>

Only schools and organizations registered with their state Poetry Out Loud coordinator are eligible for the competition.

- **Grade Level:** Only currently enrolled students in grades 9-12 are eligible, with an exception made for 8th-grade students participating in a 9th- through 12th-grade class.
- **Legal Participation Requirements:** No student may be excluded from participating in Poetry Out Loud on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, disability, or national origin. Schools may determine eligibility for classroom and school level Poetry Out Loud programming pursuant to local and state law.
- **Prize Requirements:** The Poetry Foundation provides and administers all aspects of the monetary prizes awarded in Poetry Out Loud. In order to receive prizes, State champions and runners up must submit a properly-completed [IRS Form W-9](#) or [Form W-8BEN](#) in order to be eligible to receive the prize money. Prizes are not transferable and are taxable to the recipient; prizes issued to individuals submitting a Form W-8 may be subject to additional withholding requirements.
- **Travel and Accommodations Requirements:** The Poetry Foundation provides and administers all aspects of the travel for State Champions to the Poetry Out Loud National Finals. State Champions (or their legal guardians) and their chaperones must submit a properly-completed

[IRS Form W-9](#) or [Form W-8BEN](#) before travel and lodging are arranged by the Poetry Foundation. The value of travel and lodging are taxable to the recipients; the value of travel and lodging issued to individuals submitting a Form W-8 may be subject to additional withholding requirements.

- **State Finals:** A student may not advance to the state finals without competing in a lower-level competition.
- **Homeschooled Students:** Homeschooled students may participate by competing in a contest at a local school (at the school's discretion) or with other local homeschooled students. Contact your state coordinator for specific guidelines.
- **School Not Participating?** Students unable to participate at a local school should contact their state Poetry Out Loud coordinator to discuss other opportunities for inclusion in the state's official competition.
- **Repeat Champions:** National Champions (1st place winners) are not eligible to compete in subsequent years even if they are still in grades 9-12
- **Relatives:** Avoiding any potential conflicts of interest (or the appearance of conflicts of interest) helps to preserve the integrity of the contest and make it fair for all students. Relatives* of national organizers (National Endowment for the Arts and the Poetry Foundation) may compete in school, local, regional, and state competitions, but are not eligible to advance to National Finals. Relatives* of State Art Agency Coordinators or affiliated contractors and sponsors may not compete past the school level in that particular state. *Relatives for this age group are defined as child, sibling, or any member of the employee's household.

AWARDS:

The Poetry Foundation provides and administers all monetary prizes awarded in Poetry Out Loud. Awards are made in the form of lump sum cash payments, reportable to the IRS. Tax liabilities are the sole responsibility of the winners and their families. Poetry Out Loud funding as part of the Arts Endowment Partnership Agreement grant may not be used to supplement the awards.

1. State awards:

Each state champion will receive \$200. The state champion's representing school or organization will receive a \$500 stipend for the purchase of poetry materials. One runner-up in each state will receive \$100; their school will receive \$200 for the purchase of poetry materials.

2. National awards:

A total of \$50,000 in awards and school stipends will be given at the Poetry Out Loud National Finals, with a \$20,000 award for the National Champion. The second-place winner will receive a \$10,000 award; the third- place winner will receive \$5,000; and the fourth- to ninth-place finalists will each receive \$1,000. Their representing schools or organizations will receive \$500 for the purchase of poetry materials. There will be one honorable mention award in each semifinal competition. That student will not advance to the finals, but will receive a \$1,000 cash award and a \$500 stipend for their representing school or organization.

TIMELINE:

For specific dates and details, contact the Poetry Out Loud Program Manager listed on the last page.

MONTH	SAA DEADLINES	DETAILS
DECEMBER	First Friday - notify Arts Endowment of your state finals date	Send the date of your state finals to poetryoutloud@arts.gov .
JANUARY	Last Friday - POL participation lists due to Arts Endowment.	Send the list of schools/organizations participating in POL in your state to poetryoutloud@arts.gov . Arts Endowment staff will provide an Excel template for completing this task.
MARCH	Third Monday - deadline for State Finals . State contests must take place by this day. Third Thursday - deadline for National Finals student registration, including poem selections and award paperwork.	If your state Poetry Out Loud finals take place <u>after</u> the third Monday in March, you risk not having your state's champion listed in the National Finals program or printed on award certificates and plaques
Late APRIL - MAY	POETRY OUT LOUD NATIONAL FINALS	Each state champion competes in the National Finals, where more than \$50,000 in monetary prizes are awarded.
JUNE	Last Friday - Poetry Out Loud Final Descriptive Report due.	All Poetry Out Loud Final Descriptive Reports will be submitted through REACH. Instructions and more information will be available at: https://www.arts.gov/grants/manage-your-award .

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:**1. When will SAAs get the funds?**

Poetry Out Loud funds are part of your Arts Endowment Partnership Agreement grant and may be requested as soon as you start incurring cost for the POL program during the approved period of performance for your award. See the **How to Manage your National Endowment for the Arts Award and eGMS REACH Handbook** for instructions on requesting payment. Coordinate payment requests with your authorizing official at your SAA.

2. Must the grant funds be matched?

Unless otherwise stated in your award letter, the entire Partnership Agreement grant must be matched

one-to-one with state funds. As noted in the **General Terms and Conditions for Partnership Agreements**, while the overall Partnership Agreement is matched one-to-one, each individual component, such as Poetry Out Loud, does not necessarily need to be if the match is met under another component. However, all funds allocated for Poetry Out Loud activities must be spent on this program; POL funds may not be allocated to other grant components. If it appears you are not going to use all the Arts Endowment POL funds, contact the Office of Grants Management at grants@arts.gov.

3. Can we use third-party in-kind contributions as match?

No, per the Arts Endowment's legislation, in-kind match cannot be used to meet the minimum matching requirement for your award.

4. How may the funds be spent?

Arts Endowment funds may be used for administrative expenses of the state Poetry Out Loud program, including staffing, in compliance with the **General Terms and Conditions for Partnership Agreements**. Funds may be used to send writers or teaching artists to give workshops in schools. Funds can also be sub-granted or subcontracted to a local partner— as long as the program is implemented and the state finals are held in cooperation with the SAA. Arts Endowment funds can be used for travel expenses to bring school-level champions to the state finals. Grant funds may also be used to pay travel costs for a SAA representative to attend the National Finals. Typically, costs include guest artists, transportation, and the state finals event.

IMPORTANT: Arts Endowment grant funds and state matching funds may not be used for receptions, parties, additional monetary or merchandise prizes, or any other items of cost that are noted as unallowable in 2 CFR Part 200 - Subpart E.

5. If we cannot pay for receptions, how do we feed students who participate in our state final event or teachers during workshops?

Students traveling to a state final competition may be offered a per diem. Alternately, grant funds may support working lunches (excluding costs for employees of the grantee organization). If you have day-long events for students or teachers you may serve lunch or support their meals during these Poetry Out Loud related activities. This is considered subsistence.

6. May we use funds for judge stipends at the state finals?

Yes, SAAs may use Arts Endowment funds for stipends and/or travel expenses for judges undertaken during the period of performance of the Partnership Agreement.

7. Must my program be statewide?

No, a statewide program is not a requirement.

8. Can state arts agencies use a partner to administer the program?

Yes. SAAs may run Poetry Out Loud in-house, or they may contract or subgrant out some or all of the program. Many states plan to work with partners in administering Poetry Out Loud. We do ask, however, that the SAAs stay closely involved in the program. SAAs should retain ultimate oversight and ownership of the project, as partners with the Arts Endowment. The Arts Endowment believes that the SAAs will continue to benefit from high visibility in this program and have many resources that are necessary for the program to succeed.

9. Is there room for other elements in Poetry Out Loud?

Poetry Out Loud should align with your SAA’s educational priorities. To serve that need, we encourage SAAs to think creatively about artist residencies, teacher in-services, creative writing workshops, and other educational opportunities that will enhance a student’s appreciation for poetry. Of course, there is no requirement that SAAs incorporate these additional components into their programs.

POETRY OUT LOUD CONTACTS:

Poetry Out Loud Program Manager	State Partnership Agreements Specialist
<p>For general information about Poetry Out Loud, including how to run a state program:</p> <p>Lauren Miller Program Manager millerl@arts.gov Phone: (202) 682-5490</p>	<p>For information on Poetry Out Loud funding for your State or Jurisdictional Arts Agency and ways in which Poetry Out Loud is incorporated into your partnership agreement:</p> <p>Lara Holman Garritano States and Regions Specialist garritanol@arts.gov Phone: (202) 682-5586</p>