

MAKING A LIVING AS A POET



Magazines & Anthologies

Publishers will look for a track record of being published when considering your work, so publishing individual poems in magazines and journals is a good way to get started. Some magazines pay, but all should give you a free copy of the issue. For comprehensive UK magazine listings see:

- www.poetrylibrary.org.uk/magazines (includes print and online magazines)
- *The Writers' & Artists' Yearbook* (includes non-poetry-specific magazines)
- www.poetrymagazines.org.uk

Pamphlets

A lot of poets will publish at least one pamphlet before putting out a full collection, allowing you to experiment with curating a smaller body of work and (hopefully) gaining attention for it. Some useful resources include:

- www.poetrylibrary.org.uk/publishers
- If you are considering self-publishing at this stage, read **the SoA Guide to Self-Publishing** first (free for members / £12 for non-members)
- **Guide to Marketing Your Book** by Alison Baverstock and Catherine Charley, available from the SoA website (free / £6)

Protect Your Rights

Whenever you agree to publish, ensure you're aware of exactly what you're agreeing to. Copyright should remain with you for works published in magazines or anthologies. For pamphlets and collections you should receive a contract. It is essential you read this properly. Useful SoA guides on the subject include:

- **Guide to Publishing Contracts** (free for members / £12 for non-members)
- **Guide to Copyright and Permissions** (free / free)

The SoA advisory team offer a clause-by-clause contract-vetting service to all members. Join at www.societyofauthors.org/Join.

Payment for Poems

Most magazines will have information on their website about whether they pay contributors. Anthologies from larger publishers should offer a fee for inclusion of your work, while smaller ones may offer copies of the book instead. See the SoA guidance on rates and fees for more information:

- www.societyofauthors.org/Advice/Rates-Fees

Reading/Performance Fees & Expenses

Often you will be expected to read for free at smaller local events and magazine or anthology launches. It is up to you whether or not to take these opportunities, but do consider how much money you are having to spend in travel and accommodation as set against the opportunity to market your work and meet people. If you're asked to read by bigger events or festivals where there is a charge for tickets, think about your right to be paid for your work and time. Useful resources include:

- **Andrew Bibby's Reckoner:** www.andrewbibby.com/reckoner.html
- **SoA guides to appearances, visits, events and festivals:** www.societyofauthors.org/Advice/Guides (all free)

The Poetry and Spoken Word Group is running a survey gathering information on poets' experiences at events and festivals. We'll use the data to put together some industry best practice guidelines for poets to use in future negotiations. The more poets we hear from, the more helpful this will be – take it here:

www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/PSWG_Events_Survey.

Money for Nothing (Near Enough)

If you have anything published in print, it is well worth taking the time to sign up to **the Authors' Licensing and Collecting Society**, which distributes money from photocopying and scanning licensing. Membership of the ALCS is free with SoA membership. You should also register under the **Public Lending Right (PLR)** system, which ensures you are paid when your book is loaned from public libraries:

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- www.alcs.co.uk
- www.plr.uk.com

Prizes

Invest any entrance fees wisely; make sure you're comfortable with the terms and conditions and beware prizes which take exclusive rights or oblige you to undertake extra work. SoA members are welcome to ask for advice on competition terms and conditions if unsure. Some free-to-enter awards include:

- The Eric Gregory Awards www.societyofauthors.org/Prizes/Poetry/Eric-Gregory
- The Jane Martin Poetry Prize www.girton.cam.ac.uk/jane-martin-poetry-prize

Funding & Subsidies

Arts Council England offer funding to poets for specific projects and the Society of Authors has grants for works in progress. Keep an eye out for subsidised writers' residencies too. See:

- www.societyofauthors.org/Grants/Grants-for-works-in-progress
- www.artscouncil.org.uk/funding/grants-arts

RESOURCES

The following are useful resources, and many have mailing lists to keep you up to date with the latest news, events and opportunities:

The Poetry Society

www.poetrysociety.org.uk

NAWE

www.nawe.co.uk/the-writers-compass

The Poetry Library

www.poetrylibrary.org.uk

The Scottish Poetry Library

www.scottishpoetrylibrary.org.uk

The Poetry School

www.poetryschool.com

Apples and Snakes

www.applesandsnakes.org

Write Out Loud

www.writeoutloud.net

The Poetry Business

www.poetrybusiness.co.uk

NAWG

www.nawg.co.uk

Poetry London

www.poetrylondon.co.uk/listings

The Poets' Resource

thepoetsresource.wordpress.com

Arts Jobs

www.artsjobs.org.uk

Writers' & Artists' Yearbook

www.writersandartists.co.uk

Arvon Foundation

www.arvon.org

Poetry Can

www.poetrycan.co.uk

The Poetry Kit

www.poetrykit.org

Poets & Writers

www.pw.org/toolsforwriters

Aerogramme Writers' Studio

www.aerogrammestudio.com

Jobs

www.jobs.ac.uk

THE SOCIETY OF AUTHORS

- Guides can be downloaded from the website or ordered via 020 7373 6642 or info@societyofauthors.org.
- Join at www.societyofauthors.org/Join for professional advice on appearance fees, competition T&Cs, contractual terms, permissions for anthologised work and more.
- The SoA is your trade union, advising individuals and speaking out for the profession. It is open to all types of writers at all stages of their careers.

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THE SOCIETY OF AUTHORS POETRY AND SPOKEN WORD GROUP

- Contact Nadia Bonini at nbonini@societyofauthors.org or visit www.societyofauthors.org/groups/pswg for more information.