



NATIONAL ARTS COUNCIL
SINGAPORE

NAC-NLB WRITERS' LAB 2025 APPLICATION GUIDE

1. About the Programme

The National Arts Council is pleased to present the NAC-NLB Writers' Lab 2025 (the "NAC-NLB Writers' Lab") for **up to four (4)** writers working in any of Singapore's four official languages (English, Chinese, Malay and Tamil). The NAC-NLB Writers' Lab will take place in any of the NLB's libraries of the writers' choice, from January to April 2025.

The NAC-NLB Writers' Lab is a 8 -12 week manuscript incubation programme that aims to support writers at the early pre-drafting stages of conceptualising their manuscript idea by providing the requisite support to the appointed writer to develop a strong manuscript concept. Writers will be supported with:

- a. rich primary resources available at the host library and National Library Board's collections;
- b. feedback and guidance from a mentor, literary agent or publisher;
- c. "beta-testing" of concept or topic with library-goers through public programming; and
- d. stipend to allow the writer to allocate time to develop the concept.

In doing so, writers will strengthen their skills in developing their manuscript idea through rigorous research of their chosen writing topic(s), and in conversation with the community of library users who may be their potential readers.

Writers will be provided with the following:

- a. desk working space (subject to availability, to be booked via the Seat Booking function on the NLB Mobile app);
- b. a room for programming purposes;
- c. access to archival services, and National Library resources and services;
- d. stipend of \$2,000 a month, up to \$6,000 total, based on length of participation in the Lab;

- e. a honoraria of up to \$2,000 for engaging additional services related to the editorial development of the manuscript idea (e.g. engaging a literary agent, publisher or editor); and
- f. a grant of up to \$1,000 for public engagement sessions, materials cost, fees for other speakers/facilitators/assistants, publicity and marketing costs, etc., related to a proposed public engagement programme. This should not include any fees for the writer, who is already supported via the stipend.

More information on the participating libraries and resources and services provided may be found in Annex 1.

2. Eligibility

Only Singaporeans or Permanent Residents may apply.

3. Expectations

Writers will be expected to:

- a. use the National Library Board's resources and services to develop a manuscript idea in one of the following genres:
 - i. Fiction (e.g. speculative fiction, flash fiction, historical fiction)
 - ii. Literary/Creative Non-fiction
 - iii. Young adult fiction
- b. offer **at least two (2)** comprehensive and meaningful public engagement programmes related to the manuscript idea, **to be completed within four (4) months from the start of the Lab.**

These programmes may be, but are not restricted to, an event from the following tracks:

- i. a sustained exhibition, discussion, or showcase platform that communicates the author's presence in the library to library users (e.g. updates on the manuscript idea via a physical idea board, curating a shelf of recommended reads, etc.);
- ii. outreach sessions to their intended readership (e.g. reading of their work-in-progress, AMA (Ask Me Anything) online sessions, focus group discussions, etc.).

NLB is open to both physical and digital formats for the public engagement programmes, depending on the programme content, and will work with writers to shape the programmes.

After completing the NAC-NLB Writers' Lab, writers will submit a Self-Evaluation report addressing the following:

- a. a write-up on the manuscript idea and how it has been developed through the NAC-NLB Writers' Lab, including a draft of the work-in-progress manuscript, and future plans for the manuscript;

- b. the actual project expenditure, supported by documents (e.g. receipts);
- c. supporting documents for the public programmes (e.g. collaterals, photos);
- d. the usefulness of the resources and research services provided by the NAC-NLB Writers' Lab in developing their manuscript idea;
- e. the relevance of their public engagement programmes;
- f. the suitability of the venue and facilities provided by the NAC-NLB Writers' Lab in allowing the participant to engage with the community of library users who may be their potential readers; and
- g. any other feedback or areas for improvement for how the NAC-NLB Writers' Lab can be improved for future editions.

4. Application Submission

Complete the **Application Form** [on Form SG](#) which includes:

- a. **A proposal** that includes:
 - i. a statement of purpose which outlines your main objectives for participating in the NAC-NLB Writers' Lab;
 - ii. a detailed outline of your work plan on how you aim to achieve these objectives that includes specific requests for materials from NLB's archival services, resources or other services; and any additional services, if required e.g. honoraria for a writing mentor;
 - iii. a 100-word synopsis of working title and the manuscript idea to be developed; and
 - iv. details of both the proposed public engagement programmes, including a budget breakdown.
- b. **Literary curriculum vitae** including all published works, awards, contributions to the local literary scene and other relevant literary experience.

5. Selection Criteria and Process

Applications will be assessed by representatives from the National Arts Council (NAC) and the National Library Board (NLB), using the following assessment criteria:

- a. strength of the applicant's literary track record and initial manuscript idea (40%);
- b. strength and creativity of the proposed public engagement programme (20%);
- c. programme's (i.e. Writers' Lab) potential to contribute to the development of the manuscript idea and applicant's capabilities (40%).

6. Submission Deadline

Please apply via the online application form on [FormSG](#) by **19 Nov, Tuesday, 5pm.**

Hardcopy, late, and incomplete applications will not be accepted.

All applicants will be informed by email of the outcome of their application by **8 Jan 2025.** NAC will work with selected participants to confirm their preferred programme period at the respective libraries.

We regret that we will not be able to engage in correspondence on unsuccessful applications.

7. Enquiries

The FAQs can be found in Annex 2 of this Application Guide. Please read them carefully before applying. If you have further enquiries, please contact Gladys Chua at Gladys_Chua@nac.gov.sg.

ANNEX 1: ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE NAC-NLB WRITERS' LAB 2025

Resources and Services for NAC-NLB Writers' Lab

In addition to the venues and facilities at the NLB libraries, writers may also access the following:

1. The National Archives Singapore's (NAS) Archives Online:

Writers can search for archived materials on Archives Online (www.nas.gov.sg/archivesonline/) using keywords of interest.

Many records such as images, press releases, and selected oral history material can be accessed online. For records that cannot be viewed online, writers will need to submit an e-Request to view them. They will be notified within five (5) working days of their request submission on the status of their records. Please note that the final response to the request may take up to an estimated 12 weeks.

Should the records be made available for viewing, they can be accessed at the Archives Reading Room (ARR) located at 1 Canning Rise, Singapore 179868. While the ARR is open from 10am to 9pm daily, except public holidays, please note that full services are only available on Mondays to Fridays (10.00 am to 6.30pm) and Saturdays (10.00am to 1.00pm). More information about visiting the ARR can be found here <http://www.nas.gov.sg/archivesonline/faq>

2. National Library Board's (NLB) resources and services, subject to approval and availability of librarians to accompany the participant, with 2-4 weeks advance notice:

- a. Access to rare books collections and closed stacks;
- b. Access to special collections (e.g. Raffles Library, Dr Carl Alexander Gibson-Hill collections), various donated collections, the Maps Collection and the microfilm and digitised collection of Singapore/Malaya newspapers.
- c. Tours of special exhibitions, distribution centres, National Archives, etc.
- d. Introductions, interviews or meetings with specialist librarians, book clubs, community groups, etc., subject to agreement with relevant librarians, book clubs and community groups.
- e. Invitations to contribute to NLB publications subject to content relevance, editorial timelines, etc.

ANNEX 2: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. May I submit my application in hardcopy by post?

No. All applications must be submitted by FormSG.

2. May I submit an application for more than one genre?

No. You have to choose one genre for the entire duration of the NAC-NLB Writers' Lab.

3. What criteria will be used in the selection process?

The criteria used in the selection process are outlined in page 3 in this document. NAC also reserves the right to not disclose reasons for approving or rejecting an application.

4. Must I have developed or drafted a manuscript by the end of this programme?

Yes. Though the objective of the NAC-NLB Writers' Lab is for you to be able to leverage on the resources, services, venues and facilities provided by NLB libraries to significantly develop your manuscript idea within the duration of your programme, a work-in-progress manuscript is one of the deliverables that you would have to submit at the end of your residency.

5. I have a day job. Can I still participate in this programme?

Yes, as long as you are able to develop your manuscript idea using the National Library Board's resources and services, and deliver on both your proposed public engagement programmes.

6. Do I have to be in Singapore for the entire duration?

No, but you are expected to develop your manuscript idea using the National Library Board's resources and services, and deliver your proposed public engagement programmes. You may need to be physically present in order to access some of the resources provided by the National Library Board (see Annex 1 for more details).

If your question has not been addressed here, please email Gladys Chua at Gladys_Chua@nac.gov.sg.