

"Writers helping writers"

This collaborative philosophy has been the foundation of the Writers' Federation of Nova Scotia (WFNS) since its creation as a non-profit arts service organization in 1976.

Today, the same philosophy informs our wide array of programs, events, and resources that support the craft of writing, the business of being a writer, and the promotion of Nova Scotia writers as integral to the province's cultural life and creative economy. Our 700+ annual members, come from all career stages and parts of the province and engage in a diverse range of forms, genres, and writing practices.

WFNS is based in Kijipuktuk, in Mi'kma'ki, ancestral and unceded Mi'kmaq territory.

WFNS MEMBERSHIP

To connect with our local writing community, consider joining WFNS! We offer numerous opportunities to partipate in local literary events and to meet, support, and learn from other Nova Scotian writers.

WFNS PROGRAMS

The **Alistair MacLeod Mentorship Program** connects selected emerging writers with later-career authors for intensive mentorships as they prepare promising, book-length manuscripts for publication.

The **Coffee Chats** program helps writers seek advice from more experienced authors on creative problems, the writing life, and career advancement.

The **Manuscript Review Program** provides writers at all career levels with access to affordable feedback on works-in-progress.

Writers In The Schools (WITS) brings award-winning authors into elementary & secondary schools for presentations and workshops.

WFNS BOOK AWARDS

- Ann Connor Brimer Award for Atlantic Canadian Children's Literature (\$5,000)
- Evelyn Richardson Non-Fiction Award (\$2,000)
- J.M. Abraham Atlantic Poetry Award (\$2,000)
- Maxine Tynes Nova Scotia Poetry Award (\$2,000)
- Thomas Raddall Atlantic Fiction Award (\$30,000)

WFNS WRITING CONTESTS

- Ellemenno Visual Literature Prize (\$250), for literary & visual art cross-pollinations
- Emerging Writers Prizes (\$1,000 to \$5,000), for equity-deserving writers
- Message on a Bottle (\$250), for short works published on locally crafted beverage labels
- Nova Writes Competition (\$250), with prizes in five categories and written feedback for all entrants

WFNS WORKSHOPS & MORE

Our annual workshop calendar features creative writing and professional development for all, intensives and masterclasses for more advanced writers, and talks, panels, and meet-ups.

Build a Writing Community

Connect with other writers & find support for your craft

WRITING + COMMUNITY

Writing can be a solitary pursuit. Our ideas and voices need time and space to develop, become unique, and flourish—but finding a community of fellow writers and growing with their support can be invaluable for writers trying to build a practice or take the next step in their writing career.

Joining and building a writing community can help in all of the following ways:

- Learning from fellow writers' creative processes and experiences and expanding your professional network
- Establishing mutually beneficial relationships (and even friendships) with writers who have common interests and goals and can help you stay on track with your writing goals
- Finding opportunities to share your work and get feedback, especially through public events and writing groups

This brochure offers tips for finding and building writing community—online, in Nova Scotia, and beyond.

It also introduces the Writers' Federation of Nova Scotia (WFNS) and some benefits of becoming a General Member.

Visit writers.ns.ca/membership
to see all the benefits of joining WFNS

SOCIAL MEDIA FOR WRITERS

Whether you follow and promote the writers you love, share your writing, engage with readers to build your audience, or start an online writing group, social media provide many opportunities for literary connection. Here is a simple guide to some of the most popular social media platforms:



On **Instagram**, a photo-focused platform, you can post images and personal updates while connecting with other creators. As a writer, use it to share your progress, link to your website or digital publications, and promote your events.



On the video-based **TikTok**, posting short, witty videos is a great way to catch readers' eyes and build a following. There is a large and active community of 'book-tokers,' creators that make book-related content, that may review your work.

WRITING GROUPS

Writing groups are regular but informal meet-ups, where writers gather to write, read either others' works-in-progress, offer and receive feedback, and share creative struggles and successes. They're a great motivator for writers who struggle to write alone.

Because they are run by their participants, however, writing groups can sometimes be difficult to find. Check for posters in local libraries, ask around at community events, or consider **starting your own writing group**:

- Find a space to meet—ideally, one with no rental fee. Consider local cafes, libraries, art galleries, your kitchen table, or even online. (WFNS members can book space in our Halifax office and on our Zoom accounts for free!)
- Determine what forms you'll discuss. Will you welcome only fiction writers, or can you provide feedback on everything from poetry to memoir?
- Determine your group's ideal size based on your meeting space and your desired atmosphere—as well as how often and for how long you'd like to meet. Can you meet once a week for an hour, or will that be unsustainable in the long run? Will each writer share a whole short story at each meeting, or will you take turns giving and receiving feedback?
- Determine how to structure your meetings. Will you silently write for the first hour and then each share something? Will you give feedback as a group or in pairs? Will you prioritize writing time or focus on sharing?
- Use social media, physical posters, word-of-mouth, and events to recruit. (WFNS members can post writing group listings on our website!)



X (formerly Twitter), mainly a text-based platform with posts limited to 280 characters, encourages interaction, current event commentary, and sharing writing events and deadlines. Follow users you like, stay tuned in to their news, and congratulate them on their successes.



Substack and other blog or newsletter platform are useful for building a loyal audience for your writing. Substack allows others to subscribe to you, notifying them when you self-publish new work. Successful accounts tend to have a consistent voice and offer a fresh perspective.

COMMUNITY EVENTS

Bookstores, galleries, community centres, and small businesses frequently offer opportunities to connect with other writers.

Open mic events allow writers and artists of all levels to share new work, while **free public readings** at libraries and bookshops often showcase local and visiting book authors and may include live interviews or Q&A sessions. Attend these events to meet fellow writers, learn about their writing processes, and contribute to conversations about literature.

Readings are often part of **book launches & tours**, which authors and their publishers plan to promote new books. The (occasional) formality of these events shouldn't discourage you from engaging: touring authors want to meet readers and fellow writers just as much as they want to sell copies of their books.

Authors, publishers, and booksellers gather at **book fairs** to sell and promote their work, creating a welcoming environment for discovering local presses and chatting with literary professionals. WFNS's book fair, Booktoberfest, is held each year in Halifax.

Literary festivals, annual, multi-day celebrations of the literary arts, typically combine public readings with panel discussions, social events, workshops, pitch sessions, and more.

Visit writers.ns.ca/resources
to find Nova Scotian book fairs, festivals,
and listings for writing groups