

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS
AND POETRY FOUNDATION PRESENT



2023-2024 POETRY OUT LOUD PR Toolkit

The National Endowment for the Arts and the Poetry Foundation have created this PR toolkit to guide schools, organizations, and state coordinators in creating and implementing your own media plan for Poetry Out Loud. Included are several tools you can customize to raise awareness of Poetry Out Loud among audiences in your community. Feel free to use some or all of these resources to facilitate your efforts and generate awareness and media coverage of Poetry Out Loud.

Questions on media outreach? Contact National Endowment for the Arts Public Affairs at publicaffairs@arts.gov.

For information on the use of the logo and registered trademark symbol, please review the [Poetry Out Loud Branding Guide](#).

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Note: Additional promotional materials for the state finals will be available separately this winter.



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POETRY OUT LOUD 2023-2024 RECRUITMENT LETTER/BLOG POST

Feel free to use this recruitment letter from National Endowment for the Arts in a blog post on your website or in your recruitment efforts.

From the desk of National Endowment for the Arts Chair Maria Rosario Jackson, PhD

Since 2005, more than four million high school students from across the nation have benefited from participation in Poetry Out Loud[®], a free arts education program from the National Endowment for the Arts and the Poetry Foundation.

With a catalog of 1,200 classic and contemporary poems at their disposal, students can explore language and themes that resonate with their own experience. This personal connection helps with memorization and performance, which in turn builds self-confidence and public speaking skills. Through the discovery of great poetry, students learn about themselves, world history, and contemporary life.

Students who participate in Poetry Out Loud may take part in classroom and school contests, with finalists advancing to state competitions and ultimately to the national finals where students compete for the grand prize of \$20,000. In addition to school-based opportunities for participation, students may also engage through non-school organizations, such as after-school clubs, libraries, and nonprofit organizations that also host Poetry Out Loud and enable advancement to state competitions. In total, Poetry Out Loud annually awards more than \$100,000 to state- and national-level winners and their schools.

In Spring 2023, I had the privilege of watching the first in-person National Finals in four years, and it was a joy to witness students make deep and meaningful connections with their poems, the audience, and one another. Poetry Out Loud is an experience that will stay with these young people long after the competition ends, impacting how they carry themselves and engage with the world for the rest of their lives.

We hope you will explore PoetryOutLoud.org to learn more about this program and to access free materials such as lesson plans and tips on organizing a contest. You will also find contact information for the Poetry Out Loud coordinators nationwide who can help you bring Poetry Out Loud to students in your community.

Maria Rosario Jackson, PhD
Chair, National Endowment for the Arts



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POETRY OUT LOUD 2023-2024 FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is Poetry Out Loud?

A partnership of the National Endowment for the Arts, the Poetry Foundation, and the state and jurisdictional arts agencies, 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.

The program starts in 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.

Since the program began in 2005, more than 4.3 million students and 76,000 teachers from 19,000 schools and organizations across the nation have participated in Poetry Out Loud.

Where and when will Poetry Out Loud take place?

Poetry Out Loud takes place in all 50 states, American Samoa, the District of Columbia, Guam, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. High schools and organizations that choose to participate in the official competition conduct their programs and contests between September and February. State contests take place by early March. The 2024 Poetry Out Loud National Finals are planned for April 30-May 2, 2024, in Washington, DC. More information will be announced in the future.

Schools and organizations should contact their state/jurisdictional arts agency with any questions pertaining to live streaming or broadcasting their competitions.

Who can participate in the official Poetry Out Loud contest?

The official Poetry Out Loud contest is administered at the state level by state and jurisdictional arts agencies in all 50 states, American Samoa, the District of Columbia, Guam, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. All types of high schools are welcome to participate, including public, private, parochial, independent, charter, etc., as well as homeschool students. Non-school organizations, such as after school clubs, libraries, or nonprofit organizations, may choose to run Poetry Out Loud as well. Students may only compete in one stream—either with their school or an organization. Only schools and organizations registered with their state Poetry Out Loud coordinator are eligible for the competition; if you would like to get involved, contact your [state arts agency](#). Students unable to participate at their school or a local organization should contact their state Poetry Out Loud coordinator to discuss other opportunities for inclusion in the state's official competition.

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. A Poetry Out Loud National Champion is not eligible to compete in future years.

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. More information on Poetry Out Loud rules and eligibility may be found at PoetryOutLoud.org.

Are schools and organizations that are not part of the official contest welcome to participate in other ways?

All of the Poetry Out Loud program materials are available for free online in the [Teachers & Organizers](#) section of the website. Using these online materials, schools and organizations are welcome to conduct their own “unofficial” poetry recitation competitions and introduce their students to classic and contemporary poetry.



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Are program materials available?

Poetry Out Loud offers educators free, standards-based curriculum materials, which include an online poetry anthology with more than 1,200 classic and contemporary poems, a teachers' guide, lesson plans, and video and audio on the art of recitation. These free resources are available at PoetryOutLoud.org.

What are the prizes?

National Level: A total of \$50,000 in awards and school/organization stipends will be given at the Poetry Out Loud National Finals, including a \$20,000 award for the National Champion, \$10,000 for 2nd place, \$5,000 for 3rd place, and \$1,000 for 4th–9th places. The representing schools or organizations of each of the top nine finalists receive \$500 for the purchase of poetry materials. There will be one honorable mention in each of the three national semifinals competitions. Those students will not advance to the finals, but will each receive a \$1,000 cash award and a \$500 school/organization stipend.

State Level: Each winner at the state level will receive \$200 and their school will receive \$500 for poetry materials. One runner-up in each state will receive \$100; their school will receive \$200 for the purchase of poetry materials.

The Poetry Foundation provides and administers all aspects of the monetary prizes awarded and travel arrangements to the Poetry Out Loud National Finals. Awards are made in the form of lump sum cash payouts, reportable to the IRS. Tax liabilities are the sole responsibility of the winners and their families. Full details on prize requirements and travel and accommodations requirements are available in the [rules and eligibility](#) section of the website.

What are the judging criteria?

All contestants are evaluated on these criteria: physical presence, voice and articulation, evidence of understanding, interpretation, accuracy, and overall performance. For more information regarding these criteria, please consult the [teacher's guide](#).

How can I get more information?

Visit PoetryOutLoud.org for more information on this program. The website features educational resources for teachers and students, including standards-based educational materials, tips on hosting a school contest, and videos of outstanding performances.

The [NEA](#) and [Poetry Out Loud](#) YouTube channels also include short videos from students, teachers, and others discussing Poetry Out Loud that you can use to build interest and enthusiasm for the program.

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POETRY OUT LOUD TALKING POINTS

This document is for internal use only, not for distribution. Feel free to use this language in your interviews with the media.

BACKGROUND ON POETRY OUT LOUD

- The National Endowment for the Arts and the Poetry Foundation created Poetry Out Loud® which is managed in partnership with state and jurisdictional arts agencies and their partners.
- Poetry Out Loud is a national arts education program that encourages the study of great poetry by offering educational materials, and a dynamic recitation competition for high school students across the country.
- Since the program began in 2005, more than 4.3 million students and 76,000 teachers from 19,000 schools and organizations across the nation have participated in Poetry Out Loud.
- Poetry Out Loud begins at the local level with a school or organization. Winners advance to a school-wide competition, then to the state competitions in February and March, and then to the national finals in the spring.
- Non-school organizations, such as after school clubs, libraries, or nonprofit organizations, may also choose to run Poetry Out Loud as well. Students may only compete in one stream—either with their school or an organization.
- Guidelines are available on poetryoutloud.org to hold both in-person and virtual competitions.
- The state and jurisdictional arts agencies in all 50 states, American Samoa, District of Columbia, Guam, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands have enlisted high schools to participate in the official Poetry Out Loud program. Schools or organizations that wish to get involved should contact their [state coordinator](#).
- The National Endowment for the Arts and the Poetry Foundation provide program materials (teacher’s guide, online poetry anthology, and posters) for distribution to participating schools or organizations. Materials are available online at PoetryOutLoud.org.
- Any school nationwide may visit PoetryOutLoud.org to access free online program materials. Using these materials, they are welcome to conduct their own “unofficial” poetry recitation competitions to introduce their students to classic and contemporary poetry.

WHY WAS POETRY OUT LOUD CREATED? WHY IS POETRY OUT LOUD IMPORTANT?

- Arts education programs like Poetry Out Loud matter. National Endowment for the Arts research tells us that children who have arts opportunities in and out of school are much more likely to become adults who participate in the arts.
- To encourage the nation’s youth to learn about great poetry, the National Endowment for the Arts and the Poetry Foundation jointly support Poetry Out Loud.
- Poetry Out Loud can impact students’ academic performance, such as improved writing and analytical skills.



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- Poetry Out Loud can increase students' appreciation of poetry. Through participation in Poetry Out Loud students can understand how poetry can reveal new ways to see the world, foster connection and empathy, and reach a greater understanding of ourselves, our past, and others.
- Students who participate in Poetry Out Loud also showed an increase in self-confidence and found that reading and listening to poetry helped them think about situations from multiple perspectives.
- Poetry Out Loud can have a positive impact on schools, helping to build community, forging stronger connections between teachers and students, and bringing together students who may not have otherwise formed connections.
- In 2022, over 29 million adults either read or listened to poetry via broadcasts, recordings, or web streaming, according to NEA research.

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SOCIAL MEDIA TIPS

Social media channels such as blogs, [Facebook](#), [YouTube](#), [Instagram](#), and [X \(Twitter\)](#) are useful tools to promote Poetry Out Loud in addition to traditional media (newspapers, radio and TV, magazines, online versions of these outlets). You can find the official Poetry Out Loud social media pages here:

- [Poetry Out Loud Facebook Page](#)
- [Poetry Out Loud X \(Twitter\)](#) (@PoetryOutLoud)
- [Poetry Out Loud YouTube Channel](#)

With social media, you play a different role: in addition to persuading traditional media to cover your story, you take on the role of the journalist—you tell your story about Poetry Out Loud directly to the public. Here are social media tips and tools to enhance your overall Poetry Out Loud communications plan.

KEY SOCIAL MEDIA IDEAS TO CONSIDER

Look at the big picture – Social media is a tool and not a strategy. Integrate social media tactics into your overall media outreach plan for Poetry Out Loud. Make sure your traditional media and social media tactics cross-reference each other (e.g., the blog points readers to the newsroom and vice versa; share your Facebook photos on your X (Twitter) account).

What’s your goal? Clarify why you are using particular social media channels to promote Poetry Out Loud. Are you trying to reach a new audience? Drive more people to your website?

Pick and choose – Every day there are more social media platforms. Pick the ones that will best help you share your Poetry Out Loud stories and news. What type of content do you have? How much time do you have to manage a particular platform? Which platforms are popular with your target audience? Make sure you understand the social media platform, its community, and its rules.

Make a game plan – Social media tactics are as time-intensive as traditional media tactics. Know what you can sustain and create a plan. Who will write, edit, produce, and approve new content, and how frequently? Who will respond to queries; will you respond to negative posts? Will you create content to share with partners, such as tweets or photos? Note that images are key to a successful social media strategy. Social media content with visuals often has a better success rate. If possible, use a cell-phone camera to capture high-quality, digital images of your activities and events. There are multiple sites online that now offer high-quality images under a Creative Commons or Creative Commons Zero license that you can use to augment your own photos.

Find your voice – Social media users join communities that offer interesting, informative, useful, and fun content. This is a great opportunity to make poetry come alive through humor, personality, interesting perspectives, and discussion.

Use the “80/20” rule – Social media is about sharing so a good rule of thumb is to use 80 percent of your social media content to reference content by other organizations and experts. Invite your state’s Poet Laureate to guest post on your blog. “Retweet” a relevant post or link to an article about poetry. Then use the other 20 percent of your posts to highlight your state or school or Poetry Out Loud announcements and conversations. Consider following the [Poetry Out Loud](#), [National Endowment for the Arts](#), and the [Poetry Foundation](#) X (Twitter) feeds for ideas on content to share.

Engage! It’s called social media for a reason. Aim for two-way conversations. If possible, enable comments on your blog, or YouTube. (But don’t forget to include a comment policy.) Consider crowd-sourced content. Think about ways you can encourage the students participating in the program—whether it’s at the classroom or local level or state level—to



share their participation in Poetry Out Loud. See what your school’s social media policy will allow and if exceptions can be made to encourage participation at the school level.

Make it easy to share – Make sure your social media channels are easy to find on your website. For example, add the “follow us on X (Twitter)/Facebook/YouTube/other” buttons to your website home page or newsroom page. Include social media channels on your press announcements and in your organizational e-signature. Mention them at your events. Tag your posts with **#POL24**, and/or **#IAmPoetryOutLoud**. Remember that social media is part of your branding effort; if possible, be consistent with the names you use on each of your social media platforms.

Use visuals—Social media content with visuals often has a better success rate. Use a cell phone camera to capture high-quality, digital images of your events or use images from past events in your promotion. Make sure you have permission to use the images you’ve selected.

Use ALT tags—To make sure your content is accessible to people with low or no vision, it's best practice to write ALT tags for any images included in your content. ALT tags are short descriptions of what is shown in each image. Each social media platform has different character limits and procedures for adding ALT tags; you should be able to access this information on the platform's help page.

Measure what you want to know – Every organization has different ways of measuring engagement. Is it the number of clicks on a certain link? Is it the amount of time a user spends reading your content? Is it ticket sales? Think about which metrics are important to your organization, and develop a strategy for measuring those elements. While there are paid services out there to help with this step, there are also many free services available—including those available in the social platforms themselves (e.g., the “Professional Dashboard” within your Facebook channel)—that you can bundle to get a fairly robust picture of your content’s performance.

SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS

Blog

- If your arts agency or participating school has a blog, post updates on Poetry Out Loud at least once a week. If you publish less than 3x/week, choose consistent dates.
- Blog content might include a student interview with a teacher or artist involved in Poetry Out Loud, a student writing about their favorite poem, tips for participating in the competition, or a link to a press release on statewide or school contests.

X (Twitter)

- Use [X \(Twitter\)](#) to share short thoughts about Poetry Out Loud—at 280 characters or fewer per post (please note that this platform no longer includes handles or images in the character count).
- Invite your audience to follow your handle. Arts agencies can invite other arts organizations. Schools can invite parents to follow their X (Twitter) feed to keep track of the program at the local level. You can ask your followers to retweet your posts and help spread the news. You can also use your account to have conversations with your followers.
- Your X (Twitter) posting frequency will vary based on the content you have to publish. Aim for 1–2 pre-written posts a day. Consider “re-tweeting” (RT, or copying) relevant posts from others you are following on the platform. Be selective and develop guidelines for the types of content you are RTing.
- Include an image with your post. (The platform will allow you to attach up to four images with a post.) If you are using only one image, try to use one that’s oriented horizontally so the platform won’t cut the top off your image.



- Use X (Twitter) to provide “play-by-play” commentary during the competitions. You can also send out interesting trivia about the poems, the poets, and the competitors. You can also post videos of up to 140 seconds, which could be a way to share short interviews with participating students.
- Use a hashtag to help users follow conversations about your competition. You can use **#POL24** for general posts about the competition and tag photos of your Poetry Out Loud community—students, parents, teachers, judges, etc.—with **#IAmPoetryOutLoud**.
- Also use the hashtags **#POL24** and **#IAmPoetryOutLoud** to search for other people who are posting about Poetry Out Loud—and to help them find you.
- When you register for a free X (Twitter) account, you will have to select several accounts to follow (get their posts sent to you) so make sure to do this research beforehand. There are online search engines to help you find users with similar interests that you can follow.
- Follow and/or tag, or retweet content from @PoetryOutLoud, @NEAarts, and @PoetryFound.

Facebook

- [Facebook](#) is an online community space; you can register for a group page, and invite people on Facebook who are participating in your Poetry Out Loud program to join the group. A group page is a great way to keep participants updated on events, share photos, and encourage conversations before and after your events. You can set up your Facebook group page to be public or hidden, and you can also make it a moderated forum. Make sure to create a comment policy for your Facebook page.
- Follow the national [Poetry Out Loud Facebook page](#), and let the [National Endowment for the Arts Poetry Out Loud staff](#) know you have a Facebook page so they can follow you.
- Use the Facebook page to share news about the program, content from your blog, photos from your events.

YouTube

- The average viewer spends only 1–2 minutes watching a YouTube video, so plan your videos accordingly.
- Highlight videos that complement Poetry Out Loud learning objectives. Be aware of copyright issues when featuring poetry online.
- Each year, several state schools for the Deaf participate in Poetry Out Loud. Make your video accessible to Deaf or hard of hearing audiences by using YouTube’s easy captioning options. Alternatively, you can post a transcript of the poem with the video. Fill out the “description” section in detail, and include a link to your website. Use YouTube video tags (descriptive words) to help viewers find your video when using the YouTube search engine.

Instagram

- [Instagram](#) is an easy way to share visual content and short videos. Instagram is geared toward capturing moments as they happen, but you can also post photos and videos after the fact.
- You can share poetry that is in the public domain or snapshots from classroom, school, regional, or state competitions.
- You can also post short videos on Instagram. Instagram content is easily shareable to both Facebook and X (Twitter), so it’s a great way to get a lot of bang for your buck from one piece of visual content. As with X (Twitter), images on Instagram are often grouped by hashtags, e.g. #POL24 or #IAmPoetryOutLoud. You can also encourage members of your community to share photos from your events on their own Instagram accounts with these hashtags
- There are many tools available that will enable you to “regram,” or share photos from other Instagram profiles in your organization’s Instagram stories. Instagram stories are also a great way to share photos live from an event.

There are many more social channels to help share news about Poetry Out Loud. On platforms that use hashtags, make sure to tag your content to help people who are interested in the program find your content.



PR TIPS FOR SCHOOLS AND ORGANIZATIONS—Promotional Ideas & PR Tips

Poetry Out Loud is a great way to generate positive visibility for your school or organization and raise school spirit. Here are some simple ways to increase awareness of Poetry Out Loud and share your students' achievements with the community at large.

In your school/organization

- Post notices announcing the competition and champions at your school/organization and/or on your website, newsletter, student newspaper, or social media pages. Use the Poetry Out Loud logo to celebrate your involvement.
- Write an article about the school-wide contest for your PTA/PTO newsletter.
- Announce classroom winners and the school-wide competition in the daily PA broadcast, at assemblies, or on the school's YouTube channel.
- Include a "poem-a-day" poetry recitation in the daily PA broadcast.
- "Live Tweet" a Poetry Out Loud contest or share photos on Instagram. Remember to use the **#POL24** or **#IAmPoetryOutLoud** hashtags.
- Organize a viewing party of the Poetry Out Loud national finals webcast. Visit arts.gov/Poetry-Out-Loud in Spring 2024 for more details on the live webcast. *(Please note that Poetry Out Loud webcast viewing parties are intended solely as educational events to help foster dialogue about poetry, and about the Poetry Out Loud National Finals. Poetry Out Loud webcast viewing parties must be free of charge, no purchase requirements of any kind.)*
- Arrange for your class to watch online or attend your region or state Poetry Out Loud competition.

In your community

- If your competition is open to the public, call your community newspaper (we suggest the metro section editor), and invite them to attend the competition or watch the webcast.
- Invite a prominent member of the local media to serve as a judge or master of ceremonies for the competition.
- After the event, send the local newspaper a follow-up press release highlighting the contest, your involvement in Poetry Out Loud, and photos from your event or photos of your local champions.
- Send a letter to the editor of your local newspaper. Use the letter to showcase your school or organization's participation in Poetry Out Loud, and to discuss the benefits of taking part in a national program like this.
- Follow other local community or educational organizations on Facebook, X (Twitter), and YouTube to build a social media network for your school (including Poetry Out Loud) and start sharing your #POL24 news.



PR TIPS FOR SCHOOLS AND ORGANIZATIONS—Sample Local Winners Press Release

For schools and organizations participating in the official Poetry Out Loud contest, simply fill in the blanks of this template press release and send it to your local media outlets (newspaper, newsletters, websites, radio, TV, social media channels) after your contest.

Contact: [NAME, TITLE]

[HIGH SCHOOL/ORGANIZATION NAME/ LOGO]

[ADDRESS] [PHONE | EMAIL]

[WEB ADDRESS | BLOG ADDRESS | FACEBOOK | X (TWITTER) – EMBED HYPERLINKS TO ADDRESSES]

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE

[HIGH SCHOOL/ORGANIZATION] ANNOUNCES WINNERS OF POETRY OUT LOUD CONTEST

[CITY, STATE] — [HIGH SCHOOL/ORGANIZATION] announces the winners of the [SCHOOL OR LOCAL] contest of Poetry Out Loud®. The student winners are [NAME OF CHAMPION AND OTHER TOP WINNERS].

Poetry Out Loud—presented in partnership with the [STATE ARTS AGENCY], National Endowment for the Arts, and the Poetry Foundation—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. Since the program began in 2005, more than 4.3 million students across the country have participated in Poetry Out Loud. On [DATE], more than [NUMBER] high school students participated in the Poetry Out Loud contest [ONLINE OR AT LOCATION].

At [HIGH SCHOOL/ORGANIZATION], students recited works selected from an anthology of more than 1,200 poems. Judges evaluated student performances on criteria including voice and articulation, evidence of understanding, and accuracy. The National Endowment for the Arts and Poetry Foundation have created free, standards-based curriculum materials to support Poetry Out Loud including a teacher’s guide, lesson plans, an online anthology, posters, and video and audio on the art of recitation. These resources are available for free at PoetryOutLoud.org.

[NAME OF CHAMPION] will advance to the [REGIONAL OR STATE] Poetry Out Loud contest on [DATE]. The [STATE] champion will receive \$200 and will advance to the national finals next spring where \$50,000 in awards and school/organizational stipends will be distributed. The representing school or organization of the state champion will receive \$500 for the purchase of poetry materials. The first runner-up in each state will receive \$100, with \$200 for their school or organization. The Poetry Foundation provides and administers all aspects of the monetary prizes awarded and travel arrangements for the Poetry Out Loud National Finals.

To learn more about the [STATE] Poetry Out Loud contest, contact [STATE ARTS AGENCY REPRESENTATIVE] or visit PoetryOutLoud.org.

[BOILERPLATE INFORMATION ON YOUR HIGH SCHOOL/ORGANIZATION]

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PR TIPS FOR STATE ARTS AGENCIES—Sample Poetry Out Loud Launch Announcement Press Release

This is a sample template press release that you can customize and send to local education and consumer media to announce Poetry Out Loud. With your help, we can encourage more teachers, organizations, and students to participate in this program. To use this release, simply fill in the blanks (the date, your state arts agency’s name, your contact information, etc.) and distribute it to media outlets in your area (state arts agency newsletter, PTA newsletters, school district websites, and local consumer newspapers, TV and radio stations). Distribute this announcement at your earliest convenience.

Contact: [NAME, ORGANIZATION, PHONE, EMAIL]
[ORGANIZATION/LOGO]

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – [DATE]

[NAME OF STATE/JURISDICTIONAL ARTS AGENCY] ANNOUNCES 2023-24 POETRY OUT LOUD

***High School Students in [STATE/JURISDICTION] Invited to Compete
in National Poetry Recitation Contest***

[CITY, STATE] — Join the [STATE/JURISDICTIONAL ARTS AGENCY] and bring the experience of Poetry Out Loud® to students throughout [STATE/JURISDICTION] this school year. This national arts education program from the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) and the Poetry Foundation encourages the study of great poetry by offering free educational materials and a dynamic recitation competition for high school students. This program helps students master public speaking skills and build self-confidence, while also learning more about both classic and contemporary poetry.

“Through Poetry Out Loud, students discover great poetry while also learning about themselves, world history, contemporary life and the power of words. Through their participation in the program, they have the opportunity to build important public speaking skills, increase self-confidence, and build appreciation for different world views and styles of expression,” said NEA Chair Maria Rosario Jackson, PhD. “We are grateful for the work of [NAME OF STATE/JURISDICTIONAL ARTS AGENCY] in making this opportunity available to students throughout [STATE/JURISDICTION].”

During [CLARIFY TIME FRAME], schools are invited to hold classroom and school wide contests, with students advancing to a state competition on [DATE]. Non-school organizations, such as after school clubs, libraries, or nonprofit organizations, may also choose to run Poetry Out Loud. Students may only compete in one stream—either with their school or an organization. As part of Poetry Out Loud, the National Endowment for the Arts and Poetry Foundation also offers free, standards-based curriculum materials—all available online—which teachers may choose to use in their classrooms. These include an online poetry anthology containing more than 1,200 classic and contemporary poems, a teacher’s guide, lesson plans, posters, and videos on the art of poetry recitation. These materials are all free to access at PoetryOutLoud.org.

State champions will advance to the national finals, which are planned to take place in Washington, DC, April 30–May 2, 2024, where \$50,000 in awards and school stipends will be distributed. More information will be announced in the future.



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[INFORMATION ON YOUR 2023 STATE CHAMPION OR YOUR STATE’S PARTICIPATION IN THE PAST.] Since the program began in 2005, more than 4.3 million students across the country have participated in Poetry Out Loud.

[QUOTE FROM STATE ARTS AGENCY REPRESENTATIVE, GOVERNOR, OR STATE POET LAUREATE]

How to get involved in Poetry Out Loud

High schools and organizations that wish to be part of the official Poetry Out Loud program must contact [STATE ARTS AGENCY] by [DATE] to participate. [STATE ARTS AGENCY] will work with interested schools and organizations to include them in the official Poetry Out Loud program. Schools and organizations that are not in the official program may conduct their own contests using the online resources. Contact [LOCAL CONTACT INFORMATION] or visit PoetryOutLoud.org for more information.

Poetry Out Loud awards

Each state champion will receive \$200 and will advance to the national championship, where \$50,000 in awards and school stipends will be distributed, including a \$20,000 award for the Poetry Out Loud National Champion. The state champions representing school or organization will receive a \$500 stipend for the purchase of poetry materials. The first runner-up in each state will receive \$100, with \$200 for their school/organization. The Poetry Foundation provides and administers all aspects of the monetary prizes awarded and travel arrangements for the Poetry Out Loud National Finals. For further information on Poetry Out Loud, visit PoetryOutLoud.org.

About the National Endowment for the Arts

Established by Congress in 1965, the National Endowment for the Arts is the independent federal agency whose funding and support gives Americans the opportunity to participate in the arts, exercise their imaginations, and develop their creative capacities. Through partnerships with state arts agencies, local leaders, other federal agencies, and the philanthropic sector, the Arts Endowment supports arts learning, affirms and celebrates America’s rich and diverse cultural heritage, and extends its work to promote equal access to the arts in every community across America. Visit arts.gov to learn more.

About the Poetry Foundation

The Poetry Foundation recognizes the power of words to transform lives. We work to amplify poetry and celebrate poets by fostering spaces for all to create, experience, and share poetry. Follow the Poetry Foundation on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/PoetryFoundation), [Instagram](https://www.instagram.com/PoetryFoundation), and [X \(Twitter\)](https://twitter.com/PoetryMagazine), and *Poetry* magazine at [@PoetryMagazine](https://www.poetrymagazine.com).

[BOILERPLATE ON YOUR ORGANIZATION]

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PR TIPS FOR STATE ARTS AGENCIES—Sample Poetry Out Loud Script for a Public Service Announcements (PSA)

Promote participation among schools and organizations in Poetry Out Loud by tailoring this sample script for public service announcements on your local radio or television stations.

Public Service Announcement
30-second live read script

start date: [DATE]
end date: [DATE]

:30 – Who will be the next [STATE/JURISDICTION] Poetry Out Loud Champion? Registration is now open for schools and organizations to sign up to participate in Poetry Out Loud. This national arts education program includes free online educational materials for high school students to learn about poetry through memorization, recitation, and competition. For more information, contact [PHONE/WEBSITE/EMAIL] or visit PoetryOutLoud.org.