



ST JOHN'S COLLEGE
UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE

HARPER-WOOD CREATIVE WRITING & TRAVEL AWARD FOR ENGLISH POETRY & LITERATURE

St John's College, Cambridge, invites applications for the Harper-Wood Creative Writing & Travel Award for English Poetry and Literature. The purpose of the award is to inspire a project of creative writing by making it possible for the holder to engage in relevant, project-related travel and study.

The award is intended primarily for creative writers who are in the initial stages of their careers. Applications are encouraged from writers whose work has not yet achieved book-length publication (e.g. novel, book of short stories, poetry collection, play).

Eligibility

At the time of election, candidates must be a graduate of any university in the UK, Ireland, the Commonwealth or the USA to be eligible to apply.

Terms of the award

All or part of the period of tenure should be spent in a country of the candidate's choice, outside the UK (ie England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland). Candidates are asked to provide a detailed outline of their proposed course of study/research and travel plan, as well as making a strong case for its relevance to their creative writing project.

During the period of tenure the award holder is expected to engage in a course of study or research, not necessarily attached to a university or other institution, culminating in the production of original fiction, poetry or drama. If, however, the candidate proposes to study or research at a university or other institution, such an affiliation need not be finalised before applying for the award.

The award is tenable for one year and is not renewable. The successful candidate is expected to take up their award on 1 October 2026. They will be invited to visit the College following the end of their tenure, to give one or more talks about their experience.

Funding will be determined by the College Council considering the successful candidate's qualifications and financial circumstances (including payments from other sources), up to a maximum of £20,700. This sum is intended to cover accommodation and other living expenses during the successful candidate's tenure. Additional financial assistance is also available to enable the successful candidate to meet travel costs incurred.

All applications must be submitted online by **16:00 BST on Wednesday 22 April 2026**. Referees will then have until **16:00 BST on Monday 27 April 2026** to complete references. While you can submit an application before obtaining both references, **an application will be considered incomplete if the references are not added by the deadline of Monday 27 April**.

The competition opens on Wednesday 18 February 2026. [Applications should be submitted online](#)