

Helen Anne Bell Poetry Bequest Award 2023

Australia's richest poetry prize: \$40,000 Celebrating Australian female poetry in 2023

Presented by the University of Sydney, the biennial Helen Anne Bell Poetry Bequest Award is funded by the generous bequest of a former student of the University – Helen Anne Bell.

This year the award offers a cash prize of \$40,000 for a collection of poems by an Australian female poet and its publication by [Vagabond Press](#). This is the fifth biennial award made under the bequest, and it is now the richest poetry prize in Australia.

We invite female poets to submit a collection of poems between 50 to 80 pages to the award. The work should broadly deal with Australian culture in some way; otherwise, there are no restrictions on the subject matter. The award is judged by three distinguished Australian female poets.

Frequently Asked Questions

Important Dates

- Entries open on **Monday 25 September 2023** and close on **Monday 18 December 2023** at 11.59pm (AEST). Late submissions will not be accepted.

How do I enter?

- Ensure your work complies with the **Conditions of Entry** below.
- Complete the required sections below then click the **Submit** button at the bottom of the page. You will receive confirmation of your entry once it has been submitted.

What is the prize?

- There is a cash prize of \$40,000 for the award winner. The winning entry will be published by Vagabond Press.

Visit the [University of Sydney](#) page about the prize.

If you have any trouble using this online system, please email fass.events@sydney.edu.au.

Who can enter this award?

In keeping with the University's legal obligations as trustee, the Bequest is open to female poets 18 years of age or older at the date of entry. The University relies on the self-declaration by entrants as to their eligibility. We are mindful of and regret the limitations of the language used to outline the eligibility criteria. However, as the Helen Anne Bell Poetry Award is funded by a bequest, which stipulates the award is open to female poets, we have limited scope to move away from this language in implementing the award.

Can anyone living in Australia enter?

The award is only open to Australian citizens.

I'm an Australian based overseas, can I still enter?

Australian citizens may enter, regardless of where they live, as long as their work is about Australian culture, broadly understood.

How old do you have to be to enter this award?

You need to be 18 years or over at the date of entry.

What does 'unpublished' mean?

'Unpublished' means your collection of poems has not been published in *any* form of publication, printed or online, by a registered publisher who is not paid by you to publish your work.

Does self-published count as already published?

No. You may enter the award if you have self-published your collection.

Are there any restrictions on formatting?

Entries must be typed and be between 50 to 80 A4 pages. Please upload a single pdf or Word document for your whole manuscript. We only accept .doc, .docx, .pdf file format. Font size should be 12pt but font, line spacing and layout is your choice, as is the style of poetry.

Are acknowledgements/title/content pages etc. essential and are they included in the page count?

They are not essential, and they are not included in the page count.

Can I include illustrations/drawings/photos in my work?

Yes. These will count towards the maximum number of pages allowed (80). Illustrations/drawings/photos must be your own or those that you have been legally granted permission to use.

I have entered or been shortlisted before, am I eligible to enter this time?

Yes, you can. Only previous winners cannot enter.

Can I include poems written by other people?

No. The award is for a collection of poems by an individual poet.

How many times can I enter?

One entry per person is allowed.

How do I know my entry has been successfully submitted?

You will receive a confirmation email via the Formstack submission portal when you submit your work.

Can employees of the University enter the award?

Yes, but employees directly connected with administering or judging the prize may not enter.

Can I query why my manuscript has not been selected or ask for feedback?

No. The judges' decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into either prior to or after the winner is announced.

Can I include my name on the manuscript?

Yes. The judging of this award is not done anonymously.

Conditions of Entry

**** Please read the full Conditions of Entry below before submitting your work.****

- Closing date for submissions is **Monday 18 December 2023** at 11.59pm (AEST).
 - Entry is FREE.
 - Only ONE entry per person will be accepted.
 - The award is for an original, previously unpublished collection of poems between 50 to 80 pages, "about Australian culture," broadly defined.
 - Applicants must be Australian females over the age of 18.
 - The award is open to anyone who identifies as female. The applicant's self-identification will be sufficient to establish eligibility.
 - Individual poems can have been previously published or won prizes, but the manuscript, as a whole, should be unpublished.
 - Entries may be under consideration for publication elsewhere, but if an offer to publish the manuscript is accepted elsewhere, the applicant should immediately withdraw from the award.
 - The poet must present the entry under their own name and NOT under a pseudonym.
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- The entry must be typed (12 point) and submitted in one Word or PDF document.
 - The judges will short-list applications and select a winner. The decision of the judges is final, and no further correspondence will be entered into.
 - Applicants may reapply for a subsequent award provided they have not previously won the award.
 - The winner must agree to give a public reading of the works at the University of Sydney.
 - Late entries will not be considered.



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- Entries will not be accepted by post, email or fax.
- All entries to be submitted via: [Formstack](#)
- The winning manuscript will be delivered in its final form to Vagabond Press.

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Want more information?

For any further enquiries please email info@helenannebell.org (*with Helen Anne Bell in the subject line*)