

## Organising payment

Writers are professionals who work for a living. They put time, energy, expertise and talent into preparing for workshops, seminars, readings and other events. Whether they are conducting a seminar on publishing, discussing or reading from their work, or providing some other writing related service that uses their skills, they should be paid a professional rate.

While sometimes writers may volunteer their services it is not reasonable to expect someone to work for nothing. Also, while writers may appreciate flowers, petrol tokens etc. this should not be considered as payment for their services.

## What should the payment include?

The payment should include the fee for the service provided; this will include preparation time for workshops and seminars and any papers to be presented.

Travel and accommodation costs will be those agreed to, and reimbursement for any material costs required, e.g. photocopied hand outs.

## Guidelines for paying writers

The following is a range of recommended fees. Please consult with the writer prior to organising your event.

### Fee schedule

Readings and talks.....\$100 – \$200  
One hour lecture.....\$200

for a small group to \$750 for an international writers festival. (Check whether accommodation, travel and transfers are extra.)

Guest Author for a small festival..... \$300 plus mileage

Multiple readers.....\$20 – \$50 per reader

Panel member (up to six).....\$50 each (minimum)

Seminar/workshop – full day.....\$300 – \$400

Seminar workshop – half day.....\$150 – \$250

(includes preparation time; travel, transfers and accommodation will usually be extra. Please check.)

Judging a contest.....\$5 per entry (short story)

\$3 per entry (poem)

Pre-judging/shortlisting.....\$1 – \$2 per entry

## Other Costs

Copy editing .....\$35 – \$90 per hour

Structural editing.....\$90 – \$100 per hour

Proofreading.....\$30 – \$70 per hour

(depending on the type of work)

- Mileage rate 70c per km
- Private Mentoring \$55 per hour.

*The information provided here is of a general nature and may not be up to date. NZSA will not be liable for any reliance placed on this material and specific professional advice should be sought in any specific circumstance*

# How to organise a Writing Event

WITH A GUIDE TO PAYMENT FOR WRITERS

*NZ Society of Authors (PEN NZ Inc)*  
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## Why have writers events?

Writers play a valuable role in the cultural life of New Zealand. Their books provide a rich historical portrait for generations to come by reflecting the society we live in. They also give insights into thinking and behaving and enrich our lives.

It is a wonderful experience to hear writers read or discuss their work, the craft of writing, and the opportunities for writing that exist in New Zealand today.

## Planning a workshop or writing event

From readings to writing festivals there are a number of events and opportunities organisations such as book clubs, writers groups, libraries, schools and others can run in their communities.

The key to a successful event is planning. Ensure you or your group allows plenty of time to fundraise, contact the writer, make accommodation arrangements, travel and transfers, and organise and publicise the event.

## Finding a writer - who can help

1. *The NZSA or its branches* can assist you in finding a suitable writer for your event, or can contact the writer you would like to have visit you. A number of our members are skilled teachers of creative writing, manuscript assessors and editors, and experienced at conducting seminars and giving readings.

Our members write in a variety of genres, from sciencefiction to fantasy, romance, poetry, novels, short stories, nonfiction, lifestyle and business.

2. *The New Zealand Book Council* successfully runs literary events throughout New Zealand. The Book Council's programmes include *Writers in Schools*, *Meet the Author*, and *Words on Wheels*. The Book Council runs events that include both New Zealand and International authors; they administer the *International Writers Fund*, and are active in encouraging Literary Tourism.

For information about the New Zealand Book Council please visit [www.bookcouncil.org.nz](http://www.bookcouncil.org.nz)

3. Another organisation which organises writers' tours is *Booksellers New Zealand*. They organise writers' touring programmes and promotional events for new and established

authors, and administer the New Zealand Post Book Awards and the New Zealand Post Children's Book awards. Website: [www.booksellers.co.nz](http://www.booksellers.co.nz)

## Selecting a suitable venue

Depending on what type of event it is, there are a number of things it would be useful to consider.

- The room should be large enough to accommodate a small group but not so large as to make it difficult for the writer to be heard. If the room is very large, organise a microphone and speakers.
- A panel will require a long table and chairs to sit behind, as well as a microphone if it is in a large room or hall. A comfortable seating area with couches, a coffee table, and a lectern for the speaker works well.
- Ensure that there is no competing noise.
- A lectern or small table is necessary for the writer to place his/her material on.
- Make sure the lighting is adequate. Perhaps have a clip on light for the lectern so the writer can easily read his/her material if the room is dark or the reading is at night.
- If the event is a workshop, desks or large tables need to be organised for the participants as well as for the writer.
- Ask the writer if he/she needs material photocopied or prepared for the workshop and if the participants need to bring anything with them.
- Check with the writer if he/she requires an overhead projector, computer connection for Power Point, a whiteboard and markers, or wireless internet access.
- Remember to have water available for the writer as well as tea and coffee making facilities if it is for a longer session.

## Confirming the details

- Confirm the event in writing with the writer, ensuring he/she knows where, and when to arrive and what is expected.
- Give the writer a contact person to call in case of illness or sudden unavailability.
- Ensure the writer has a map of how to get to the venue and the accommodation address if required.
- Ensure there is someone to meet the writer at the venue and help set up.

## Publicising the event

Unless you already have participants lined up and/or the event is for a closed audience, in order for it to be a success, it needs publicity.

Here are a few ideas to help publicise the event.

- Write a press release for the local newspaper, and ask the writer for a photograph. Stress the benefits to the community of having the writer visit.
- Advertise in local news media.
- Send a notice to the local radio station for their public service broadcasts.
- Use a telephone tree or bulk email to follow-up and remind people (remember to bcc).
- Send a notice out through the schools.
- Make some posters and pin them up in libraries, visitors' centres and bookshops.
- Make up fliers to distribute.

## Working out the budget

The budget should include all the potential expenses, such as the writer's fee, travel, accommodation, materials costs, hireage, refreshments and meals.

Revenue will come from participants' fees, estimated ticket sales, donations, grants and accumulated funds able to be used to cover costs.

You will need to have worked out a detailed budget with costs and revenues to apply for a grant.

## Financial assistance

There are a number of ways you can raise funds for your event.

- Contacting local councils which often, through Creative Communities, have funding available for cultural events and should be contacted for their application forms.
- Charging a fee to cover costs of the event. For workshops and seminars experience shows participants who pay a fee are more motivated to learn.
- Charging a small fee or a gold coin 'koha' for readings.
- Getting a local firm or firms to sponsor the event.
- Applying to Creative New Zealand for funding support.