



## Free Reads Scheme 2020 - 2021

### What is the Free Reads Scheme

The **Free Reads Scheme** gives writers with a low income the chance to get feedback from professional writers and agents. It is paid for by Arts Council England and run by The Literacy Consultancy.

When you join our Scheme, we will match you to an editor who will read your work and give feedback. For this Free Reads Scheme you should live in London. But if you want to apply join another Free Reads Scheme in another area, you can find out more here:

<https://literaryconsultancy.co.uk/editorial/ace-free-reads-scheme/>

We would especially like to hear from writers who may not get published as often – for example writers of colour, disabled writers and writers from the LGBTQIA+ community.

### Who can join the Free Reads Scheme

To join the Free Reads Scheme you need to write in any style or form – this includes fiction, non-fiction, poetry, scripts and screenplays for film.

You should be **over 16 years old** to enter and your **work needs to be in English**.

You should be the only writer and you can't apply for Free Reads two years in a row.

You should fit one or more of these situations:

- √ **Be on a low income** – you need to earn less than £10.55 an hour or £23k a year. If you have been

furloughed and earn less than you used to because of COVID-19, let us know. We will need an email from your employer to say you are earning less money.

- √ **Get benefits** – this might be Job Seeker’s Allowance, Income Support, Disability Benefit or other benefits like Tax Credits or Universal Credit
- √ **Be a full-time student**
- √ **Be 60 years or older**

If you think you are on a low income but fit with this list, please tell us about your situation and we will see what we can do. You can do this by email to this address

[aliya@spreadtheword.org.uk](mailto:aliya@spreadtheword.org.uk)

We will need to see some evidence about your income when you send your application.

## **How do I apply to join Free Reads**

To apply to join Free Reads, please send us your

- **Application form** – you can find the form online
- **An outline/short synopsis** of the work you want an agent to read. This should not be longer than 1000 words. It might be a good idea to read our Pocket Guide to Writing a Synopsis before you apply
- **A piece of your writing** – this should be more than 20 pages long. Your work doesn’t have to be finished to enter but you should be able to show how the story is going to develop.

If you are disabled or want to send in your work in a different way, you can do this in an audio or visual way. Please email [aliya@spreadtheword.org.uk](mailto:aliya@spreadtheword.org.uk) to do this.

You should send all the parts of your application via Submittable. You can find the link here:

<https://spreadtheword.submittable.com/submit/170475/the-free-reads-scheme-2020-2021>

## **When do I need to send my application**

You can send us your application and work you want an editor to read between

1. **Monday 20 July – Monday 2 November**
2. **Monday 2 November – Monday 22 February 2021**

You can only send ONE application in the same year.

If you send your application by 2 November, we will get back in touch by 20 November to let you know if your work was chosen.

If you send your application by 22 February, we will get back in touch by 20 November to let you know if your work was chosen.

### **What happens next**

We will send an email to let you know if we are going to read all of your work or just part of it.

We will send you guidelines on what to do next and how to submit your work to us. You will have two weeks to put your work together and send it.

We will pass your work onto The Literary Consultancy who will match your work to the professional editor that suits you best. The editor will then read it and send you feedback within 4-6 weeks.

**Monday 2 November** writers should receive feedback by **Friday 22 January**.

**Monday 22 February** writers should receive feedback by **Friday 14 May**.

If you are not chosen for Free Reads, then we are sorry but we can't give you any feedback about why your work wasn't chosen this time.

### **Any other questions**

If you have any other questions, please send an email to [aliya@spreadtheword.org.uk](mailto:aliya@spreadtheword.org.uk)