# 2018 Split This Rock Poetry Festival Call for Session Proposals

Split This Rock Poetry Festival: Poems of Provocation & Witness

April 19-21, 2018, Washington, DC

Call for Proposals for Workshops, Themed Readings, and Panel or Roundtable Discussions

DEADLINE: June 30, 2017

HOW TO SUBMIT: Send in your proposal by emailing [poetryfest@splitthisrock.org](mailto:poetryfest@splitthisrock.org) or mail your submission to: Split This Rock, 1301 Connecticut Ave., NW, Suite 600, Washington, DC 20036. If you have not received an email confirmation of receipt within a week's time, please contact us at [tiana@splitthisrock.org](mailto:tiana@splitthisrock.org) or (202) 787-5210.

Overview

Split This Rock invites proposals for workshops, panel and roundtable discussions, and themed group readings for the Sixth Biennial Split This Rock Poetry Festival, celebrating Split This Rock's 10th anniversary, scheduled for April 19-21, 2018, in Washington, DC.

Not only does poetry equip us to speak out against oppression but it helps to sustain us in these extremely perilous times. It reminds us of what it means to be fully human, holds the vision of what is possible, creates community, keeps alive what we value: compassion, justice, love. Poetry helps us find our voice when we feel powerless. It helps us be our best selves, so we can continue the long-term activism our current climate demands.

We're particularly interested this year in seeing proposals that help us combat despair (or ride through it), learn from one another across generations, celebrate cultures targeted by hate, figure out what it means to live in this time, and equip us all as creative and effective citizens and activists.

We value diversity within the sessions, creative ways of interacting, ideas that are new to us. Special areas of interest this year are sessions focused on disability, transgender issues, reproductive rights, xenophobia/immigration, health care issues, confronting white supremacy, poverty and economic inequality, and eco-justice. We're eager to learn about ways that you've engaged poetry in working against the current repressive regime and we welcome intergenerational conversations.

The festival prides itself on being a place for community building. Interactive proposals that open unique opportunities for participants to connect with one another are of particular interest. When proposing panel discussions and readings, we request that time be set aside in your session for dialogue or a period of questions and answers.

Split This Rock is not an academic conference, but a gathering of individuals from many backgrounds. Please, no academic papers and avoid jargon of all kinds. Thank you!

We invite you to visit the [Split This Rock website](http://www.splitthisrock.org/programs/festival/2016-poetry-festival/) and review the schedules of the first five festivals to get a sense of the broad range of topics and approaches that appeal to organizers.

## PROPOSAL GUIDELINES

Split This Rock cultivates, teaches, and celebrates poetry that bears witness to injustice and provokes social change. Building the audience for poetry of provocation and witness from our home in the nation's capital, we call poets to a greater role in public life, foster a national network of socially engaged poets, and celebrate poetic diversity and the transformative power of the imagination.

Split This Rock Poetry Festival invites poets, writers, and activists to Washington, DC, for three days of poetry, community building, and creative transformation. The festival will feature readings, workshops, panel discussions, youth programming, activism, a bookfair, a party - opportunities to imagine a way forward, hone our activist skills, and explore the many ways that poetry can act as an agent for social change. Learn more about Split This Rock and the festival at the [website](http://www.splitthisrock.org/).

When submitting a proposal, you'll be asked for a description of 200 words or fewer, including information about format, themes, activities (if applicable), and topics or questions to be explored. We also want to know what makes the session timely and necessary and how participants will benefit both at the festival and afterwards.

Tell us how your session aligns with Split This Rock's work, how the presenter(s) are uniquely qualified to lead the session, and how you will ensure that the session is interactive. There are 3 types of sessions you can propose:

## Workshops

We have a strong interest in workshops that are interactive. Workshops could offer opportunities for writing, themed activities that open discussion on writing or writers, space to explore ways to maintain personal balance, or any number of exercises to guide participants in thinking about the connections between contemporary issues and their writing life. Please tell us exactly what you have in mind for activities. A workshop may be led by one person or collaboratively.

Themed Group Readings

Readings might showcase voices or perspectives that could otherwise be missing from the festival program. Please tell us if there is a coherent theme or organizing principle for your reading that makes it a natural fit for Split This Rock. Also, note how much time will be set aside for participants to dialogue with readers. All readings should include more than one person.

Panels/Roundtables

A panel or discussion may consist of 3-4 persons, with one person designated as facilitator. Please tell us what questions you wish to explore. We have a strong interest in interactive conversation and community building, so please be sure to describe how you will involve participants in the discussion and how much time will be set aside for participants to dialogue with one another and/or session leaders.

Session Length

Sessions are typically an hour and a half long. We will confirm how much time each session will have once sessions are accepted.

## COMPLETING THE APPLICATION

Please title your proposed session. Titles should be 10 words or fewer (no more than 40 characters in length, including spaces). Include brief biographical information and full contact information for each participant. Provide a description of your session, using the online form.

PLEASE NOTE: All selected presenters must register for Split This Rock Poetry Festival. Last year, festival registration for presenters was $100, with a student rate of $50. While the rates may change, we are committed to keeping festival prices reasonable. Scholarships will be available so that all may participate.

There is no limit to the number of proposals you may send, but be sure all proposed presenters have agreed to be part of your session before you send it to us. Take time to develop your proposal and bear in mind that this is a very competitive process. (In the past we've had to turn away many strong proposals.)

Please note that we prefer that presenters be part of no more than two accepted sessions. Once sessions have been selected, we will ask any presenters who are part of more than two to narrow their participation.

One final note: Split This Rock has a small staff without a lot of time for double-checking information. Please follow these instructions carefully. Remember:

* Give your proposed session a meaningful name of 10 words or less (no more than 40 characters).
* Provide FULL contact information for all your session leaders.
* Remind all session leaders that they will have to register. Generous scholarship funds will be available; we will post a simple scholarship application when festival registration opens.
* Please note we are not interested in readings of academic papers.
* Regretfully, we have no funds to compensate session leaders.

Questions? Email us at [info@splitthisrock.org](mailto:info@splitthisrock.org) or call us at 202-787-5210. If you have questions specifically about accessibility, feel free to contact Tiana Trutna at the number above or [tiana@splitthisrock.org](mailto:tiana@splitthisrock.org). We look forward to reading your proposal!

What to Submit

Contact Information and Bio for the Main Contact (Required for Submission)

Please provide full name, email address, phone number, mailing address, and a bio of no more than 75 words for the main contact for your submission. The bio should be written in 3rd person and begin with the contact’s name. This is the bio that will be in the program book should the proposal be accepted.

Contact Information and Bio for all other Session Presenters (Required for Submission)

If applicable, please provide full name, email address, phone number, and a bio of no more than 75 words for the main contact for your submission. The bio should be written in 3rd person and begin with the contact’s name. This is the bio that will be in the program book should the proposal be accepted. Please note only workshops can be led by only one person.

### Session Topics (Required for Submission)

From the list below, tell us what topic(s) your session focuses upon. Choose as many as apply. We realize this list is not comprehensive and the next section will allow you to offer topics that may be missing from this list.

Activism

Aging/Ageism

Animals/Animal Rights

Body/Body Image

Civic Participation

Criminal Justice

Disability/Ableism

Environment/EcoJustice

Food & Hunger

Gender/Sexism

Gentrification

Global Perspectives

Health/Health Care/Illness

History & Elders

Homelessness

Immigration/Xenophobia

Intergenerational Community

Language

Mental Health

Middle East

Poetics

Police Brutality

Poverty/Economic Inequality

Race/Ethnicity/Racism

Reproductive Rights/Justice

Self Care

Sexual Orientation/Homophobia

Sexuality

Social Movements/Resistance

Socioeconomic Class/Classism

Spiritual Practice

Spoken Word

Teaching

Transgender Lives/Transphobia

Translation

Veterans/Military

Violence & War

White Supremacy

Writing Techniques, Prompts, Etc.

Youth

### Additional Session Topics (Optional)

If a particular topic your session focuses on was not covered by the list above, please share it with us.

Session Title (Required for Submission)

In 10 words or less, provide a title for your session. Please keep in mind that this is the title that will be included in festival materials if your proposed session is accepted.

### Description of Session (Required for Submission)

In 200 words or less, please describe your session, including any themes, topics or questions to be explored, what makes the session timely and necessary, overview of the format or specific activities to be included, and how participants will benefit both at the festival and afterwards. Keep in mind that this is the description that will be included in festival materials if your proposed session is accepted.

### Additional Session Questions (Required for Submission)

In 250 words or less for each reply, please respond to the questions below. It is okay to be brief but add enough information to properly inform the selection committee.

* How does this session align with the work of Split This Rock?
* Please describe how you and your fellow session presenters (if applicable) are uniquely qualified to lead/facilitate your proposed session.
* In what ways will this session be interactive and how much time will be set aside for participants to dialogue with one another and/or session presenters?

### Acknowledge Need to Register for Festival (Required for Submission)

Please include this statement with your submission to confirm that you are aware that session presenters for all accepted proposals will be required to register for the festival prior to attending the festival: I am aware that if my session is accepted I will need to register for the festival and will inform my co-presenters of this policy.

A special presenter rate and scholarships will be available to ensure that all can attend.

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Thank you for your submission!

If you have any questions, contact us at [info@splitthisrock.org](mailto:info@splitthisrock.org) or 202-787-5210. For questions specifically regarding accessibility, feel free to contact Tiana Trutna at the number above or [tiana@splitthisrock.org](mailto:tiana@splitthisrock.org).