

Wellcome Collection Non-Fiction Awards 2026/7



<https://www.londonwriterscentre.org.uk/project/wellcome-collection-non-fiction-awards/>

Who we are and what we do

We are the **Wellcome Collection**. We are a free museum and library.

We are part of a charity called **Wellcome**.

We support science to build a healthier future for everyone.

We have collections, exhibitions and events about the past, present and future of health.

We believe everyone's experience of health matters.

You can visit us

⇒ In person – we are near Euston Station in London

⇒ Online – www.wellcomecollection.org

All our exhibitions and events are free. You can use our library for free too. You might need to book in advance before you visit.

What kind of writers are we looking for?

We are looking for writers to take part in the **Wellcome Collection Non-Fiction Awards**.

We are working with **London Writers Centre** in London to make this happen. London Writers Centre is London's literature development agency. Find us at www.londonwriterscentre.org.uk

We started the awards in **2022**.

We supported **12 writers** in two versions of the programme.

10 writers now have an agent, and **3 writers** have a book deal with a publisher.

Information about the awards programme

The Awards programme offers

- **£2000 bursary** – this is money to support your travel and research
- Industry days to find out what it's really like to work in publishing
- Supportive time with a published author
- Supportive time with a non-fiction editor
- Time to spend in the Wellcome library
- Time on your own with the Wellcome Trust team
- Time on your own with the London Writers Centre team

The Awards programme also offers

- A chance to be published by the **Wellcome Collection**
- Masterclasses on how to write non-fiction
- Group feedback sessions to help you improve your writing
- A meeting with an agent
- Extra money for travel and access – if you need it.

This writing programme runs for **10 months**. By the end of the programme you will have turned your book idea into a full proposal you can share at our final event.

We will tell you more about this later.

Who we want to apply

We want writers to apply if you

- ✓ Are **Disabled** – this includes deaf, disabled and neurodivergent people. It includes people with long-term and mental health conditions.
- ✓ Are from **Global Majority** – this includes anyone who is Black, Asian, Dual-Heritage
- ✓ Have not been published before
- ✓ Don't have an agent
- ✓ Are **18 years old** or over
- ✓ Live **full-time** in the UK

What we mean by non-fiction writing about health and being human

Your book project should include one of these main themes

- ✓ Medicine
- ✓ Health

- ✓ Illness
- ✓ Identity

You can write in any style you want to – for example as a memoir or an essay.

Health, illness, and medicine are part of all our lives. We want the writers we work with to write a piece of non-fiction that gives new meaning to what it means to be human.

Your piece of writing must be in English and be your original work.

For example, you might want to write about

- Climate crisis
- Mental health
- Physical illness
- Fairness in health
- The body
- Infection
- Pain
- Memory
- Identity
- Social histories
- Justice in medicine
- Changing the structure of how we think about health

These are just some of the ideas you might want to write about. We want to change the stories and work that is published about health.

How to apply for the Awards

The applications open from

Midday on Wednesday 25 February 2026

The applications close at

5pm on Wednesday 8 April 2026

We use an online space called **Submittable** for you to upload your application.

We will manage the applications using the London Writers Centre Submittable account.

You need to make your own account to upload your information. This is free.

You can complete your Submittable form using

√ Words –

<https://spreadtheword.submittable.com/submit/349667/wellcome-collection-non-fiction-awards-2026-27-text-only-application>

√ Audio/Video –

<https://spreadtheword.submittable.com/submit/349669/wellcome-collection-non-fiction-awards-2026-27-audio-or-video-submission>

There will be a form to fill out with the following questions:

A statement about your writing life and what you want to get from the programme – this should be 300 words or up to 2 minutes and 30 seconds as an audio or video file

An outline idea of the book you would like to write and how it links to health and being human – this should be 300 words or up to 2 minutes and 30 seconds as an audio or video file

Anything else you want to tell us about access needs – this should be 150 words or up to 2 minutes as an audio or video file

Please send a sample from the project you want to write or a piece of non-fiction writing for the audience you want to reach with your project. This should be up to **3000 words (there is no minimum word count)**.

There is no fee to apply.

Support with your application

London Writers Centre are holding a free online information session on

Monday 2 March 2026, 7pm-8pm

The online session is with

Bobby Nayyar from London Writers Centre

Francesca Barrie – Wellcome Collection publisher

You can find out more about the programme, ask questions and get advice on how to apply.

You will also get to meet **2 writers** who already took part in the programme.

We will record the session and have a BSL interpreter there.

You can register for free here

<https://www.londonwriterscentre.org.uk/our-events/wellcome-collection-non-fiction-awards-2026-27-thinking-of-applying/>

How we judge your application

We want to find writers who want to

- ✓ make a change in their writing careers
- ✓ focus on writing a non-fiction book about something to do with health

We judge every application in the fairest way we can. For example, we won't know your name or who you are when we read your application.

Someone from London Writers Centre and someone from the Wellcome Collection will read all the entries and decide who goes through to the next round.

After the second round we will make a long list of people we want to look at again.

Our judges will read the work of everyone on the long list. They will choose 9 people to go forward for an interview.

The 3 judges are

- Kerry Hudson
- Micha Frazer-Carroll
- Eli Keren

The judges will choose up to **9 people** to have an interview either

- ✓ **in person** – we will meet you at the Wellcome's offices
- ✓ **on a ZOOM call**

The interview will take **up to 30 minutes**. We can make adjustments if you need them.

The date of the interviews is

Wednesday 3 June 2026

We will then choose the final 6 people to join the programme. You must prove that you live in the UK if we choose you.

How much time does the programme take

This is an intensive programme which includes workshops, sessions with a mentor and events.

We think you will need to have around 25 hours a month free to take part and make the most of the opportunities.

We will invite you to travel to London sometimes and develop your work at the Wellcome Collection, or facilitate sessions online as needed.

We want all writers on the programme to have their proposal and chapter or chapters ready by **June 2027**.

Who can apply

You **can** apply if you are a published writer but not if you have self-published a non-fiction book already.

You **cannot** apply if you are studying creative writing or have studied in the last two years. We want to keep the spaces for writers who have not had much writing support in the past.

You **cannot** apply if you have an agent.

Key dates for your diary

Applications are open from

Wednesday 25 February (midday) to Wednesday 8 April (5pm)

Zoom event about the Awards including time for questions

Monday 2 March 2026 – 7pm-8pm

We will let everyone know the results by

Wednesday 20 May 2026

The interview date is

Wednesday 3 June 2026

We will contact the 6 writers we have chosen for the programme by

Friday 5 June 2026

The launch event for the programme is

Saturday 12 September 2026

Final sharing event at Wellcome Collection in London – this is in person so you will have to travel if you can

Wednesday 9 June 2027

We will run all the creative workshops **in person or online according to access needs.**

Feedback sessions will be **online.**

We will make adjustments for anyone who has access needs. Please just let us know what you need

These are the dates we have now, but this may change.

A full schedule of dates will be given to the successful writers in **September 2026.**

Bursary, access and travel funds

We will pay your bursary money in stages. You can use it to support your writing work. For example, you might want to

- ✓ Buy materials
- ✓ Go on trips
- ✓ Buy books for research
- ✓ Make time to write

If you need extra access money, then please let us know. For example, you might need access money for

- ✓ Equipment
- ✓ Software for your laptop, computer, tablet or phone
- ✓ A personal assistant

If you live outside London there will be money for travel as most activities will happen in London. We will always make adjustments for anyone who can't travel because of their disability or condition.

If you have any questions, please send an email to Bobby Nayyar who works for London Writers Centre.

bobby@londonwriterscentre.org.uk