



**FRAN ABRAMS CREATIVE WRITING AWARD
FOR MONTGOMERY COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL JUNIORS**

2019-2020 GUIDELINES

APPLICATION DEADLINE: Friday, February 28, 2020 – 11:59 p.m.

**All applications must be submitted online at
<https://artsandhumanities.fluidreview.com>**

801 Ellsworth Drive, Silver Spring, MD 20910

creativemoco.com/fran-abrams-humanities | (301) 565-3805 | AnaAlicia.Feng@creativemoco.com

The Mission of the Arts & Humanities Council of Montgomery County

The Arts & Humanities Council of Montgomery County (AHCMC), in partnership with the community, cultivates and supports excellence in the arts and humanities, expands access to cultural expression, and contributes to economic vitality in the region.

Equity and Inclusion

With the acknowledgement and understanding that access to resources has been historically limited for certain groups of people, AHCMC is committed to cultural equity within all funding activities and to serving communities that have been traditionally underrepresented in mainstream funding, discourse, leadership, and resource allocation including, but not limited to, African, Latinx, Asian, Arab, and Native American (ALAANA) constituents, socio-economically disadvantaged communities, differently abled individuals, and LGBTQ communities.

Fran Abrams Creative Writing Award

Introduction

The *Fran Abrams Creative Writing Award*, established in 2010, honors a high school junior who excels in creative writing, as well as Fran Abrams, who worked tirelessly throughout her career to support the arts and humanities in Montgomery County. The *Fran Abrams Creative Writing Award* is a competitive award open annually to all Montgomery County high school juniors. The awardee receives \$3,000. A reception will take place at the Betty Mae Kramer Gallery in the Silver Spring Civic Building and will feature a reading by the awardee.

Purpose

This award benefits a high school junior graduating in the class of 2021, who is enrolled in a public or non-public high school in Montgomery County, and who intends to pursue the study of and/or a career in creative writing. The 2019-2020 *Fran Abrams Creative Writing Award* will be presented to one recipient following a [juried selection process](#) that is based upon the merit of the original work submitted and the applicant's potential for a creative writing related career, not financial need.

Eligibility

An eligible applicant must be **all** the following:

- A Montgomery County resident;
- Enrolled full-time during the fall of 2019 and spring of 2020 of their junior year in a public or non-public high school located in Montgomery County. Home-schooled students are also eligible to apply; and
- Graduating in the spring of 2021.

Creative Writing Disciplines

The work submitted must demonstrate the applicant's work in one or more of the following creative writing disciplines:

- Poetry
- Fiction
- Songwriting
- Scriptwriting
- Creative Nonfiction¹

¹ Creative Nonfiction is the retelling of factual events and/or people in a dramatic, creative way. For the purposes of this award, research/history papers will not be accepted. If you have any questions, please contact grants staff.

Work samples in the above disciplines may include but are not limited to:

- Novels
- Poems
- Short stories
- Song lyrics
- Memoirs
- Personal essays
- Screenplays for film or television
- Scripts for theater, podcasts, or radio

If your work has a performance aspect to it, such as spoken word, or is conveyed through media, such as a podcast or radio broadcast, we highly encourage you to upload a video or audio in addition to the written component.

Application and Panel Process

All eligible applications are evaluated by a panel of arts professionals in an open panel review process. Panelists are chosen to represent a cross-section of professionals qualified to provide expert knowledge of the visual arts and arts education. AHCMC staff make every effort to ensure that the panel is diverse in all respects.

AHCMC grants staff provide the applications and support materials to panelists approximately four weeks prior to the panel review meeting in order to allow panelists sufficient time for their evaluation. During the panel review meeting, the panel evaluates all eligible applications based on AHCMC's Evaluation Criteria: Activities & Relevant Skills, Career Goals, Technical Skills, and Originality & Creativity (described in detail below).

AHCMC staff review applications for eligibility and completeness, but do not score. Staff manage all administrative and logistical tasks necessary to conduct a successful panel review; provide panelists all documentation necessary to evaluate applications effectively; inform the panel in matters of AHCMC policy and procedures; and facilitate panel meetings.

The panel meets to discuss and provide scores for each application. Panel meetings are open to applicants who wish to listen; however, applicants are not permitted to make any comments or participate in any way during the panel meeting. Applicants may not contact panelists before or after the panel meeting regarding their application.

AHCMC grants staff use the applicant's panel score to make recommendations to AHCMC's CEO. AHCMC's CEO has final authority to approve or decline the selected applicant.

The panel scores and comments are available to the applicant upon request after the award announcement. Applicants may contact Ana-Alicia Feng, Grants Program Coordinator, at AnaAlicia.Feng@creativemoco.com or (301) 565-3805 ext. 21

Evaluation Criteria

Panelists use the Evaluation Criteria below to score the application. An applicant's commitment to each Evaluation Criteria should thread through the entire application, including the narratives, and the portfolio images.

Activities & Relevant Skills (25 points)

- ✓ Clearly describes extracurricular activities, creative writing activities outside of school, and other obligations, which can include paid work

- If the applicant does not participate in any extracurricular activities, please provide a statement stating why
- ✓ Demonstrates interest in developing skills that will serve them in a creative writing career and/or further their creative writing/literature/poetry academic studies

Career Goals (25 points)

- ✓ Demonstrates commitment to the creative writing discipline
- ✓ Provides clear statement of goals for a creative writing career
- ✓ Outlines specific steps that the applicant has taken or will take to achieve these goals

Technical Skills (25 points)

- ✓ Presents work sample(s) in a professional manner, including correct spelling, grammar, and syntax
- ✓ Effectively reflects a tone and mood appropriate to the material in the work samples
- ✓ Provides description of skills and techniques used

Originality & Creativity (25 points)

- ✓ Demonstrates creativity, originality, and strong conceptualization
- ✓ Shows versatility by challenging standard clichés and/or genre boundaries, and/or notions of how a particular concept or emotion can be expressed
- ✓ Explains themes and patterns present throughout the work

Required Application Materials

Your completed, online Fran Abrams Application includes:

1. A completed application form

2. Work Samples

- Upload work samples that are original work, created in the past two years. The work sample(s) must consist of the following:
 - Poetry/Songwriting – Submit no more than 10 poems and/or song lyrics. The document should not exceed 10 pages total.
 - Fiction/Creative Nonfiction/Scriptwriting – Submit no more than 10 pages combined, double-spaced with 1” margins. You may submit multiple pieces, or an excerpt that is part of a larger piece, as long as your submission does not exceed 10 pages.
 - Work samples of a combination of disciplines should to no more than 10 pages maximum.
 - If your written work sample has a performance component, feel free to upload it **in addition** to the written work sample as follows:
 - Video: Maximum 2 videos, no more than five minutes combined. Maximum 100 MB per file
 - Audio: Maximum 2 audio files, no more than five minutes combined. Maximum 10 MB per file
 - Live video or audio hyperlinks can also be placed within PDF that is uploaded to FluidReview (i.e., an applicant can submit a live YouTube hyperlink within a PDF)

- If the submitted video and/or audio is more than five minutes, include instructions to tell the panel which segments to watch
- ❖ If submitting more than one work sample, upload a cover page with a work sample number, title of each work, genres, and year completed. Use [this template](#) as a guide

3. High School Transcript

- Upload one copy of your current high school transcript, verified by original signature of your guidance counselor in a PDF document. Home-schooled applicants may have their current high school transcript signed by their primary instructor if a guidance counselor is not available. This signature verifies that the applicant’s grades are up-to-date and that they are on track to graduate with a high school diploma in the spring of 2021.
- Transcripts will be used by AHCMC staff to verify eligibility and confirm that the applicant is on track to graduate with a high school diploma in the spring of 2021.
- **Transcripts will not be sent to the panel and will not be used as part of the evaluation process.**

4. Home-School Notification Form (required for home-schooled students only)

- All home-schooled applicants must submit a Home-School Notification Form signed by a parent or guardian who verifies that the student is home-schooled and that they comply with Maryland State Department of Education home-schooling regulations.

Reminders:

The following will **not** be accepted:

- Work that is not the original work of the applicant
- Incomplete submissions
- Late application materials
- Documents submitted through any means other than FluidReview
- Work that was created more than two years ago

The Online Application Process

All applications and materials for the *Fran Abrams Creative Writing Award* must be submitted online on the AHCMC [FluidReview](#) portal.

1. Create your online FluidReview account at <https://artsandhumanities.fluidreview.com/>. Once you have created your account, you will be able to access the application portal.
2. Select “2019-2020 Fran Abrams Creative Writing Award Application” and click on the gray “Create Submissions” button on the far right of your screen to access all application tasks.
3. On the application form, be sure to click “Save & Continue Editing” at the bottom of each page before moving onto the next page.
4. Upload-tasks will be directly below the application form. Before submitting, make sure that all uploads comply with the guidelines.

Award Recipient Responsibility

Before you apply, please read the Award Agreement, Exhibition Timeline, and Award Recipient Responsibilities below. The applicant understands and agrees to honor the following obligations as conditions for accepting the award:

- The award recipient will work with a creative writing mentor designated by AHCMC.
- The award recipient must agree to read their original work at the award reception that will take place in spring, 2020 at the [Betty Mae Kramer Gallery & Music Room](#), located in the Silver Spring Civic Building, One Veterans Place, Silver Spring, MD 20910.
- AHCMC reserves the right to produce one slide from the award recipient's submission, at the Council's expense, to publicize the award presentation reception, and for other AHCMC publications. AHCMC agrees to credit the award recipient by name and include copyright symbol on the written work. AHCMC will not use the recipient's writing for monetary advantage.
- AHCMC reserves the right to publish the name of the recipient and the recipient's high school in press releases to publicize the *Fran Abrams Creative Writing Award*.

Application Preparation Assistance

Grant Preparation Workshops

AHCMC staff will hold free preparation webinars to provide assistance to those applying for the *Fran Abrams Creative Writing Award*. Workshops are scheduled in coordination with schools. Attendance to a webinar and/or workshop is not required and will not be a factor in evaluating the application, however AHCMC strongly encourages all applicants to attend or reach out for preparation assistance.

Please click [here](#) or go to <http://creativemoco.com/grants/newsletter> to join our email list and receive notifications about grant deadlines, webinars, and workshops.

Applicants are encouraged to contact AHCMC with any questions they may have. Assistance is available via email, phone or in-person by contacting Ana-Alicia Feng at AnaAlicia.Feng@creativemoco.com or (301) 565-3805 ext. 21.

IMPORTANT DATES

APPLICATION DEADLINE: Friday, February 28, 2020 – 11:59 p.m.

Award notification: April 2020

Tentative Award Presentation and Public Reading Timeframe: May 2020

QUESTIONS?

Ana-Alicia Feng, Grants Program Coordinator
AnaAlicia.Feng@creativemoco.com or (301) 565-3805 ext. 21