

Writing Our Legacy
Committee Member Recruitment Pack
July 2021

Community Base, c/o Black History
113 Queens Road, Brighton BN13XG

Friday 30 July 2021

Dear applicant

Thank you for your interest in applying to become a Writing Our Legacy committee member. You will be joining the organisation at a pivotal time and have the opportunity to make a strong contribution.

Writing Our Legacy is currently going through an exciting organisation development process to strengthen and consolidate the organisation as we approach our 10th birthday in April 2022.

Established in 2012 as a voluntary-run organisation, we have applied to become a CIO (charitable incorporated organisation) in April, and we are fundraising to generate core funding and longer-term project funding to sustain our activity year-round due to popular demand.

We have a small but dedicated committee of 4 members, plus a wider network of advisory and associate artists and over 300 writers and creatives who are involved with our organisation.

Earlier this year, we carried out a skills audit to identify areas of development for the board. As a result, we are particularly looking to strengthen our expertise in the following areas:

- Marketing
- Finance
- Fundraising
- Publishing Industry
- Strategic arts sector experience
- Theatre, live lit or other performance
- Running venues or or producing events in venues

We're looking for committee members from the Black, Asian and ethnically diverse communities and from other underrepresented groups including working class, LGBTQ+, disabled, Gypsy and Travellers and others. We are also looking for committee members who are under 40 and who are intersectional, to better represent our stakeholders and communities.

We are a friendly informal organisation with a strong commitment to our core values, aims and making the world a better place.

Time commitment for committee members is quarterly meetings for 2 hours, plus board paper reading. Over the next 8-9 months, we are planning to meet a few more times (every other month) to provide support to our CEO and the organisation development processes.

To apply, please submit by **Monday 30 August 2021** an expression of interest to Amy Zamarripa Solis,CEO, Writing Our Legacy on amy@writingourlegacy.org.uk:

1. Short written statement (500-700 words or less) or a 3-5 minutes video statement of about why you'd like to join our committee and what you would like to bring to the organisation
2. Your CV
3. Skills audit (very short, we promise)

If your application looks like a good match for us, we will hold interviews on the week commencing 13 September. Selected candidates will have the opportunity to observe a committee meeting on Monday 20 September and let us know if they would like to join as a member.

If you'd like an informal chat about what's involved or any questions, please drop me or Amy a line and we will set up a time for a phone call or Zoom with you -- email info@writingourlegacy.org.uk

If you have any access needs or would like an Easy Read version of this pack, please also get in touch, and we will do our best to help, in consultation with our colleagues at Disability Arts Online.

Thanks again for considering our organisation and best of luck with the application.

Kind regards

Graham Lally
Chair
Writing Our Legacy



Introduction

Who we are, what we do, recent achievements

Who we are

Writing Our Legacy is an established arts organisation that enables Black, Asian and ethnically diverse people to tell their story through writing and the creative arts. We give writers and other creatives a platform and community to feel supported, nurtured and evolve their work through the creative pipeline, from start to publication. We share stories and heritage of diaspora communities and bring them to life through various art forms for audiences to learn and take part in cultural heritage.

We employ MOSAIC's definition of Black to be 'Black people' and 'mixed-parentage people' including all those people whose ancestral origins are African, Asian, Caribbean, Chinese, Middle Eastern, North African, Romany, the indigenous peoples of the South Pacific islands, the American continents, Australia and New Zealand.

What we do

We produce opportunities for writers and artists of all backgrounds to develop their skills and experiences, with a specific clear focus and remit to support Black, Asian and ethnically diverse creatives on their artistic journeys.

We also produce activities and events for people of all ages and backgrounds to learn about the heritage, culture and arts of diaspora communities, specifically Black, Asian and ethnically diverse people in the UK.

Over the past eight years, we've produced literary events and festivals, theatre productions, residencies, workshops and publications.

Our regular year-round offer includes:

- Weekly and one-off creative writing workshops
- Monthly socials for writers and creatives of colour
- Creative writing retreats
- Spoken word events
- Community talks and events
- Writing groups and forums
- Publications (new)
- Residencies
- Productions

We also do capacity building work for individuals and diverse communities: we offer support to writers and Black-led community partners to apply for funding, write letters of recommendation and develop their expertise and skills in project management, arts and other areas.

WOL is an essential resource for new and established writers of colour and literature organisers for support, advice, funding info, promotion and signposting. We broker relationships between writers & publishing companies, agencies, funding and commissioning organisations.

Literary agents, publishers and arts commissioners discover writers through our books and website.

Regular funders include: Arts Council England, Brighton & Hove City Council, East Sussex Arts Partnership, Big Local, Sussex Community Foundation

Regular partners include: Crawley Wordfest, Shoreham Wordfest, Brighton & Hove Black History, Diversity Lewes, Brighton Libraries, West Sussex Library Services & Worthing Museum, New Writing South, Brighton Dome, Brighton Museum, MK Lit Fest & MK Gallery, Creative Futures



Recent Achievements

In 2019 we published the *Hidden Sussex* anthology, our first publication.

2020 was a critical year: we galvanised writers of colour through our C-19 programme and new online spaces including retreats, monthly socials and Whatsapp/Facebook groups. We presented leading writers including Kadija George, Catherine Johnson, Jacob Ross, Dean Atta, and Sean Wai Keung in events.

Our proactive response to C19 and Black Lives Matter created a growing community of writers of colour in excess of 300.

Organisations respect our expertise and engagement with Black, Asian and ethnically diverse writers and audiences.

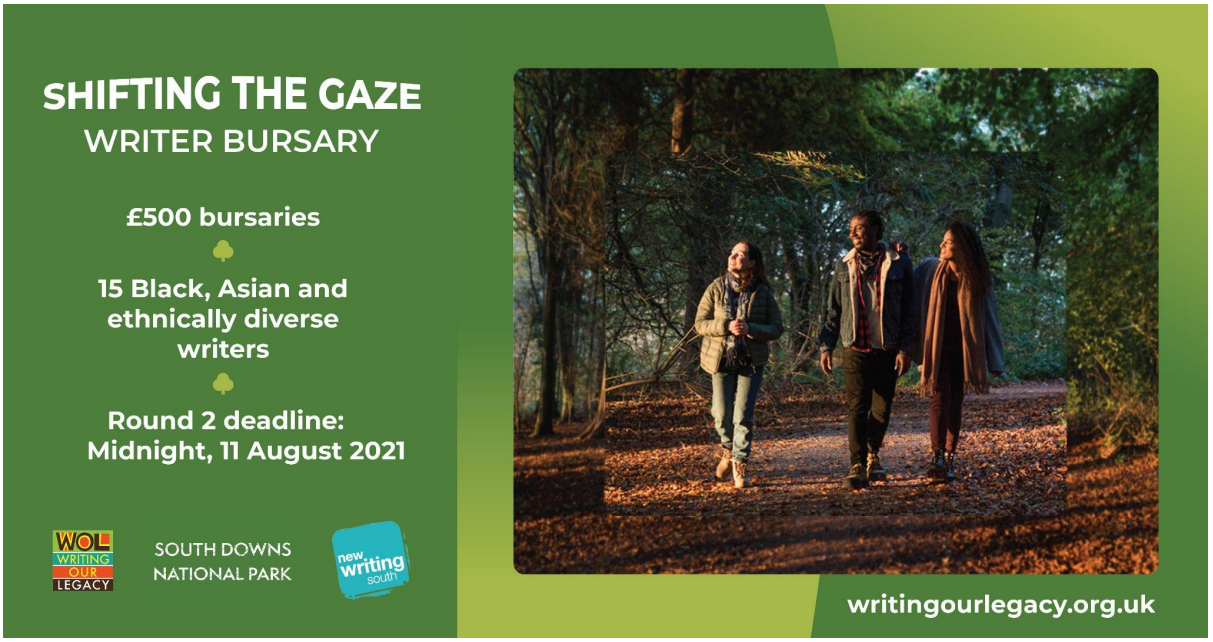
2020 saw several commissions: talks, lectures, readings, workshops & consultations:

- Brighton & Hove Libraries
- Sussex University, working with 2 different departments
- Brighton University
- National Trust
- South Downs National Park Authority

In December 2020, we published our first magazine, *Covert*.

In 2020/2021 we were awarded funding by Arts Council England to undertake our ambitious organisation development plans and also deliver a winter events programme.

Our 2021 partners include Southdowns National Park, National Trust, Ditchling Museum, Brighton Museum, New Writing South, Creative Futures, Shoreham Wordfest, Brighton & Hove Libraries, urbanflo, Writers Mosaic, and Disability Arts Online.



Organisation Development

Writing Our Legacy (WOL) was established in April 2012 as an incorporated association by Founder Amy Zamarripa Solis, with support from Bert Williams MBE, Neil Ansell, Cynthia Jimenez and Jenny Aburra.

The organisation started as a grassroots response to the lack of diverse literature or arts programming happening in Brighton and Sussex. We are now about to celebrate our 10th birthday in April 2022, and it is clear from demand and a growing community that stability and core funding are needed to sustain the organisation's much needed and valued services to writers, literature fans and audiences year-round.

We have applied to become a CIO (charitable incorporated organisation) as we now need to adopt a more robust legal structure, governance and financial model as WOL increases its income and provides more services to support the strong network of writers and audiences developing through our work.

Our proposed objectives are:

- The advancement of Black, Asian and ethnically diverse literature for the public benefit in the arts through the provision of arts, culture and heritage programmes and by raising awareness and enabling access to participation in arts, culture and heritage activities.

- The promotion of equality and diversity for the public benefit by advancing the education of minority voices and experiences
- The provision of access to literature and arts to marginalised excluded communities

From January to May 2021, we underwent a five-month period of organisation development, supported by Arts Council England National Lottery Project Grant, delivered by CEO Amy Zamarripa Solis and with delivery freelance consultants.

As part of this we commissioned external consultants to carry out stakeholder evaluation, writer impact case studies and film testimonials.

We have also developed a business plan that outlines our business aims, vision, fundraising and communications plans for the next three years from 2021-2024.



Our team

Staffing, Committee, Associate Artists

Staffing

We have a small freelance delivery and creative team who have formed into a fairly consistent core group over the past two years:

- Amy Zamarripa Solis - CEO
- Rowena Price - Press & Marketing

- Mohammed Rahman - Programme Coordinator, Creative/Designer & Writer
- Oyin Fowowe - Creative/Designer & Video and Audio producer
- Joey Lee - Creative/Designer (also volunteer)
- Bip Mistry -photography & video
- Other freelance consultants, mostly ethnically diverse

Amy Zamarripa Solis has worked in communications, fundraising and management in arts, culture and creative sectors for over 20 years. Amy has worked for a wide range of charities, businesses and organisations, from tech start ups and grassroots community groups to national and international bodies including Arts Council England. For the past four years, she has run her own arts management and production company, This Too Is Real, supporting and developing art and cultural work that promotes social cohesion, equality and diversity.

Rowena Price is a communications consultant and coach with over 15 years' experience working in the creative industries. She has been working with Writing Our Legacy since 2018 and is passionately committed to working with organisations and individuals who actively remove barriers to inclusion and participation in arts and culture.

Joseph Lee is committed to producing brand messaging and communications across multiple platforms, building communities through creative collaboration. A spoken word performer and published poet, Joseph now resides in Brighton where he studies a Creative Writing Masters. His involvement in developing literary communities aims to celebrate diversity within creative writing.

A writer and visual artist based in East London, Mohammed Rahman joined the Writing Our Legacy team in November 2020 as a Freelance Programmes Coordinator. Mohammed has had writing published in The Willowherb Review, Skin Deep Magazine and on the Goethe Institut website.

Management Committee

Our current committee includes:
Chair: Graham Lally
Founding member: Dr Bert Williams MBE
Founding member: Neil Ansell
Member: Umi Sinha

Graham Lally is a haiku writer, photographer and blogger with a technical background covering over 20 years. He was winner of a Guardian's political blog award, and has been featured in Black and White Photography magazine. Living in Seaford, he is half-Chinese mixed with Irish blood.

Neil Ansell was formerly a community affairs researcher for the BBC, but for the past decade has been a full time writer. He is chair of the national charity FFT, which supports and

campaigns for members of the Gypsy, Traveller and Roma communities. Neil is the author of *Deep Country, Deer Island* and other nature books. He is the father of mixed race children.

Dr Bert Williams MBE is co-founder of Brighton & Hove Black History. Born in Jamaica, Bert has lived in Brighton since 1967. He served in the RAF, then worked for the NHS. After retiring, he chaired Black & mixed parentage family charity Mosaic. Bert has also organised Chattri Memorial service to honour WW1 Indian Soldiers. In 2011, Bert was awarded a MBE in the Queen's Birthday Honours. In 2017, he received an honorary Doctor of Letters from Sussex University.

Umi Sinha is a writer, creative writing tutor and mentor and oral storyteller. She has taught creative writing at Sussex and Brighton Universities and for the Creative Writing Programme based in Brighton. She runs The GuestHouse Storytellers, an oral storytelling club for adults, based in Newhaven, East Sussex. Her first novel, Belonging, set in Sussex and India during the British Raj, was published in 2015. She is currently in the process of completing her second novel.

Associate Artists and other artists we work regularly with

Our advisory board includes writers Uschi Gatward and Colin Grant and producer Carolyn Murphy. The Changing Chalk Associate Artists include Alinah Azadeh, Josie Hall, Georgina Parke, Joyoti Grech Cato and George Aboud. Writing Our Legacy 'Associate Artists' include Akila Richards, Alinah Azadeh and others.

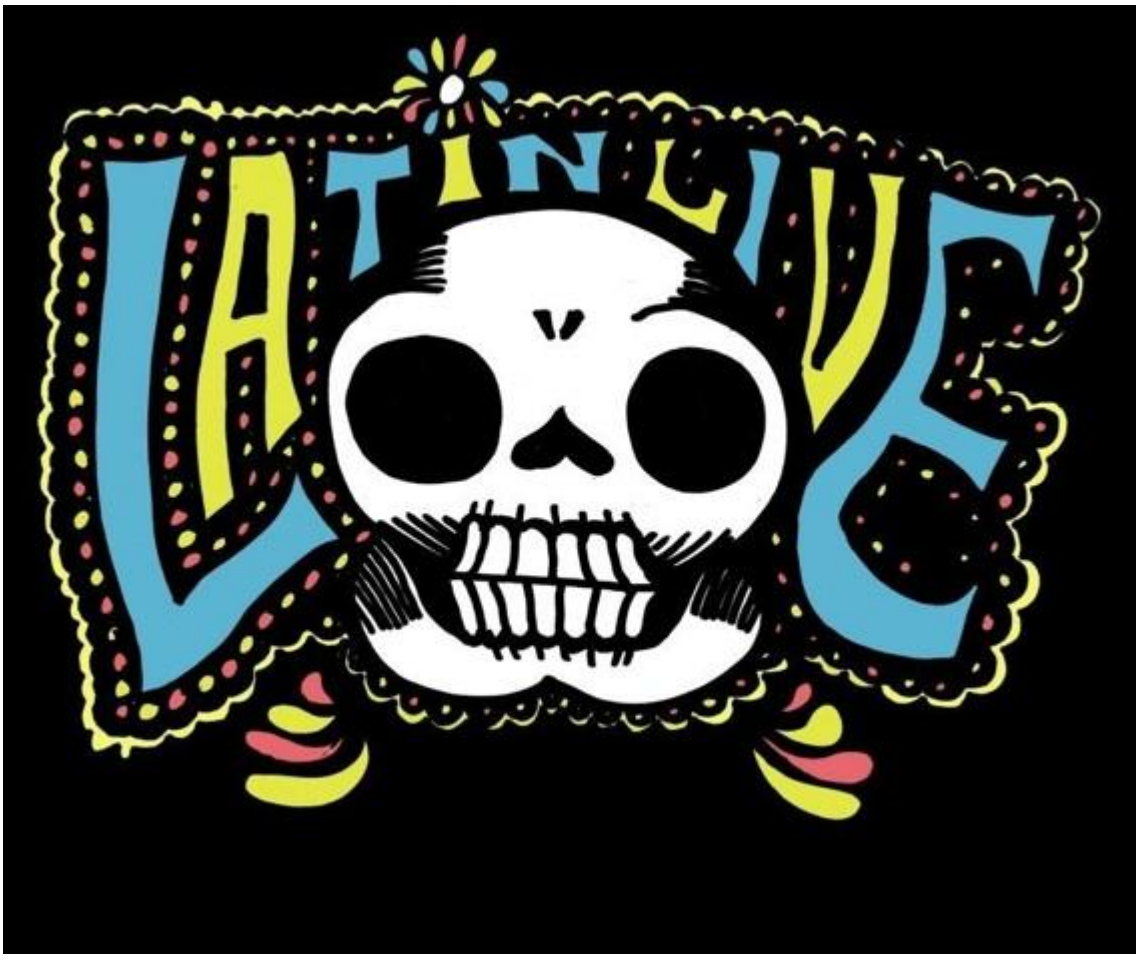


Values

Writing Our Legacy is a values-driven organisation that puts the needs of writers, creatives, local communities and audiences as the focus of our work. We aim to deliver our services through each, as follows:

1. Creativity

Since 2012, we have been driven by a vision to produce high quality diverse writing and art. As a small voluntary organisation we have been able to provide a testing ground for new ideas and approaches to making work by Black, Asian and ethnically diverse creatives. Our approach to creativity -- fusing literature and multi art forms -- has been considered fresh, innovative, intuitive, at times lively and multidisciplinary. For instance in 2013 we transformed Brighton Museum into a Dia De Los Muertos party at night with dancing skeletons and filled Jubilee Library with a Tree of Life with butterflies, decorated mirrors and other ornaments created by local school children. For two years running, we took over Brighton Dome and Brighton Museum for a day-long free family friendly Mexican and Latin American festival honouring authors Argentinian Jorge Luis Borges and British Mexican artist Leonora Carrington.



2. Diverse heritage

We believe that Black, Asian and ethnically diverse people have an inherent right to share their stories, memories, experiences and express their feelings and be read, heard and experienced by others. Our work is steeped in diverse heritage and helping others to explore and learn about the heritage of Black, Asian and culturally diverse people of Sussex and the UK in a fun and creative way..

We are a diverse-led organisation. Our organisation and its work is born out of Brighton's diverse community. Our CEO and board members have been actively involved in Brighton's charity sector for over 20 years collectively. Bert Williams MBE co-founded Black History and was Chair of Mosaic, a charity for Black and mixed race children and their families. Neil Ansell has long been Chair of Friends, Families and Travellers, a national charity to support Gypsies, Travellers and Roma people. Umi's writing is informed by her mixed race heritage of Indian and British, told through research and voices in history, while. Graham embraces his own mixed heritage of British and Chinese through his creative pursuits. Amy Zamarripa Solis has been a volunteer with Brighton's Black History since 2005, leading on literature, press and marketing and has shared her own Mexican cultural heritage through Latin Voices Live! Festival and La Llorona theatre production.

We work closely with diverse community partners in East Sussex, West Sussex, Brighton; Milton Keynes; and more recently in Hampshire and support one another in our shared values of inclusion, diversity, equality and commitment to anti-racism.

3. Kindness

In our work, we start from the place that writers are in and develop our services and projects around their needs. By place, we mean in terms of writer experience, creative needs, socio-economic situation, emotional/ psychological state, and any other barriers they might be experiencing.

All of our ticketed workshops and events offer free and concessionary spaces, and we provide bursaries to support costs to address barriers in their lives eg travel or childcare.

We also try to make sure that participants are comfortable and able to take part in the way that they want, whether that's online or in person.

4. Justice

Social justice, the fight for equality and human rights and challenging racism and discrimination are a core part of our work in representing and championing Black, Asian and ethnically diverse writers and artists in the UK. In our work, we aim to support marginalised people to have a voice and tell their story so that they are no longer invisible. We involve various marginalised groups such as refugees and asylum seekers, homeless, unemployed, and disabled, and we strive to dedicate more project work to support the artistic development of people who struggle the most with society's inequalities, barriers and exclusions.

5. Sustainability and natural environment

Over the past few years, we have become more attuned to the connection between writing, creativity and the natural environment, thanks to the work of published authors from our publications and our committee member and nature writer Neil Ansell. We are keen to continue developing our recent partnerships with organisations such as National Trust and South Downs National Park, and also explore new ones, in order to expand our offer to writers around health and wellbeing, ecology, environment emergency and sustainability.

This year we have launched our first bursary scheme to support writers of colour whose practice explores the landscapes of South Downs, in partnership with South Downs National Park Authority and in association with New Writing South.



Writing Our Legacy
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