

How to Register for Write! Canada

Especially for First-Time Attendees or Beginner Writers

If you're a first-time attendee or beginner writer, or if you are overwhelmed with all the choices, we've prepared these step-by-step tips to walk you through the whole process easily. You'll get the most out of the conference if you use this checklist to help you prepare for it effectively.

Step 1. Read through the whole Web site

Set aside some time to look through all the sections on this Web site to get a general feel for the conference and how it operates. We've provided pretty much everything you need to know right here. Place your cursor on the menu bar at the top of this page (Who's Coming, What's Happening, etc.). A drop-down menu with several levels will appear under each topic. As you move your cursor down, the various sub-sections will turn red. Click on each sub-section to be taken to that page.

You'll probably find the answer to your question at the FAQs (Frequently Asked Questions) page. Scan down through the blogs on the Home page, you'll find lots of interesting information there and you'll see any conference news and updates, such as extra faculty added.

Step 2. Choose one continuing class

Your most important choice is the continuing class, listed under What's Happening/Learning Opportunities/Continuing Classes. This consists of six, one-hour segments taught over the three days. You will pick one class, and attend all six sessions. Decide which topic best fits your interests and experience. Look at the faculty pages under the Who's Coming/Faculty to see who will be teaching the class. This year, most of the classes and workshops are Open to all experience levels. Write down your choice so you remember the code number when you fill in the online registration form. Keep a record of your choice; many people forget which classes they signed up for by the time they arrive at the conference.

Step 3. Choose three workshops

Don't look at all 18 workshops at once listed under What's Happening/Learning Opportunities/Workshops, or you will get confused. You will attend three different workshops at three different times, so decide one at a time. First look at the 6 choices in time slot A. Decide which topic best fits your interests and best complements what you're going to be learning in your continuing class. Look at the faculty pages under Who's Coming/Faculty to see who will be teaching the class. Make your decision based on a combination of the topic and the instructor.

Once you've decided on one of A1, A2, A3, A4, A5 or A6, follow the same steps to pick Workshop B 1 to 6, then Workshop C 1 to 6. Write down the code numbers of your choices so you will have them handy when you fill in the online registration form. Keep a record of your choice; many people forget which classes they signed up for by the time they arrive at the conference.

Step 4. Decide on accommodation

Decide if you need overnight accommodation. Write! Canada strongly recommends staying on-site, in order to enhance the conference's connecting opportunities to meet new friends and colleagues, and to enjoy the sense of community and retreat setting. The conference schedule is very full; events start at 7 a.m. and run through to 11:30 p.m. if you choose to participate. Staying on-site allows you to take full advantage of all the activities and relax without the added time and stress of daily commuting.

Pick which accommodation category you prefer. If you don't know anyone to request for a roommate, we will try to assign you compatible roommates. You will need a car if you choose to stay at a Bed and Breakfast or hotel.

Step 5. Register online

Register early to increase your chances of securing a place in small-group intensive classes or your first choice of accommodation. Get a \$20 early bird discount if you register by April 30. Full-time students get an additional \$20 discount, as do members of The Word Guild. If you are not already a member, we highly recommend joining The Word Guild at the same time as you register.

Fill out the online registration form carefully and accurately. If you have mobility or health issues (such as you can't climb stairs, so you need to be assigned a ground-floor bedroom), be sure to fill in the "Anything we should know about you" line.

Decide if you could add a donation to your online payment. The donation goes to The Word Guild's bursary fund, which enables writers with financial needs who demonstrate a serious commitment to writing to attend Write! Canada. You will receive a charitable tax receipt early next year, and you will provide invaluable help to a fellow writer.

We recommend that you pay by PayPal, which is a secure online system that charges your credit card. If you prefer to pay by cheque, inform the registrar on the online form; print the registration form before hitting "send;" and mail the registrar a copy of your registration form with your cheque.

Step 6. Help publicize Write! Canada

Tell people about Write! Canada. Post or distribute the flyer. Insert an announcement in your church bulletin or other newsletter. Send the news release to colleagues who might be interested. Forward posts on your social networking services such as Facebook or Twitter. Full details in the Help/Publicize section.

Step 7. Read registration package

Watch for your registration package, which you will receive as a PDF by email after you register. It gives you lots of information about the conference. Make sure that registrar@writecanada.org is added to your email safe list, so it does not accidentally go into your spam box. Please print the PDF and read through this material. If you don't receive it within a week or two of registering, contact the registrar.

Step 8. Prepare advance requirements for some classes

Some classes require assignments to be completed before the conference. Check if your class selections have advance requirements. For example:

- Continuing Class 7 "Writing the Stories of Life: Nonfiction Writing Intensive" with Audrey Dorsch requires you to submit a manuscript in advance by May 15.
- Continuing Class 5 "Getting the Word Out" with John Longhurst suggests you submit a press release by June 4.
- Continuing Class 2 "Principles of Writing Poetry... Well" with D. S. Martin suggests that you bring drafts of poems-in-progress.
- The workshop "From Pen to Live Event" with Eric Spath specifies that several book authors who register early, with their permission, will be selected to use as case studies.

Step 9. Prepare manuscripts for critiques

Decide if you want to get feedback on one or more samples of your writing. Write! Canada's manuscript critique program is a paid service that gives you access to editors, agents and professional writers to discuss the craft and marketing of your work. Read about this service at <http://www.writecanada.org/whats-happening/learning-opportunities/manuscript-critiques/>. Do some research on faculty members to decide who you would like to request for a manuscript critique, and who you would like to meet during your appointments. Start preparing your manuscript(s) early.

Step 10. Read faculty appointments and critiques package

Watch for your appointments package, which you will receive as a PDF by email closer to the conference dates. Please print it and read through this material. It gives you instructions on how to submit manuscripts for faculty critiques (a paid service), and how to request 15 minute appointments with up to three faculty members during the conference (a free service). If you don't receive it by early May, contact the registrar.

Study the faculty interests chart to see who is the best fit for you to meet, follow the instructions, and submit your manuscripts and requests for faculty appointments by the deadline.

Step 11. Book appointment with image consultant

Decide if you would like to take advantage of the services of a professional image consultant who will give you objective feedback on the first impressions you convey through your body language, clothing, makeup, hairstyle, etc. These optional appointments are helpful for both men and women who need to make public appearances to promote their writing or speaking career.

Special discounted rate for Write! Canada attendees. Remember to bring cash to pay for the appointment. Full information under Learning Opportunities.

Step 12. Prepare one-sheets, presentation folders

A one-sheet is a good tool to have in your marketing arsenal to leave with editors and agents you meet to help them remember you better. If you're primarily an article-writer or poet, you may want to display some of your published work in a presentation folder so others can browse through your work. Find out more about both marketing tools under whats-happening/marketing-opportunities.

Step 13. Send material for gift bag promotion

The gift bag given to all Write! Canada registrants is a great opportunity to get your name, product and services directly into the hands of over 200 motivated potential customers. See the list of ideas under whats-happening/marketing-opportunities. Deadline for delivery is June 4.

Step 14. Prepare consignment materials

If you're planning to bring books, CDs, DVDs or other writing-related materials you've made yourself to sell on consignment, review the instructions under whats-happening/marketing-opportunities. Label individual items with price. Download the consignment form, fill it out in advance, and email it to the treasurer, or print it and bring it with you.

If you have used books or magazines about writing and editing topics, bring them for the freebie table. If they are in like-new condition, you can sell them on consignment at the bookstore.

Step 15. Volunteer

Why not volunteer to help out during the conference? We keep the fees as low as we can through the help of many volunteers. It's a great way to get to know more people and feel part of the community. Watch for email messages about how to sign up for volunteer opportunities.

Step 16. Read Constant Contact electronic newsletters

Watch for email newsletters from The Word Guild with Write! Canada news and updates. We use a service called Constant Contact for mailings. It offers instant removal from the mailing list with a "Safe Unsubscribe" button. Please do NOT unsubscribe from Constant Contact, or you will stop receiving all communications from Write! Canada or The Word Guild. Reversing your decision to unsubscribe is very complicated.

Step 17. Check Web site

Keep checking the Write! Canada Web site once or twice a week for news, announcements about faculty members added, etc. You can sign up for the RSS feed so you automatically get updates [feed://www.writecanada.org/feed/](http://www.writecanada.org/feed/).

Step 15. Attend Awards Gala

If you are able, please join us for The Canadian Christian Writing Awards Gala on Wednesday, June 16, the night before the conference, at World Vision Canada in Mississauga, Ont. We encourage you to come to meet and support your fellow writers. You will be inspired to join their ranks as you see writers honoured for their work in 35 categories, and find out who is the first winner of the \$5,000 Grace Irwin literary prize. You can see more information and obtain tickets in the Gala section.

If you follow these steps, you'll be well prepared and ready to go when you arrive on the grounds to register on Thursday, June 17 at 12:30 p.m. We also provide a half-hour orientation session for first-timers before the classes start, to help you feel welcome. We look forward to meeting you. See you then!