Berkeley Youth Poet Laureate Judging Process and FAQs

Who are the judges?
We selected judges who are community leaders and who contribute to the creative environment in different ways. All of our judges have ties to Berkeley and/or its surrounding cities. You can learn more about the current and former judges on our website: [Berkeley Youth Poet Laureate Judges | Berkeley Public Library](#).

What if I know one of the judges?
In order to be fair, we cannot accept applications from applicants who are related to any of the judges.

How do they judge the application?
The first round of judging is anonymous and will be done internally within a committee of library staff. The second round of judging is done by our judging panel. The first round will only look at the three poems submitted (craft and creative voice), while the second round will also look at the CV (civic engagement and social justice).

Craft:
- thoughtful (no dead or useless words, varied syntax)
- strong understanding of poetic forms
- strong understanding of structure
- uses poetic devices (metaphor, symbolism, rhythm, etc)

Creative voice:
- interesting and creative
- uses figurative language, sensory language
- reflects poet’s emotional truth

Civic engagement & social justice:
- potential to lead peers
- demonstrated engagement, such as participation in school clubs and extracurriculars
- awards and honors received
- community service and volunteerism