

TRUE VOYAGE IS RETURN SUBMISSIONS TERMS & GUIDANCE

You can also read this information at philipholyman.com/true-voyage-is-return

- **WRITERS**

I can accept submissions from an individual writer, or from a collaborative writing team of two or more people.

I want to ensure that all writers are appropriately credited. Writers can use their own name(s) or, if they prefer, they can use a pseudonym (a name that they've made up).

- **WRITERS' LOCATION**

This project is about nurturing and celebrating local talent, so I can only accept submissions by writers who are based in Birmingham or the Black Country (Dudley, Sandwell, Walsall or Wolverhampton).

- **NUMBER OF ENTRIES**

I can only accept ONE submission from each writer or writing team, so make sure you only send me the piece you'd like to be included in the anthology.

- **WRITING BRIEF**

The work you submit must respond to the project brief: the four-word phrase — "**True Voyage Is Return.**" (If I'm in doubt, I won't be able to include the work in the anthology!)

More details about the writing brief can be found at philipholyman.com/true-voyage-is-return

- **STAGE OF READINESS**

The work you submit must be finished and ready for inclusion in the anthology. It should not be a rough or incomplete draft. There will not be any opportunity for writers to make revisions to the work once they have submitted it.

- **FEEDBACK**

This project is not a competition and is not part of any kind of mentoring or education programme. I will not be able to provide any feedback on the work you submit.

- **COPYRIGHT**

The work you submit must be an original work by the writer or the writing team. The work should not have been previously published, or be subject to any kind of current contract or agreement with a publisher.

(As you'll appreciate, I don't want to see any plagiarism going on — and I don't want to infringe any copyright laws or publishing agreements! If I'm in doubt, I won't be able to include the work in the anthology!)

The copyright ownership for the work will remain vested with the writer or the writing team. The copyright for the anthology as a whole will remain vested with me. By submitting the work to me, the writer or writing team is giving permission for me to include it (in whole or in part) in the anthology and any derivative *True Voyage Is Return* activities, including the podcast. I will not make commercial use of the work, and contributors will not be entitled to any royalties from my use of the work.

- **AI**

This project is all about giving you an opportunity to explore your own writing and your own creativity — it's not about seeing how well you can prompt AI to write or create something for you.

As part of the Submissions Form, you'll be asked to confirm that the work you're submitting has not been produced through any kind of AI generating program. (If I'm in doubt, I won't be able to include the work in the anthology!)

- **LANGUAGE**

The work you submit must be primarily in English. If your work includes elements in languages other than English (including languages you've invented), you should ensure that the piece still makes sufficiently clear sense to a reader of English who does not speak those languages.

- **LITERARY FORM**

I want the anthology to include a range of literary forms. As this project is being supported by public funding through Arts Council England, I can accept works in the kind of literary forms which they support more widely through their Literature strand.

Examples of what I can accept include:

- short prose fiction — such as a short story
- short works combining images and text — such as a zine or short graphic novel
- poetry — this could be a single poem or a collection of up to five poems
- theatre writing — such as a short play or a monologue
- narrative non-fiction — such as a memoir, a travelogue or a biography that experiments creatively with language, form or style
- writing for children and young people — such as a picture book or a young adult short story

Examples of what I can't accept include:

- screenwriting for film or television
- academic publications

- non-fiction where the literary quality of the language, form and/or style are not a key focus of the project
- translations from English into other languages

(As you'll appreciate, I also don't have the capacity to accept longer forms of prose fiction — such as novels and novellas.)

- **LENGTH / WORD COUNT**

The maximum length of the work you submit depends on which literary form you're using:

- short prose fiction — no more than 5,000 words
- poetry — no more than 5,000 words (across a total of up to five poems)
- theatre writing — no more than 5,000 words
- narrative non-fiction — no more than 5,000 words
- graphic novel or zine — no more than ten pages
- picture book — no more than ten pages

(If the work you submit is any longer than this, I won't be able to include it in the anthology!)

IMPORTANT NOTE: If you're submitting a hand-written or other non-digital document, the maximum lengths are smaller. This is because I will need to do a lot of extra work to get your piece ready for inclusion in the anthology, and that will end up taking me a lot of time!

- short prose fiction — no more than 2,000 words
- poetry — no more than 2,000 words (across a total of up to five poems)
- theatre writing — no more than 2,000 words
- narrative non-fiction — no more than 2,000 words
- graphic novel or zine — no more than five pages
- picture book — no more than five pages

(If the work you submit is any longer than this, or if I am not able to clearly decipher your writing, I won't be able to include it in the anthology!)

- **LAYOUT FORMATTING**

You must format your work in the following ways, as this will make it as easy as possible for me to compile the anthology:

- Paper size — A4
- Page layout — Portrait
- Margins — 2.54 centimetres / 1 inch at Top, Bottom, Left and Right
- Font and Size — Arial 12 point
- Line Spacing — 1.15
- Alignment — Justify

I recognise that graphic novels, zines and picture books will need to be laid out in whatever way best suits the specifics of the work, in terms of colour, font, pagination, etc. — but in order to keep the anthology at a standard size, graphic novels, zines and picture books should use A4 paper size.

- **FILE FORMATTING**

The file format of the work you submit depends on which literary form you're using:

- short prose fiction / poetry / theatre writing / narrative non-fiction — **.docx**
- graphic novel / zine / picture book — **.pdf**

(If the work you submit isn't formatted this way, I won't be able to include it in the anthology!)

- **CONTENT GUIDANCE and AGE RECOMMENDATION**

I want the anthology to be enjoyed by as many readers as possible, but I also recognise that some kinds of content may be unsuitable for readers of all ages. This is especially applicable to, but not limited to, the following:

- strong or coarse language;
- depictions of, or references to, violence or physical or mental abuse;
- references to, or images of, sexualised behaviour;
- racist, homophobic, misogynistic or other discriminatory language or behaviour;
- dangerous or criminal behaviour (including references to or images of illegal drug use and/or the misuse of alcohol, tobacco and/or other substances) depicted in such a way that glamorises such behaviour or that may encourage imitation, and which may be considered by a significant number of people to be offensive or unsuitable for children

It is not my intention to censor writers or their imaginations, but I ask you to think carefully about your prospective readers while writing and before submitting your work so as to take these considerations into account.

I will produce two copies of the anthology — one featuring all eligible works which are considered suitable for readers aged below 16, and one featuring all eligible works which are considered suitable for readers aged 16 and above. This will support readers of all ages (and the appropriate adults in the case of young or vulnerable readers) to make more informed choices.

As part of the Submissions Form, you'll be asked to declare if the work you're submitting is suitable for the over-16's anthology and the under-16's anthology, or for the over-16's anthology only. You will also be asked to indicate if your work includes material relating to dangerous or criminal behaviour, discriminatory language, drugs and drug use, sex, sexual violence, strong or coarse language, suicide and self-harm, or violence.

IMPORTANT NOTE: The final decision on age suitability is mine. I reserve the right not to include any work in any version of the anthology which I feel does not adhere to this guidance, particularly in relation to potential breach of the criminal law, including any legislation relating to defamation, libel or slander, or any material judged to be obscene under the current interpretation of the Obscene Publications Act 1959.