



LIGHTHOUSE
WRITERS WORKSHOP

THE
BOOK
PROJECT

WHERE BOOKS ARE BORN





A TWO-YEAR MANUSCRIPT DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM



The Book Project isn't just another writing program—it's a carefully designed pathway to a finished book created by working writers who understand the real challenges every writer faces. Whether you're crafting a novel, memoir, short story, essay collection, or narrative nonfiction book, we offer a comprehensive, supportive track with the tools, mentorship, and community you need to bring that manuscript to life, from concept to completed book.

Over the course of two years, you will be part of a cohort of six writers and paired with a mentor who is chosen to support your specific literary goals.

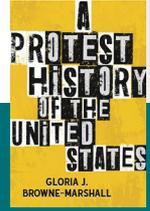
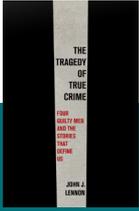
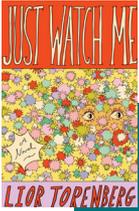
THE PROGRAM AT A GLANCE

Activities Include:

- Annual membership at Lighthouse each year, giving you free access to events like Friday 500, our monthly writing challenge, and affinity group meetups (like Body of Words, Queer Creatives, and Writing in Color).
- Cohort meetings led by a mentor (Six per year).
- Eight-week workshops (Two generative, three critique workshops).
- Four craft-based or reading-as-a-writer courses.
- Lit Fest Full-Access Business Pass, including an agent meeting. (One pass per year; one agent meeting in the second year).
- One-on-one meetings with mentor.
- Two individual hours with industry expert, who can answer questions, review pages, and read queries, in addition to courses at the weekend intensives.
- Weekend Intensives (Two three-day intensives per year).
- Writing Getaways (Optional. Two per year. Meals and accommodations not included).

PUBLISHING SUCCESS

Since 2020, Book Project writers have signed over 30 book deals with prestigious presses and imprints like Simon & Schuster, Knopf, Tin House, Celadon, Riverhead, Penguin Random House, and Hachette. The Book Project has helped launch books across multiple genres, demonstrating our commitment to all of our writers' careers.



RECENT TITLES

Lior Torenberg's *Just Watch Me*

John J. Lennon's *The Tragedy of True Crime*

Simone Stolzoff's *The Good Enough Job*

Jihyun Yun's *And The River Drags Her Down*

Nini Berndt's *There Are Reasons for This*

Gloria Browne-Marshall's *A Protest History of the United States*





BENEFITS

Our community embraces writers at every stage: first-time novelists and nonfiction writers, experienced authors seeking new directions, and writers with completed drafts, across genres and backgrounds. Whether you're a published or emerging writer, the Book Project offers a supportive environment for your literary ambitions.

Intentionally small cohorts of six writers create a collaborative environment where you'll forge lasting connections. Our dedicated mentors provide more than just feedback—they become true literary partners.

A SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENT AND EXPERT CRAFT

Cohort-Based Learning: Build connections with five other writers who meet six times a year with your mentor to motivate each other and collaborate, not compete. Cohorts often decide to meet more frequently on their own to help each other achieve literary goals.

Credits to Lighthouse Offerings: You will be given credits to attend four 4-week and five 8-week courses. These options can be swapped and applied towards other offerings of interest, such as:

- Advanced Workshops at Lit Fest, working directly with world-class authors like Percival Everett, Min Jin Lee, and Cheryl Strayed, and a rotating annual roster.
- Retreats such as the annual Grand Lake writer's getaway or the periodic Rekindle Retreat in Juneau, Alaska.
- Weekend Fests, which are topic or genre-focused, such as Nonfiction Fest, Spec Fest, and West Fest.

Structured Support: Engage with numerous affinity groups, writing collectives, and productivity boosters to support a disciplined practice that will propel your work forward.

Weekend Intensives: Twice per year, join the other participants of the Book Project for a three-day weekend of craft talks, a keynote with dinner, guest speakers, cohort meetings, social activities, writing times, and more.



PERSONALIZED MENTORSHIPS AND PUBLISHING PATHWAYS

Comprehensive Manuscript Review: Sometime in your second year, your mentor will read your entire manuscript (up to 100,000 words), providing deep, detailed feedback.

Direct Connection: Each year, get a Full-Access Business Pass to Lit Fest, a multi-day writing conference, which includes publishing panels, industry insights, and, optionally, a one-on-one agent meeting. Learn more at LighthouseWriters.org/LitFest.

Industry Insider Access: Receive several hours of personal access to and advice from Shana Kelly, our publishing expert, who will advise you on query letters, proposals, and agents.

One-on-One Attention: Work closely with the same mentor over two years. You'll have regular mentor meetings to review progress, set goals, and keep you accountable throughout your writing journey.

WHAT MAKES THE PROGRAM SPECIAL?

Affordable: This program is just a fraction of the cost of an MFA degree, yet every bit as rigorous as the best programs in the world. Many MFA grads come to the Book Project to finish their work.

Flexible Scheduling: The program is fully hybrid, with nearly half of participants joining remotely, offering many opportunities via Zoom, with optional (but highly recommended) in-person touchstones.

Lifetime Commitment: The Book Project supports writers throughout their careers. Unlike other programs that conclude after a set period, we offer lifetime access to the Lighthouse writing community, which has been around for 30 years.

Priority Access: Use your workshop credits to gain entry to Lighthouse's world-class workshops before they're available to the wider public.



FACULTY

The Book Project writers work with established, award-winning authors, who are fully invested in each writer's drafting and revision process. Participants also have access to our in-house publishing professional, Shana Kelly, who provides guidance on finding an agent and getting published.



William Haywood Henderson, Book Project Director, is the author of three novels: *Native*, *The Rest of the Earth*, and *Augusta Locke*. He has taught creative writing at Brown, Harvard, the Ashland University MFA program, and the University of Denver. He was a Wallace Stegner Fellow at Stanford University. He's taught at Lighthouse for 25 years, and the Beacon Award for Teaching Excellence was initiated in his honor by his students.



Evanthia Bromiley: Evanthia's novel *Crown* came out in 2025 from Grove Atlantic, and is a finalist for the National Book Critics Circle John Leonard Prize. A graduate of the Warren Wilson M.F.A. Program for Writers, she's the recipient of scholarships from the Aspen Institute, a Lighthouse Fellowship, a Lisel Mueller scholarship and Elizabeth George and Carol Houck-Smith awards. Her short fiction and creative non-fiction can be found in *AGNI*, *Prairie Schooner*, *Five Points*, and elsewhere. When not writing, she works in impacted schools with young writers and their teachers as they sharpen their craft and voices, telling stories of growing up in the American Southwest. She lives in Durango, Colorado.



Shana Kelly was a literary agent at the William Morris Agency in New York and London for ten years. She currently works as a book editor, writer, publishing consultant, and teacher. In 2024, she won an Emmy for writing *A Towering Task: The Story of the Peace Corps*, a historical documentary which aired on PBS in September 2023. She is currently writing a historical documentary about the League of Women Voters.





Erika Krouse is the author of *Save Me, Stranger*, *Tell Me Everything: The Story of a Private Investigation*; *Contenders*; and *Come Up and See Me Sometime*. Her work has appeared in *The New Yorker*, *The Atlantic*, *Ploughshares*, *One Story*, and *Granta*. Erika is a winner of the Edgar Award, the Colorado Book Award, and the Lighthouse Beacon Award for Teaching Excellence.



Anna Qu is a Chinese American author. Her critically acclaimed debut memoir, *Made in China: A Memoir of Love and Labor*, was named a New York Times Editors' Choice pick. Her essays have appeared in *Threepenny Review*, *Lumina*, *Kartika*, and *Kweli Journal*, among others. She was a 2023 Black Mountain Institute Shearing Fellow and has received support from Yaddo and Ragdale.



Tiffany Quay Tyson is the author of two novels including *The Past is Never*, winner of the Willie Morris Award for Southern Fiction, the Janet Heidinger Kafka Prize, the Mississippi Institute of Arts and Letters Award for Fiction, and the Mississippi Author Award. Her debut novel, *Three Rivers*, was published in 2015 and was a finalist for the Colorado Book Award and the Mississippi Institute of Arts and Letters Award for Fiction. Her short fiction can be found at *SmokeLong Quarterly*, *The Ilanot Review*, *The Tulane Review*, and elsewhere. Tiffany won Lighthouse's Beacon Award for Teaching Excellence in 2021, and has worked with fiction writers of all genres and memoirists. A former journalist, she's also comfortable with nonfiction.





Vauhini Vara is the author of *Searches*, *This is Salvaged*, and *The Immortal King Rao*, a Pulitzer Prize finalist. She is also a journalist, writing for *Businessweek*, *The New Yorker*, *Wall Street Journal*, and others, and an editor, most recently at *The New York Times Magazine*.



Rachel Weaver is the author of the memoir *Dizzy* (2026) and the forthcoming novel *The Last Run* (2026). Her previous novel, *Point of Direction*, was named a Top Ten Book to Pick Up Now by *Oprah Magazine* and won the 2015 Willa Cather Award for Fiction.



Benjamin Whitmer is the author of the novels *Escape*, *The Dynamiters*, *Cry Father*, and *Pike*, which was nominated for the prestigious Grand Prix de Littérature Policière. He is also co-author, with Charlie Louvin, of the memoir, *Satan is Real: The Ballad of the Louvin Brothers*, a *New York Times*' Critics' Choice book.

OTHER MENTORS:

Natalie Hodges and **Sarah Elizabeth Schantz**



GUEST SPEAKERS

Throughout the year, visiting authors stop by the Book Project to give lectures and lead craft classes. Past visiting authors include:



**Mona
Awad**



**Kali
Fajardo-Anstine**



**Melissa
Febos**



**Stephen
Graham Jones**



**Peter
Ho Davies**



**Pam
Houston**



**R.O.
Kwon**



**Karan
Mahajan**



**Ingrid Rojas
Contreras**



**George
Saunders**



**Cheryl
Strayed**



APPLICATIONS

APPLICATIONS OPEN APRIL 1
AND CLOSE JUNE 22



WHAT TO INCLUDE

- Project synopsis, a brief outline of your proposed project
- References (two or three), ideally from current or former writing instructors familiar with your work
- Short biographical statement
- Writing sample (up to 30 pages), ideally from the book you plan to complete during the Book Project

Each mentor accepts six applicants, for a total of 36 incoming writers per year. Every effort is made to match writers with their preferred mentor, but there are always more applicants than spaces available, so flexibility is encouraged.

TUITION AND FELLOWSHIPS ASSISTANCE

Tuition is \$8,950 a year, payable in monthly installments of approximately \$746.



If you are seeking financial assistance to participate in this program, there are two types of fellowships available—the Book Project Fellowship and the Nighthawk Nature Writing Fellowship.

- **Book Project Emerging Writer Fellowships:** This option is available for writers of fiction, nonfiction, short stories, memoir, and hybrid texts.
- **The Nighthawk Nature Writing Fellowship:** This option is available for writers who are engaged in work that explores and honors the natural world and the animals and plants that inhabit it.

These fellowships are based on the promise of application and financial need. Winners are selected by a panel of mentors and a final judge.

Visit lighthousewriters.org/BookProject
for more information and application
details.

PRAISE FOR THE BOOK PROJECT:

“The Lighthouse Book Project gave me exactly the mentorship, community, and support I needed at a critical time in my writing career. The faculty is engaged, the peers are committed, and the value is excellent. Book Project has also continued to support me as my writing career progresses, and I’m so grateful to have the terrific team in my corner.”

–Lior Torenberg, *Just Watch Me* (Simon & Schuster, January 2026)

“Understanding the publishing industry can seem like a dark art—especially for first time authors. Working with Shana felt like having a cheat code. Not only is she an industry insider who knows how to sell books, but she’ll work with you hand-in-hand until the moment you’re ready to submit.”

–Simone Stoltzof, author of *The Good Enough Job* (Penguin, 2023) and the forthcoming *How to Not Know* (WW Norton)

“My most trusted critique partners came through the Book Project with me and continue to sustain my writing life. The Book Project gives a writer a crucial depth of understanding in craft, an intimacy among writers without jealousy or competition, a fine-tuned excellency in instructors and mentors, as well as that all-important manuscript read.”

–Jenny Dandy, author of *The Brownstone On E. 83rd* and *The Penthouse On Park Avenue*

“The book that I wrote at Lighthouse went on to sell in a twelve-bidder auction to Knopf, and is slated for publication in fall of 2025. In a lot of ways, I feel like my whirlwind experience from draft to selling, because it all happened within two to three years, was largely thanks to my time in the Book Project. I say this because I tend to be an avid drafter, but I get discouraged during revisions... but the structure of the Book Project, and the accountability I felt to my mentor and wonderful cohort, kept me focused enough to see the book through to completion.”

–Jihyun Jun, author of *And the River Drags Her Down* (Knopf, 2025)



APPLY NOW

You will apply for the Book Project through the Lighthouse website on an application form via Submittable. This form is also where you will apply for any of our fellowships.

LEARN MORE AT
LIGHHOUSEWRITERS.ORG/BOOKPROJECT



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