



**LIGHTHOUSE**  
WRITERS WORKSHOP

# The Book Project



# Want to Finally Write That Book?

The Lighthouse Book Project can help. Our intensive, two-year program gives writers of book-length manuscripts the classes, mentorship, and moral support they need to draft, revise, and—most importantly—finish their projects.

The Book Project was created by writers who completed book-length manuscripts in traditional MFA programs, and they designed it with all the components they wished had been included in their own education. Rather than focusing on grades or writing in forms that fit the academic workshop model, the Book Project helps you finish your book and develop processes for a lifetime of writing. The program works within the constraints of your busy life, rather than requiring that you drop everything for a degree program.

Whether you're working on a novel, memoir, short story collection, or narrative nonfiction, our program mentors will work closely with you to chart a path through your project. Intensives, retreats, and workshops with fellow Book Project participants give you a supportive, encouraging community, in which to thrive. Our in-house publishing expert provides the advice you need to take your completed book to market. At Lit Fest every year, writers are matched with agents to provide more feedback on their work, and maybe even a professional match. And at the end of two years, you'll emerge with a manuscript you can be proud of and a support team ready to help you take the next steps.



Since 2019, we've seen deals signed for thirteen books from our Book Project mentees. They've had nonfiction, short story collections, novels, and middle-grade work signed by places like Riverhead, Penguin Random House, Levine Querido, Hachette, Atria, and elsewhere.

### Will you be next?

- **Jihyun Yun** (BP class of 2023): *And The River Drags You Down* (Knopf, 2025, part of a major two-book deal)
- **John J. Lennon** (BP class of 2022): *The Tragedy of True Crime* (Celadon Books, 2024)
- **Kari Leibowitz** (BP class of 2023): *How to Winter* (Penguin Life, 2024)
- **Anna Hogeland** (BP class of 2017): *The Long Answer* (Penguin Random House, 2022)
- **Jan Thomas** (BP Class of 2017): *Control Freaks* (Levine Querido, 2023)
- **Becca Andrews** (BP Class of 2022): *No Choice: The Destruction of Roe v. Wade and the Fight to Protect a Fundamental American Right* (Hachette, 2022)
- **Theodore McCombs** (BP Class of 2015): *Uranians* (Astra House, 2023), Novel TBA (two-book deal)
- **Simone Stolzoff** (BP Class of 2022): *The Good Enough Job: Reclaiming Life From Work* (Penguin Random House), *Unknowing* (W.W. Norton, release TBA)
- **Jenny Dandy** (BP class of 2020): *Brownstone on E. 83rd* (Level Best, 2024), three-book deal



# Benefits of the Book Project

## COMMUNITY

- **Lighthouse Community:** Most MFA programs are over after two years. But with the Book Project, you'll find a group to hold you accountable, give you support, and provide educational and networking opportunities in perpetuity. And you'll be welcomed into the larger Lighthouse community, a place of ongoing literary support.
- **Small Cohort:** For two years, you'll be a member of the same six-person mentor group, and your fellow mentees will get to know your work as well as your mentor does. These mentor groups tend to be more collaborative and less competitive than traditional writing programs.
- **Retreats:** For a minimal cost, you can get away to Colorado's mountains for some writing and relaxation at the Grand Lake Retreat, or two optional Mountain Getaways per year.
- **Exclusive parties and events:** Book Project participants receive special invitations to parties, author talks, and more throughout the year.
- **Flexibility:** The Book Project is fully hybrid, and almost half of the current cohort is remote, thanks to Lighthouse's extensive online and Zoom offerings.

## MENTORSHIP

- **One-on-one mentorship:** You'll meet with your mentor on a regular basis to gauge progress, review drafts of your work, and set goals for the future, keeping you accountable and on track throughout the program. Your mentor will have an in-depth understanding of your work.
- **Manuscript feedback:** You'll receive a detailed critique of your manuscript (up to 100,000 words) from your mentor. In a traditional writing program, you tend to see a single critique for a manuscript of up to 38,000 words.

## EXPERT INSTRUCTION

- **Small-group meetings and classes:** Writers will meet with their Book Project mentor and cohort for project advice and support in the first year and intensive cohort workshops in the second year.
- **Intensives:** Two times a year, Book Project participants gather for a weekend of classes led by special guest authors and our publishing expert, mentor-group meetings, participant readings, great meals, and plenty of social time.
- **Priority access:** Book Project participants get first access to regular Lighthouse workshops, ensuring a spot in some of our most in-demand courses.
- **Writing support:** Book Project participants get a discounted rate on Getting It Done: 96 Hours Toward a Finished Draft, an 8-week structured writing-time management program.

## THE NITTY-GRITTY

- **Business-side expertise:** You'll receive one-on-one advice from our publishing expert as well as a Lit Fest Full-Access Business Pass, giving you access to educational panels and classes on the publishing world and a meeting with a visiting agent.



"You're not just creating the book—you're creating the writer."

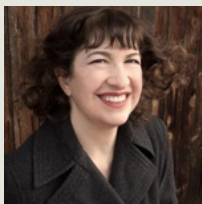
—ERIKA KROUSE,  
FICTION MENTOR FOR  
THE BOOK PROJECT

# Meet the Faculty

Book Project writers work with established, award-winning authors, gaining feedback on their writing and guidance about the drafting and revision process throughout the program. Participants will also work with our publishing expert to gain insight into the world of publishing and learn how to secure an agent.



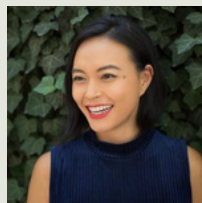
**WILLIAM HAYWOOD HENDERSON** (Director) is the author of three novels: *Native*, *The Rest of the Earth*, and *Augusta Locke*. He has taught creative writing at Brown, Harvard, the Ashland University MFA program, and Denver University. He was a Wallace Stegner Fellow at Stanford.



**ERIKA KROUSE** is the author of *Tell Me Everything: The Story of a Private Investigation*, *Contenders*, and *Come Up and See Me Sometime*, and *Save Me, Stranger*. Her work has appeared in *The New Yorker*, *The Atlantic*, *Ploughshares*, *One Story*, and *Granta*. A winner of the Lighthouse Beacon Award for Teaching Excellence, Erika is one of the mentors who helped design the Lighthouse Book Project.



**SHANA KELLY** was a literary agent at the William Morris Agency for ten years. She was the signing agent for *New York Times* bestseller Curtis Sittenfeld, author of *Prep*. Shana currently works as a book editor, publishing consultant, writer, and teacher. She has written two historical documentaries about the Peace Corps and the League of Women Voters.



**ANNA QU** is a Chinese American writer. 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 is a 2023 Black Mountain Institute Shearing Fellow and has received support from Yaddo and Ragdale.





**VAUHINI VARA** is the author of *This is Salvaged*, named a notable of 2023 by *Publisher's Weekly*, *The New Yorker*, and others, and *The Immortal King Rao*, a Pulitzer Prize finalist. She is also a journalist, writing for *Wired* and others, and an editor, most recently at *The New York Times Magazine*. She is the secretary of the mentorship collective Periplus.



**RACHEL WEAVER** is the author of the novel *Point of Direction*, which *Oprah Magazine* named a Top Ten Book to Pick Up Now. *Point of Direction* was chosen by the American Booksellers Association as a Top Ten Debut for Spring 2014, 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.

"These intensive weekends are always fantastic and bring a rich array of new knowledge and intense personalities every time. It's one of the best things about the Book Project."

- Cecilia Hyland  
Book Project '24

# Curriculum

## YEAR ONE

With guidance from your mentor and a full plate of literature and craft classes, you'll get the support you need to generate the first draft of your book. Activities include:

- Two weekend intensives
- Two optional writing getaways (meals & accommodations not included)
- A wide variety of writing workshops and craft classes, equivalent to five eight-week workshops and four four-week courses (you and your mentor decide on the workshops and courses best suited to you and your project)
- Three hourlong one-on-one meetings with your mentor
- Six cohort-group meetings with your mentor
- Two hours of consultation with our publishing expert
- One Lit Fest Full-Access Business Pass, including an agent meeting

*[Please note: Workshops and craft classes can be spread out over the Project's two years.]*

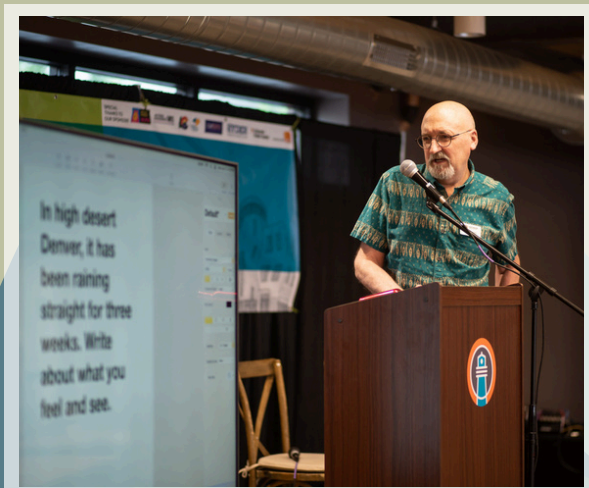




## YEAR TWO

Working closely with your mentor, your Book Project cohort, and our publishing expert, you'll continue work on your first and, eventually, second draft of your book, preparing to submit your book to agents and editors. Activities include:

- A thorough first critique of your manuscript (up to 100,000 words) by your mentor
- Two weekend intensives
- Two optional writing getaways (meals & accommodations not included)
- Three hourlong one-on-one meetings with your mentor
- Six cohort-group meetings with your mentor
- Two hours of consultation with our publishing expert
- One Lit Fest Full-Access Business Pass
- As a member of the Book Project, you've also got access to a formidable group of outside second readers at a discounted rate. We're happy to facilitate a connection for you with an approved list of outside readers, or others who have taught at Lighthouse in the past, when you've completed your revision.



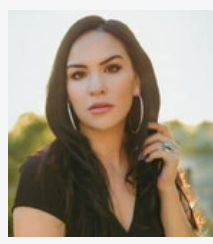
# Guest Instructors

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

- Melissa Febos
  - Laird Hunt
  - David Wroblewski
  - Mona Awad
  - Courtney Maum
  - Matt Bell
  - Peter Ho Davies
  - Tiffany Q. Tyson
  - BK Loren
  - Amanda Rea
  - Kelly O'Connor McNeess
  - Jennifer Haigh
  - Kali Fajardo-Anstine
  - Diana Khoi Nguyen
  - Idra Novey
  - R.O. Kwon
  - Hermione Hoby
  - Gabino Iglesias
  - Elle Johnson
- ...and more!**



**IDRA NOVEY**



**KALI FAJARDO  
ANSTINE**



**MATT BELL**



**R.O. KWON**

If the only thing the Book Project offered was the first read by a mentor, it would be well worth it. But there are the classes, the weekend intensives, and the cohort. My most trusted critique partners came through the Book Project with me and continue to sustain my writing life.

Sure you can take classes, find writing groups, go to conferences, but the Book Project gives a writer a crucial depth of understanding in craft, an intimacy among writers without jealousy or competition, and a fine-tuned excellency in instructors and mentors. And that all-important first read.

—**JENNY DANDY**  
**BOOK PROJECT CLASS '20**

# Tuition and Applications

Applications for the Book Project are available starting April 1, and the deadline to apply is June 21. Each mentor accepts six applicants, for a total of 36 participating writers per year. Every effort is made to match writers with their preferred mentor, space permitting.

Applications for the Book Project must include:

- Writing sample—up to 30 pages, ideally from the book you plan to complete during your time in the Book Project
- Project synopsis—a brief outline of your proposed project
- Two to three references—ideally current or former writing instructors familiar with your work
- A short biographical statement

Tuition is \$8,850 per year, payable in monthly installments of \$738.

Partial tuition assistance is available through our Book Project Fellowship.

See the Book Project application for details. For more information or to apply, visit [lighthousewriters.org](http://lighthousewriters.org)





Scan to learn more.



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