



PLANET
WOMEN

Revised April 9, 2024

***Journey to Publication Writing Fellowship, Presented by Planet Women and New Nature Writers
For Indigenous Women of the Colorado River Basin***

Overview of Fellowship

The *Journey to Publication Writing Fellowship* is a six-month program, open to all Indigenous women** writing fiction and non-fiction ages 18 and up living in or working on environmental and social justice issues related to the Colorado River Basin. The goal of the Fellowship is to support the growth and development of Indigenous women writers who are passionate about the cultural, ecological, and natural history of the peoples and places of the Colorado River, as well as documenting Indigenous women's stories. The Fellowship is part of Planet Women's aim to create a multi-generational and inclusive movement for environmental leadership.

The Fellowship matches mentors from the publishing industry with writers, offering them resources, support, personalized editing and coaching, and guidance. This Fellowship is for any writer eager to take their writing projects from the imagination stage to publication. Writing projects will become the basis of collaboration between Fellows and their mentors. By the program's conclusion, Fellows will have a manuscript, a plan to publish, and a marketing strategy so that they may successfully pitch their work to agents and publishers.

The Fellowship is supported by charitable contributions to Planet Women and is offered at no cost to the Fellows. Fellows will receive a \$3,000 stipend. Fellows will be chosen by a committee of established writers and publishing professionals as well as Planet Women staff. We hope to select three to five fellows.

About Planet Women

Planet Women is a start-up environmental nonprofit founded in July 2020 by two seasoned nature conservation leaders. Planet Women combines the best elements of conservation with a radical new approach to leadership to build a stronger, more inclusive environmental movement.

Our vision is a world where the vibrant diversity of Earth's people collaborate on equal footing to care for the planet. Our path to get there is by partnering with women.

Women's leadership is essential to solving the climate crisis. Studies from around the globe show that including women in conservation and natural resource governance results in better outcomes for nature and people. Yet, women are not equally resourced or equally represented in positions of power and

decision-making in the environmental space. Less than 2% of global philanthropy goes to the environment and only 0.2% of that amount goes to women-led initiatives.

About New Nature Writers

Laurie Scheer is the Facilitator for the Fellowship. Laurie is the co-founder of New Nature Writers. As a former vice president of programming for WE:Women's Entertainment, Laurie analyzed manuscripts and scripts as they entered the competitive media marketplace. She has also been involved in producing series for the web, films for video games, and other digital based forms of entertainment and has mentored many successful industry professionals throughout her career. Laurie has been an instructor at numerous universities across the U.S. from Yale to UCLA. A seasoned professional speaker, she has appeared at annual conventions, including the Willamette Writers Conference. As the Director of UW Madison's annual Writers' Institute, Laurie was the managing editor of *The Midwest Prairie Review*, and a writing mentor to hundreds of students (of all ages) in person and online. Her personal interest in Nature Writing stems from her love of the American Desert Southwest and from being an avid cyclist and hiker. As an Aquarian, Laurie has always wanted to bestow healing for the globe. She currently lives in Palm Springs, California.

Details

Fellows attend (2) two-hour online sessions each month to learn from industry experts and read and provide encouragement and input on one another's work. Fellows submit at least 5-10 pages per session for feedback. Fellows will complete their writing projects while gaining knowledge from writing, storytelling, and publishing professionals. Laurie Scheer, Co-Founder of New Nature Writers, facilitates each session. The online sessions are hosted over Zoom with a focus on creating a welcoming and safe environment for everyone.

The monthly schedule will look like this:

- First Session – Monthly Topic and Discussion. Pages due.
- Second Session- Guest Speaker that offers insights, guidance, breakthroughs, and wisdom from inside the publishing industry. Discussion follows. Pages due.

Each week Laurie provides feedback for individual pages and is available to the Fellows as questions and concerns arise.

Fellows should plan to devote 4 hours per month to the online sessions, plus the time they will require for writing and revising, totaling an approximate time commitment of 10-15 hours/month. Expect to block out every other Tuesday evening. Mentors and Fellows will provide feedback monthly to identify additional subject matter needs.

Topics included in the twice per month online sessions hosted over Zoom include, but are not limited to the following:

- Nature Writing as a Genre: Tropes, Truths, and Timeliness, an overall discussion regarding Nature Writing and current trends within the publishing landscape.
- Overall Writing Structure - how and where to begin your writing project, writing formats, starting out with short stories and moving through to novels/full nonfiction manuscripts.
- Indigenous Storytelling; Preserving History, Caretaking Our Lands and Waters.
- Editing Master Class.

- Book Proposals & Pitching.
- Ask Your Mentors; Next Steps; Moving Your Work Out Into the World.

Journey to Publication Writing Fellowship concludes with a Celebration & Reading Event.

Who's Involved?

Claudia Lagresa, Indigenous Writer, founding member of The Ebell Playwriting Prize
Emma Robbins, Managing Director, Planet Women and Founder, The Chapter House
Laurie Scheer, New Nature Writers
Kristine Zeigler, CEO, Planet Women

Fellowship Timeline

- April 22- June 10, 2024: Fellowship application period
- Mid-to late-June: 2024 Fellows Announced
- July -November: 2024 Emerging Voices Fellowship period

Application Process

Please find the [application here](#). Applicants must be living or working in or writing about the Colorado River Basin and interested in writing about cultural, environmental, or history related to women, water, and all of nature. In other words, writers may live outside of the hydrological boundaries of the Colorado River Basin, but must be passionate about writing about the Basin. The application deadline for the 2024 program is June 10, 2024. Expect a mid-to late-June announcement of acceptance. **Applications must be submitted electronically by 11:59pm Pacific Time on June 10th.**

Application Fee

There is no application fee, as Planet Women believes in eliminating the financial barrier from the application process.

Selection Criteria and Process

Up to three Fellows will be selected based on the potential of the writer's submitted sample, coupled with the power of the writer's ideas about Indigenous women's lived experiences in the Colorado River Basin. A list of the kinds of environmental and social justice issues we are interested in seeing is below. However, this list is not exhaustive and we still want to hear about your topic(s) and focus of your writing if it falls outside of the suggested list below. A committee of established writers and publishing professionals as well as Planet Women staff will select the Fellows.

General questions about the application process can be sent to kristine@planetwomen.org.

Terms of Use

Planet Women archives submissions in their entirety for organizational purposes. We will never use or share your application outside of Planet Women, and you retain all the rights to your work submitted as part of your application.

Planet Women and New Nature Writers are committed to providing and preserving an environment free from discrimination, harassment, and bullying, and one that is safe and secure for writers, volunteers, staff, and others who participate in the Journey to Publication Writing Fellowship.

Planet Women and New Nature Writers do not discriminate based upon sex, pregnancy, race, color, religion, sexual orientation, national origin, ancestry, place of birth, age, crime victim status, military service/veteran status, gender identity, genetic information, abilities, and any other protected characteristics, recognized and as defined by applicable law.

List of Environmental and Social Justice Issues We Are Interested In:

- Access to clean running water
- Sanitation and public health
- Personal memories and stories
- Climate change
- Pollution
- River restoration
- Forests of the Basin
- Agriculture and women
- Stories of water's importance, sacredness, and role in daily life
- Tribal water rights
- Enjoying the river, loving the river – how do you recreate and find joy in the river?
- Colorado River history – dams, diversions, who gets how much water, can you make policy into compelling fiction and nonfiction?
- Cultural practices and water
- Nature writing
- Indigenous wisdom
- Conflicts with extractive industries
- Colonization
- Contemporary experiences – such as memoir, fiction, and what hopes and visions for the future of the Basin might look like
- All peoples are included – ancestors, youth, middle-aged, elders, and future ancestors not yet born

***It's important to define how we are using the word "women." Our definition includes cisgender women, femme/feminine-identifying, Two Spirit, trans, genderqueer, and non-binary individuals who have historically been excluded from the environmental space.*