

# **THE EMMA PRESS CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS**

## **DECEMBER 2021**

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## INTRODUCTION TO THE PRESS

The Emma Press is an independent publisher specialising in **poetry, short fiction and children's books**. It was founded by Emma Dai'an Wright in Winnersh, Berkshire, in 2012 and is now based in Jewellery Quarter, Birmingham, UK.

We publish themed poetry anthologies, single-author poetry and fiction pamphlets (chapbooks), and books for children. We have a growing list of translations which includes titles from Latvia, Estonia, Indonesia, Spain and the Netherlands.

We are open for manuscript submissions for **one week every quarter**. If you come across The Emma Press and you've missed the most recent window by a hair, you'll only have to wait 3 months max until the next window.

Calls are for **general manuscripts**, which can fit into any of the existing The Emma Press series, though there may occasionally be a special thematic focus.

You can find us at [hello@theemmapress.com](mailto:hello@theemmapress.com), and on Instagram, Facebook and Twitter as @theemmapress.

## DECEMBER 2021 CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

Dear writers,

**Our next call for submissions will be between the 13th - 19th December 2021.**

We will be accepting general submissions of poetry pamphlets, prose (short stories, essays), children's poetry collections and children's fiction.

We'll be hosting an [Instagram](#) Live for any questions about submissions, as well as a [Twitter](#) writeathon day meant to provide encouragement, companionship and as a push to help you finish your proposal.

### **Timeline:**

- **Instagram Q&A:** Wednesday 1st December 2021, 2pm
- **Twitter Writeathon:** Wednesday 8th December 2021 – updates all day!
- **Twitter Q&A:** Wednesday 8th December 2021, 2pm
- **Submission period:** 13th - 19th December 2021

We'll keep sharing tips, prompts, and updates on submissions windows through our [newsletter](#), so make sure to sign up for that!

We encourage you to read some of our previous publications, so you can get a sense of what we like. The curated Emma Press Bundles are our suggested readings for anyone considering submitting – [take a look](#).

**Response time:**

We will aim to respond to everyone who has submitted within 2 submission cycles. If we think your proposal could be a good fit for The Emma Press, we will get in touch with you to request the full manuscript or more information. We will publish shortlists from each submission window, alongside comments on what we loved about those works.

We will select 1-2 books to publish from each call for submissions, and we will aim to publish books within 12-24 months of the full manuscripts being finalised.

If we don't think your manuscript is for us, we will send you a response to that effect but we're afraid it won't be individualised and we can't provide specific feedback. We hope to be able to do more for shortlisted authors in the future.

## What we offer authors:

- **Advances:** We will offer a small advance on books we choose to publish from the 2021 calls for submissions, as well as author copies and royalties. £50 for poetry pamphlets and children's books, and £100 for prose for adults.
- **Editing:** We work with our authors to get their work into the best shape possible, and we recognise that different manuscripts and authors can require different approaches.
- **Production:** We provide illustration when the work calls for it, and allow authors to have a level of input into construction of the book they might not often get from bigger publishers. However, we have an editorial vision which is as important as the author's own vision. It's a collaborative process 😊.
- **Promotion:** We will work with authors to publicise books in the lead-up to and after publication. We are a small team and publish quite a few books each year, so promotion will be a joint effort between our team and the author.
- **Prizes:** We will submit books to prizes where possible.

**Thank you for trusting us with your submissions! We can't wait to read your work. We will keep you updated on our review progress via our [newsletters](#).**

# HOW IT WORKS

## Submission Steps

1. **Write your proposal!** (There are guides and suggestions on how to structure a proposal below)
2. **Purchase a pay-what-you-can submission fee.** You can choose to purchase a ticket for between £0-20, and this choice will have **no impact** on how we read your submission. Make a note of your order number (the one starting with #), as you'll need it later. Submissions are limited to one per person, per window.
3. **Prepare your proposal and sample pages (or full manuscript)** in .DOC, .ODT or PDF format. Never .pages!! These can be in separate documents or in a single one.
4. **Fill in the Google form.** The form will tell you everything you need to know, including where to upload your files. **ONLY** upload your files once you've completed the Google Form. If you have any problems with it, drop us an email on [hello@theemmapress.com](mailto:hello@theemmapress.com).

## Eligibility

- We have a 'no agents' policy. We see The Emma Press as a place where future stars can gain a platform that enables them to get an agent, or for more established writers to take a sidestep on a side project.
- We accept submissions from anywhere in the world so long as the work is written in or translated into English.

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

*Are you accepting children's picture book submissions?*

Sadly we're not looking for children's picture book proposals at the moment, due to the production costs and the difficulty of selling them. We love picture books and would love to do more of them, so as soon as we figure out a way to make them work we will let you know!

*Do the essay collections have to be themed?*

No. They can be themed, or they can be wide-ranging in subject matter. However, the full collection should hang together well and make sense as a book, so have a think about how to achieve this.

*Does the writing need to be completely unpublished?*

It's fine if some (up to 1/3) of your essays/poems/stories have been previously published, but please do check with those publishers or publications that you still hold the rights to your poems and can licence us to publish them again with no additional payments or paperwork.



If you have published the majority of your book on your own blog or website, or through a self-publishing site or with a publisher in another country, do think about what you actually want out of us – after all, you’ve already done all the hard work yourself and essentially the book is already published. We want to be involved in the creation of the book, so it’s not just about us providing print services and distribution.

*How many books are you planning to publish a year?*

Ideally we would publish 12 books a year, 2-4 of which would be children’s books.

*How many manuscripts will you choose from each submission window?*

It’s difficult to tell how many we will receive in our new quarterly windows, and therefore what the odds will be of us finding manuscripts we love and want to publish. We would hope to find 1-2 manuscripts we want to publish from each window, but this isn’t set in stone.

*I have a full-length collection of poems for adults. Can I submit this?*

No, because we are only looking for manuscripts to join the existing series of Emma Press books.

*Will you consider translations?*

Yes, we are always happy to see translations. Translators can submit multiple proposals (i.e. one per author).

*I've written a book with a friend. Can we submit as a pair?*

Yes, if you can figure out how to fill in the Google form together (don't just do one each), and be aware that you'll split the advance, complimentary copies and royalties.

*Can I submit more than one manuscript?*

To try and keep numbers to a manageable level for the team, we are limiting submissions to one per author for every submissions window. If you have multiple projects and you are struggling to

decide what to submit, you might find it useful to read our upcoming newsletters and blogs about submissions.

*Do you accept simultaneous submissions? i.e. Can I send my manuscript for consideration by other places too?*

Yes, that's fine – just drop us an email at [hello@theemmapress.com](mailto:hello@theemmapress.com) if you need to withdraw your entry.

*When will I hear back about my submission?*

We send updates on our progress in our [newsletter](#), so that is the best place to look if you're wondering when you might hear back from us. We do reply to everyone, and we read all of the submissions very thoroughly, so thank you for being patient with us.

*What happens if you do like my writing?*

We will let you know by email and take it from there. We will probably have some suggestions for tweaking or developing your writing further, so we'll explain that all in the email.

*One more thought. . .*

We only publish writing which we utterly love and believe in, which means the matter of what we publish will always come down to our personal tastes. If we can't publish your work, it's not a judgement on the quality of your writing so much as a reflection of our personal preferences in writing. **If you would like to get a sense of our tastes, do take a look at the books we have published so far.**

## **SUBMISSION GUIDELINES:**

**We'd like to see a proposal and a sample for each submission, or else a proposal and full manuscript if you have it.**

**Your proposal document should tell us:**

- What your book is/what you are trying to do with it/what themes you explore in it
- Who you think would enjoy reading it/who it would really speak to
- Why you think it would be a good fit for The Emma Press
- What are your expectations for publication – what do you hope will happen if you have this published?
- How you would help us publicise your book

## **POETRY PAMPHLETS**

**Please send us a proposal and a sample of at least 10 pages of poems, or the full manuscript if you have it ready.**

- If submitting a sample: We'd recommend you include your most striking pieces, which give a good flavour of the pamphlet as a whole.
- If submitting a full manuscript: Bear in mind that our pamphlets contain **a maximum of 23 pages of poetry, with a maximum of 30 lines on each page** (this is without linebreaks/stanza breaks, i.e. if your poem is just one block of text). Do put some thought into the order you put your poems in, but don't agonise over it – nothing is set in stone.

Keep reading for specific advice about preparing different proposals.

## **PROSE PAMPHLETS:**

**Please send us a proposal and sample pages (or the full manuscript if you have it).**

- Advice for submitting a sample: Include at least three stories/essays/chapters, which should give us a flavour of the pamphlet as a whole.
- Advice for submitting your full manuscript: Our prose pamphlets contain around 15-20,000 words.

## **CHILDREN'S POETRY (for children 8+ years old):**

**Please send us a proposal and a sample of at least 10 pages of poems, or the full manuscript if you have it ready.**

- Advice for submitting a sample: Don't feel restricted to the ordering you have in mind – we'd recommend you include your most striking poems, which give a good flavour of the pamphlet as a whole.
- Advice for submitting your full manuscript: Bear in mind that our children's poetry collections contain **around 35-45 poems**.

**CHILDREN'S FICTION (aimed at children no younger than 8 years old):**

**Please send us a proposal and sample chapters (or the full manuscript if you have it).**

- Advice for submitting a sample: Include at least five chapters or stories, which should give us a flavour of the book as a whole.
- Advice for submitting your full manuscript: Our children's fiction books contain around 24,000 words.



## **STRUCTURING YOUR PROPOSAL**

**This section gives some guidance on writing your proposal for our upcoming submissions period.**

There are no hard and fast rules about how you should structure a proposal to us. The most important thing is to demonstrate your thinking and your vision.

If you're feeling a little lost in putting together a prose proposal for your submission to The Emma Press' open call, feel free to use the below template!

### ***Your Working Title***

#### **Introduction:**

- What is your book about?
- Is there a general theme or topic? If not, what is the organising principle of your collection?
- How would you describe your prose style?
- What are you trying to achieve with your collection?
- Who is your target audience?

- How many words will your collection have, approximately?
  - Remember, our children’s fiction books contain around 24,000 words
  - Our adult prose collections (both essays and fiction) are between 15-20,000 words.

## **Chapter Outline**

You should have at least three essays or stories finished to submit with your proposal.

For the rest of the collection, we hope you have a sense of the content of each essay or of the way the stories to come will help contribute to the overall mood and purpose.

Considering the word count, how many pieces do you anticipate including in the collection?

Summarise essays in paragraphs that list:

- Working titles
- Approximate word count
- Your thoughts on the content of each piece.

- If you are writing essays that include interviews, give a sense of who your subjects would be and why. Same with objects, locations, other writers you might be meditating on. How does your consideration of this subject contribute to your overall purpose for the collection? Are these subjects accessible to you?
- Notes on your rhetorical techniques and thoughts on the form and style of the essays.
- If your essay has appeared elsewhere, consider if you have permission to republish it, and why it is of use within this collection.

For both adult and children's fiction, if you aren't sure you can describe what your stories will be, think of a way to communicate the mood to us.

- Tell us if your stories are usually shorter or longer in length
- Tell us if you know the kernels of the stories or what they will be trying to do
- The best way you can show us what you want to do is to include writing samples written for this project

It can be harder to plot out a collection of stories that is not yet written than a collection of essays, so just do your best.

## Finally...

- Don't forget your writing samples!
- When you submit, you'll be prompted to fill in a Google form. It's basically just admin, like your name and details, permissions for already-published essays etc. The only bit that may take more thinking is a brief summary of your collection for our reference and the working title. Hopefully, if you've considered the points we've made above, you'll have the answers to those questions already.

**That's it! If you have more questions, you can contact us at [hello@theemmapress.com](mailto:hello@theemmapress.com).**

**Stay tuned for our Instagram Q&A on Wed 1 December, 2pm, and our Twitter writeathon on Wed 8th December. The writeathon will also include a half hour Q&A at 2pm that same day.**

**[Subscribe to our newsletter](#) for writing prompts, updates on the submissions process, and new things from the Press!**