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The Citizen Collective is Edinburgh International Book Festival's creative writing group for 15-18 year-olds (those in S4-S6). Led by Schools Writer in Residence, Ryan Van Winkle, it’s a fun, supportive, and inclusive space to develop writing skills (including spoken word, poetry, rap, fiction, non-fiction and/or journalism), make new friends, and try something different. There’s even the opportunity to perform at the Book Festival in the summer.

We will be meeting on **Wednesdays from 4.30-6pm** via Zoom, starting on **Wednesday 22nd October 2025.** Sessions are weekly during term time with the final session of the academic year on **Wednesday 24th June 2026**.

The sessions will provide a space for you to build your writing skills, find your voice, explore self-expression, learn about different creative writing tools and techniques, and receive feedback. Throughout the year the group will engage with a variety of industry guest speakers, attend cultural events and participate in the 2026 Book Festival.

This is a Citizen project by Edinburgh International Book Festival. **Participation is free** and open to anyone 15-18 years old living in Edinburgh or the surrounding area. All sessions will be attended and supported by a member of Book Festival Staff. We ask that you commit to attending at least 80% of sessions, so that you get the most out of the project.

Please fill in the form below and attach a piece of your own creative writing (it can be anything!) -max one A4 page- and email it to [jodie@edbookfest.co.uk](mailto:jodie@edbookfest.co.uk)**.** You will not be ‘assessed’ on your writing, we just want to see an interest and willingness to write.

**Participant name:**

**Participant date of birth:**

**Participant school (if applicable):**

**Participant email address:**

**Participant writing interests (e.g. genres, topics, styles that particularly interest you):**

**Any additional learning or participation needs:**

**Emergency contact name and number (please state their relationship to you):**

**Code of conduct**

We have put in place the following code of conduct. Please sign/type your name below to show that you agree to the following points:

* I will treat other members of the group with kindness and respect
* I will not share any work of other participants beyond the group unless agreed
* I will commit to attending as many of the sessions as possible
* I will be responsible with the camera and microphone features of Zoom
* I will not use my mobile phone during the sessions
* I understand that by not following this code of conduct I may be asked to leave the group

Signature: Date:

**Parent/guardian consent**

Please ask your parent/carer to sign/type here to consent to you taking part in Edinburgh International Book Festival’s scheme, The Citizen Collective:

Signature/written name:

Printed name:

Date:

If you have any questions, please contact [jodie@edbookfest.co.uk](mailto:jodie@edbookfest.co.uk)