



Cultures of Peace, 2026

Crafting the Words: An Online Writing Workshop

Call for Applications

Application Deadline: Monday, 28th September, 2026

[Cultures of Peace](#), an annual programme run by Zubaan in collaboration with the [Heinrich Böll Stiftung, New Delhi – India](#), is looking for aspiring and first-time writers to join us for an eight-week online writing workshop and mentorship to transform a draft work-in-progress into a publishable piece.

The workshop is especially designed for people in the age group of 20-40 years without prior experience in writing or publishing ventures as well as first generation learners who belong to historically marginalised and caste-oppressed communities, including women, queer, trans, Dalit, Bahujan and Adivasi, from the northeastern region as well as other parts of the country.

It will focus on writing to document stories and experiences from different kinds of marginalisations in a safe, shared and equal space aimed at encouraging creative expression, dialogues and solidarity-building in an increasingly divided world.

About the writing workshop

The *Cultures of Peace* programme focuses on the northeastern states of Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Tripura and Sikkim, as well as contiguous regions of Darjeeling, Kalimpong and Kurseong. It aims to diversify mainstream conversation and knowledge production about the northeastern region of India, and making connections between cultures and peoples through diverse forms of cultural production — writing, music, film, theatre, media, art and more — and thereby to expand the context in which the Northeast is spoken of, which is often limited to that of a region of conflict.

These conversations in the form of e-essays, video interviews, podcasts, webinars, Feminist Lab sessions as well as institutional histories of women-led, queer and feminist organisations and movements in the region are now part of a knowledge resource – the Zubaan Media Archive – which has become a significant platform for dialogue and mutual understanding.

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The online writing workshop will take forward both Zubaan's longstanding commitment to platforming marginalised voices as well as *Cultures of Peace's* foundational vision building meaningful understanding between the Northeast and mainland India. **It will bring together eight (8) participants from Northeast India and from caste-oppressed communities (Dalit-Bahujan-Adivasi) across India** in a structured yet nurturing space for creative expression, dialogue, and cross-learning, grounded in a feminist framework.

The central focus of the workshop will be writing as a tool for documentation, reflection, and resistance. Participants will be encouraged to articulate personal and community histories shaped by multiple and intersecting marginalisation, whether based on region, caste, ethnicity, gender, or language. By foregrounding lived experience as knowledge, the workshop seeks to foster deeper mutual understanding and build solidarities across differences in an increasingly polarised social and political context.

Workshop Format

The workshop will be co-facilitated by two experienced writers, one from Northeast Indian context and one from mainland India, ensuring both representational balance and contextual sensitivity. Their lived experience and professional expertise will help create a safe, reflective, and generative learning environment for the participants of the workshop.

The final selection will be four (4) people from Northeast India and four (4) from the rest of India. The workshop will cater to both creative fiction and non-fiction writers. Those who have already attended writing workshops and have similar certifications are not encouraged to apply.

Workshop Format: A 4-week online workshop followed by a 4-week mentorship

- **Online Workshop and lectures on techniques of writing:** Two hours every Saturday, from 24th October, 2026 to 14th November, 2026
- **Mentorship period:** 15th November, 2026 to 6th December



Workshop Outcome:

- Develop an understanding of the techniques of writing
- Develop a writing idea into a publishable fiction or non-fiction piece of about 3000-5000 words
- A fiction or non-fiction piece developed during the workshop is published online by Zubaan as part of its Media Archive

Timeline

- **Call for applications:** Monday, 21st September, 2026
- **Last date for applications:** Wednesday, 30th September, 2026
- **Announcement of selected participants:** Wednesday, 14th October, 2026
- **Workshop:** Two hours every Saturday, from 24th October, 2026 to 14th November, 2026
- **Mentorship period:** 15th November to 6th December
- **Final Submission:** 15th December, 2026

Who Should Apply?

- If you are an unpublished writer or a first-generation learner between the age of 20-40 years.
- If you come from one of the eight northeastern states – Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim and Tripura
- People from the contiguous regions of Darjeeling, Kalimpong and Kurseong
- If you belong to one of the historically marginalised and caste-oppressed communities, such as Dalit, Bahujan and Adivasi, from any of the states in India
- People from all genders can apply for the workshop. However, women, queer and trans applicants will be prioritised during the shortlisting.
- If you are committed to attend all online sessions and the mentorship without fail

How to Apply

Please complete this Google Form ([click here](#)) and upload all required documents as specified.

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List of documents required:

Prospective applicants will submit the following as part of their application: -

- A writing idea (**in about 500 words**) exploring through a gender lens one (or more) of the themes of home, oral histories, labour, migration, displacement and memory
- A rough structure and scope of what they plan to write
- A **writing sample of about 1000-1500 words** (This can be either fiction or non-fiction. Poetry and academic papers will not be considered.)
- An updated CV and any other relevant information about yourself that you think is necessary, including proof of age
- Two names of referees
- Please mention any special accommodations that you will require (example, disability accommodation, etc.)

Interested applicants can send their applications by filling in the Google Form ([click here](#)). The last date for submission of the application is **11:59 pm, Wednesday, 30th September, 2026**

Selected candidates will be informed via email by **Wednesday, 14th October, 2026.**

Shortlisting and selection process

A selection committee will screen all applications. The committee will prepare a shortlist based on relevance to the aims and objectives of the *Cultures of Peace* programme and the *Writing Workshop's* priorities as described in this document. The committee will then decide, and the candidate will be informed. The committee's decision will be final.

Cultures of Peace: Festival of the Northeast is a programme that focuses on the northeastern states of Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Tripura and Sikkim, as well as contiguous regions of Darjeeling, Kalimpong and Kurseong. Run in collaboration with the Heinrich Boll Stiftung, New Delhi, the programme aims to diversify mainstream conversation and knowledge production about the Northeast region of India, and making connections between cultures and peoples through these alternative avenues.



Registered in 2003, Zubaan is a charitable trust based in Delhi. It follows in the footsteps of its parent NGO, Kali for Women, and has been an active participant, chronicler and publisher of the women's movement since 1984. It works to increase the body of knowledge on women with a special focus on South Asia and India. For more information, log onto <https://zubaanprojects.org>.

The Heinrich Böll Stiftung (hbs) is a German green think-tank and part of the international Green movement, focusing on sustainability, democracy, and social justice. Through its network of offices worldwide, including in India, it aims to inspire conversations and action towards a sustainable and equitable future. For more information, log onto <https://in.boell.org/en>

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs)

- **What is the writing workshop about?**

The writing workshop is a structured and nurturing feminist platform for aspiring and first-time writers from Northeast India and from caste-oppressed communities (Dalit-Bahujan-Adivasi) across India to enhance their writing skills and to transform a draft work-in-progress into a publishable piece.

- **Who can apply?**

The workshop is open to aspiring and first-time writers from Northeast India – Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim and Tripura as well as contiguous regions of Darjeeling, Kalimpong and Kurseong – and from caste-oppressed communities (Dalit-Bahujan-Adivasi) across India. While all genders can apply, we strongly encourage applications from young women, queer, trans and non-binary people. **Preference will be given to candidates based locally and working actively within the community. This call is not open to non-Indian nationals.**

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- **Can I apply if I live outside of India?**

The workshop is open to all in the categories mentioned above. Preference will however be given to applicants who have not been part of a similar programme and those who have limited access to such programmes.

- **Is there an age limit to apply?**

You must be ideally between the age of 20-40 years to apply.

- **What language should my submission be in?**

All submissions will be in English.

[Note: Since we have a limited number of seats available, we would like to encourage applicants who can commit to attending all online and mentoring sessions without fail, and submitting a publishable piece by the stipulated deadline. Please apply ONLY if you feel you can fulfil these criteria so as to not deprive other deserving applicants.]

