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2 June 2017

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Executive Director

Seattle City of Literature

Dear Selection Committee of the UNESCO Creative Cities Network,

AWP is delighted to support the city of Seattle in becoming a UNESCO City of Literature. Seattle is a great literary city, and, by its artistic vitality and its bounty of community leaders, it is well suited to fostering international co-operation and cultural diplomacy. It's a great city with a thriving literary community.

AWP is an association of 550 colleges and universities in North America and the U.K.; 35,000 writers, teachers, and students; and 150 writers' conferences and centers. With 13,000 attendees and 700 exhibitors (mostly small press literary publishers), AWP held one of its biggest and most successful conferences in Seattle in 2014. We look forward to bringing our conference back to the city because we know how dynamic its cultural and literary life is.

For our conference, Seattle mustered a wonderful level of pluralistic literary activity, and the city's literary centers, publishers, bookstores, and activities keep maturing and improving.

We chose the city as a site for the conference because Seattle had the ideal qualities we sought, and I suspect these are the same qualities that UNESCO would seek in a City of Literature: outstanding universities that support the literary arts; an excellent literary center; active local writers' groups; successful independent bookstores; fine literary magazines and small presses; nationally prominent writers; and vitality across all the artistic disciplines, since each art enriches the others.

The city is rich in literary leadership, accomplishment, and cultural diversity; it's the kind of place that deserves the appellation of a UNESCO City of Literature.

Sincerely,

David Fenza
Executive Director