

# Open Call: International Radio Playwriting Competition 2018

Are you a promising writer living outside the UK? Would you like to win a trip to London and have your play broadcast globally on BBC World Service?



Writers from around the world are invited to submit scripts for the International Radio Playwriting Competition 2018.

The global competition hosted by [BBC World Service](#) and the British Council, in partnership with co-producers [The Open University](#), offers the unique opportunity for playwrights to have their radio play heard across the globe by the BBC World Service's millions of listeners.

Whether you're an established or a completely new writer, the International Radio Playwriting Competition welcomes scripts from anyone outside of the UK. The radio dramas can be on any subject you like, as long as they are 53 minutes long.

This year the two first prizes can come from either the English as a First Language or the English as a Second Language category. Both winners will travel to London, attend an award ceremony and see their plays recorded before they're broadcast on the BBC World Service.

There is also a third award — the Georgi Markov prize — which celebrates the most promising script from the shortlist, in honour of BBC World Service Journalist and

writer [Georgi Markov](#) (1929—1978). The winner of this prize will also travel to London for the award ceremony and spend two weeks being mentored by BBC Radio Drama and BBC World Service.

Last year we received 1,000 entries from a record 112 countries. Writers from Papua New Guinea, the Phillipines, Brazil, Canada, Nigeria, India, Australia, South Africa, Jamaica and the USA all made the shortlist.

"Write your play. Just write it, this is such an opportunity"



*Last year's winner Pericles Silveira (Brazil), Joanne Gutknecht (Canada) and Jude Erupu (Uganda) outside the BBC Broadcasting House in London. Photograph: Rob Thompson.*

"The competition continues to provide an important platform for talented writers from around the world", says Neil Webb, Director Theatre and Dance at the British Council. "The universal desire to tell our stories coupled with the global reach of the World Service makes the competition an invaluable bridge between people of the world and the United Kingdom."

Entering the competition can be a life changing experience. [Previous winners have left their jobs to pursue careers in writing](#) — including [Virginia Jekanyika](#), who won the English as a Second Language category in 2013 with her play *The Cactus Flowers* and moved to the UK to study creative writing.

"I don't care if you've got three jobs and five children, write your play." said Kwame Kwei-Armah, who was a panellist for the 2008 competition and has just been announced as the Young Vic's new Artistic Director. "Just write it, this is such an opportunity. You can come to London, you can have your play looked at by the BBC, you could have your play broadcast to millions on air." So, if you have a compelling story to tell, don't miss this opportunity to have it broadcast globally. We're excited to see what scripts are submitted this year.

Visit the BBC website to find out more about [how to apply](#) and to [read the terms and conditions](#). The deadline to apply is midnight (GMT) on 31 January 2018.

# International Radio Playwriting Competition 2018 - Terms and Conditions

## RULES

1. Entry is only open to anyone who is over the age of 18 as at 31 January 2018 who is not normally a resident of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Channel Islands or Isle of Man ("UK"). Individuals who have lived or worked in the UK on a temporary basis for no more than 12 months at the time of entering the competition are also eligible. Professional and previously published writers are eligible to enter, but this is not a requirement of entry. We may require proof of eligibility.
2. Entrants must not be BBC, BBC Group company, British Council, The Open University or Commonwealth Foundation employees, close relatives of such employees or any person connected to the competition. Proof of age, identity and eligibility may be requested.
3. Entrants should write a radio play of approximately fifty three minutes' length on any subject of their choice.
4. The entrants warrant, by submitting plays, that the play:
  - a) is the original work of the entrants,
  - b) is not an adaptation of an earlier work (for example a novel),
  - c) will not have been professionally produced in any medium (an informal play-reading is acceptable; a play-reading with a professional director and in front of a non-paying audience is acceptable, but a performance involving payment to actors and/or a paying audience is not) before 31 March 2019,
  - d) will not have been offered for publication, performance or broadcast or produced in any other form or medium to any other person or company before 31 March 2019, and
  - e) will not have been entered for any other competition before 31 March 2019.

A breach of these warranties will result in disqualification from the competition.

5. The winning playwrights will be deemed to have entered into an undertaking not to accept offers for their entries from other broadcasters or publishers before 31 March 2019.
6. All scripts submitted must be approximately 53 minutes in length – this usually equates to a minimum of 45 pages of A4 paper (or equivalent) and a maximum of 65 pages (note, a rough guide is a minute per page; please read and time your play before you send it). The play should have a maximum of six central characters (there may be up to 3 small “doubling” characters too, who don’t have more than a few lines each). There must be no central roles for children. Word count approx. 9000-10000 words
7. Your script should be accompanied by a short synopsis which outlines the complete story of the play. This must be no more than 400 words.
8. There are two categories for entry. One is for entrants who speak English as a first language and the other is for entrants with English as a second language. The BBC may require proof of eligibility for the selected category before announcing a winner. For translated entries, it is the responsibility of the entrant to ensure the translated script fully complies with these rules and entry requirements and the entrant must have the right to enter into a contract on the translator or translators’ behalf as per Rule 24. No additional payment can be made by the BBC for translations. • Please tick this box to confirm the translator has given permission for you to provide their personal details.
9. The play must be written substantially or entirely in English. Unfortunately, we do not have the facility to offer a translation service. Entries that have been translated must acknowledge this fact by giving a credit to the translator or translators. Entries that have been translated will be entered in the English as a first language category.
10. The competition opens on 3 October 2017 and closes on 31 January 2018. Entries must be received at your British Council office or at the BBC in London by midnight GMT on 31 January 2018. Entries received after this time will not be considered.
11. Entries must be submitted :one of the following ways
  - by post to the following address: International Playwriting Competition 2018, BBC Radio Drama, Room 6015 BBC Broadcasting House, Portland Place, London W1A 1AA, United Kingdom
  - to your local British Council office,
  - online at [URL] by completing the online form
  
  - by email to the following email address: radioplay@bbc.co.uk
12. All entries must be accompanied by a completed copy of the entry form which can be downloaded at: [www.bbcworldservice.com/radioplay](http://www.bbcworldservice.com/radioplay) or for submissions via the webform all required boxes must be completed.
13. The personal data you provide will only be used by the BBC for administering this competition. No personal data will be shared with third parties without your permission first. However shortlisted entrants’ names with their country or region of residence will be published online and shared with the Commonwealth Foundation, British Council

and the Open University. The online entry form is hosted and provided by a third party supplier on behalf of the BBC, Monterosa.

All personal data will be kept secure and deleted once the competition has ended and the prize fulfilled unless you have selected to be contacted in future. For more information on the BBC's Privacy Policy, please see [www.bbc.co.uk/privacy](http://www.bbc.co.uk/privacy)

14. Entrants can enter individually or as part of a group. If entering as a group, all entrants must meet the entry requirements and be eligible for the same category. No member should have also entered individually. Please note, the prize only includes payment for one airfare per category.

15. In the case of an entry by two or more writers, the BBC will need written or email confirmation from each writer involved that they are prepared to take a share of the prize money and are prepared to receive those funds from a nominee who will be one of the writers, as the prize money will be paid to one individual only. The nominee will be selected by the writers and it will be his or her responsibility to distribute these funds to the other writers and the organisers can take no responsibility for that aspect. As per Clause 8, there will be no additional payment from the BBC for translations.

16. Only one entry per person is permitted including any group entries. If you submit more than one entry, only the first entry received will be considered. Please do not submit plays you have entered before.

17. You may choose to submit your entry under a pseudonym (which will be the name it shall be promoted and published under), however you must include your real name on each entry for verification purposes.

18. A shortlist of up to 20 scripts will be sent a panel of up to 6 judges. These are selected by invitation each year and usually comprise the Commissioning Editor, BBC World Service, English; the British Council Director of Theatre & Dance; Executive Producer, BBC Radio Drama and an actor, director and writer. Judges are issued with specific selection criteria and from these scripts, two plays (from either category) will be chosen as winners.

19. All entries must be the original work of the entrant and must not infringe the rights of any other party. The BBC accepts no liability if entrants ignore these rules and entrants agree to fully indemnify the BBC against any claims by any third party arising from any breach of these rules.

20. Entries must not contain defamatory, obscene or any other unsuitable material, such as that which may cause offence to a wide audience of all ages. Content should not contain excessive swearing or obscene language.

21. Entrants retain the copyright in their entries but grant to the BBC an exclusive licence to broadcast their entry on radio, as well as use it on any online platforms in line with the BBC's Radio Drama Agreement as agreed with the Radio Writers' Forum (see 27 below). Entrants reserve certain secondary rights in other media subject to BBC exclusive options. Entrants also grant a licence to Commonwealth Writers and The Open University to publish extracts of their scripts, along with their name(s), on the Commonwealth Writers and Open University websites and to The Open University to

make their content available within OU courses for teaching and learning purposes, including to OU registered students on any secure platform or copy-protected medium.

22. The prize for each of the two winners (which can come from either the English as a 1st language category or the English as a 2nd language category) will consist of £2200 sterling and a trip to London (standard airfare and accommodation for one person) to see the winning play being recorded for broadcast on the BBC World Service and attend a prize-giving event. The winners should make themselves available for other BBC programmes and publicity. The prize is as stated and cannot be deferred or transferred. There will be no cash alternatives.

23. The Georgi Markov prize is an additional prize for the play from the shortlist of scripts which does not win, but is deemed by the judges to have the most potential. This can be from either language category and the judges select according to strict criteria. The winner does not have their play produced, but comes to London for 2 weeks to be mentored by BBC Radio Drama and BBC World Service. There is no cash alternative and winners are given accommodation and a small per diem.

24. As with any new play, the BBC may require further drafts and revisions of the winning plays. Winners must be willing and able to undertake redrafting and revision work in conjunction with the BBC and accept that they will work with the Producers on re-writes of the play. This work is likely to take place between June 2018 and September 2018 and the winning entrants will need to keep time free, and remain contactable, to achieve this. This work will be completed with the winning entrant using email or the most suitable method available. We reserve the right to revoke a play's prize winning status if this work is not completed.

25. The BBC will reserve the right to make minor cuts, changes and edits to the winners' final draft scripts and all editorial control rests with the BBC.

26. You must inform the BBC if any character/s or situation/s in the play relate to real situation/s or real people, either living or dead

27. Subject to a satisfactory recording being made, the winning plays will be broadcast on BBC World Service at some point around Spring 2019. Winners will first be required to enter into a contract with the BBC on the standard terms and conditions applicable for broadcast of BBC Radio Drama. No fee will be payable other than the £2200 sterling offered as prize money for one broadcast cycle and the BBC's standard package of rights under that contract. If repeated on the World Service, a sum of £1100 will be payable for the first repeat cycle and thereafter the BBC will have certain broadcasting and other rights all in accordance with the contract.

28. This competition accords with the BBC's Code of Conduct for Competitions, details of which can be found on the BBC's Standards and Guidelines website:

[www.bbc.co.uk/editorialguidelines/guidelines/appendix2](http://www.bbc.co.uk/editorialguidelines/guidelines/appendix2)