The Official Poetry Slam Handbook

EDITED BY ERIK DANIEL
DEBORAH MARSH
STEVE MARSH
JESSE PARENT
SUZI Q. SMITH
About

This Poetry Slam Handbook is a document produced by Poetry Slam, Inc. (PSi) that is intended to be a useful tool for SlamMasters, Slam Family members, and poetry slam enthusiasts. It contains the basic rules of slam as well as the rules of Poetry Slam, Inc., the Code of Honour, the Equal Opportunity Statement, How to Become a Member, How to Register Your Reading Series and more. Bring it with you to the National Poetry Slam, Women of the World Poetry Slam and the Individual World Poetry Slam as a handy reference guide.

Poetry Slam, Inc. would like to thank all of the poets and organizers whose efforts keep poetry slam alive and vibrant.

For the most up-to-date information on Poetry Slam, please visit our website:

www.poetryslam.com
Table of Contents

Mission Statement 4
Values Statement 5
A Brief History of PSi 6
PSi Deadlines 11
Venue Certification 13
Membership 14
SlamMaster Code of Conduct 17
Equal Opportunity Statement 18
Win & You’re In Structure 20
Win & You’re In Forms 23
Official MC Spiel 28
Judge Instructions 28
NPS Rules 30
NPS MC Job Description 39
NPS Bout Manager Job Description 41
iWPS/WOWps Rules 43
iWPS/WOWps MC Job Description 49
iWPS/WOWps Bout Manager Job Description 51
Protest Process 53
Protest Form 54
Tax Info for Donors 55
PSi Bylaws 56
Membership Form 70
Video/Film/Audio Rights Agreement 71
Poet's Audio/Video Release Form 72
Mission Statement
The mission of Poetry Slam Incorporated (PSi) is to promote the performance and creation of poetry while cultivating literary activities and spoken word events in order to build audience participation, stimulate creativity, awaken minds, foster education, inspire mentoring, encourage artistic expression and engage communities worldwide in the revelry of language.
**Values Statement**

Poetry Slam, Inc. (PSi) exists to celebrate the power of the voice. PSi is an arts organization that works to provide a platform for voices to be heard beyond social, cultural, political, and economic barriers. One of the objectives of Poetry Slam, Inc., is the achievement of building a healthy community that welcomes and embraces the voices of people from all races, colors, genders, sexual orientations, lifestyles, classes, national origins, religions, ethnicities, ages, and abilities. Further, PSi strives to promote networking amongst poets and poetry slam organizers locally, nationally, and Internationally.

PSi teaches and is committed to the principle that dignity, self-esteem, and respect are inalienable rights of every individual. Each member shares the responsibility of preserving the rights of all members and guests in the poetry slam community. PSi charges its members to live up to the expectations of our community and to exemplify the ideals of leadership, friendship, and justice when engaging with others in the poetry slam community, and to hold one another accountable to these expectations.

We exist to give voice to every poem, every passion, and every pressing issue that urgently needs a place for expression, and we endeavor to so build ourselves that we will ever be a credit to PSi and to the art form that is slam poetry. We challenge our members to use their art to inspire courage, hope, creativity and self-empowerment within their communities. We encourage spirited and free speech, both from the performing poets and from the audiences. We charge all of our members with the responsibility to respect other individual’s rights, just as we wish our own to be respected.

If any member or certified venue is found engaging in activities that are contrary to the values and code of conduct stated here, this Values Statement will be enforced. If necessary, actions leading to individual suspension or expulsion, or to the suspension or revocation of a venue’s certification, may be initiated to ensure compliance.
A Micro-History of the Beginning of PSi
Poetry Slam, Inc. was first officially proposed in August of 1996, at the Slam Family meeting in Portland, Oregon, though it had been talked about at the annual spring meeting for at least two years prior to that.

A corporate Charter and official bylaws worked their way into existence through several steps over the course of the next year. But, by official and unanimous acclamation, Poetry Slam, Inc. was brought to reality on August 9, 1997.

The Amended Articles of Incorporation identify the purposes for which the corporation is organized are:

Educational and literary purposes within the meaning of section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revue Code of 1986 including the following:

- To advocate, promote, support, witness, and/or perpetuate the art of performance poetry.
- To enhance the perception of literary merit and legitimacy of performance poetry as an art form.
- To manage the international affairs of the National Poetry Slam community. To protect the artistic and financial interests of the National Poetry Slam community.
- To promote and perpetuate the National Poetry Slam.

On November 9, 1999 Poetry Slam, Inc. became an official State of Illinois Charitable Trust and was granted permission to seek funds under the Solicitation for Charity Act in the state of Illinois.

On November 23, 1999, Poetry Slam, Inc. was granted official tax-exempt status under the Internal Revenue Service Code, retroactive to August 9, 1997, the day of our inception.
A Timeline
1984. Construction worker and poet Marc Smith starts a poetry reading series at a Chicago jazz club, the Get Me High Lounge, looking for a way to breathe life into the open mic poetry format. The series’ emphasis on performance lays the groundwork for the poetry that will be exhibited in slam.

1986. Smith approaches Dave Jemilo, the owner of the Green Mill (a Chicago jazz club and former haunt of Al Capone), with a plan to host a weekly poetry competition on the club’s slow Sunday nights. Jemilo welcomes him, and on July 25, the Uptown Poetry Slam is born. Smith draws on baseball and bridge terminology for the name, and institutes the basic features of the competition, including judges chosen from the audience and cash prizes for the winners. The Green Mill evolves into a Mecca for performance poets, and the Uptown Poetry Slam still continues 15 years after its inception.

1987. In August, Ann Arbor, MI starts a slam (the second oldest in the nation), with New York, San Francisco, and Fairbanks, AK following suit. The home of the New York slam, the Nuyorican Poets Cafe in the East Village, quickly becomes one of the best-known homes for slam.

1990. The first-ever national slam is held on October 18 in San Francisco, featuring four-person teams from Chicago and San Francisco and an individual poet from New York. The Chicago team wins the debut team competition, and Chicago’s Patricia Smith wins the individual competition.

1991. Chicago hosts a national competition featuring teams from eight cities including Boston, Cleveland, and the first-ever team from New York. Organizer Marc Smith coins the event National Poetry Slam. The Chicago team repeats as champions and premieres the first-ever group piece in Nationals competition. The three-minute time rule is introduced, including an on-stage clock, but Chicago poet and individual champion Lisa Buscani appeals to the audience to rescind the rule for the finals, and officials concur. While the three-minute rule remains in future years, the onstage clock does not.

1992. 17 cities are represented at the Nationals in Boston by team or individual competitors; the first-ever Native American slam team is among the 12 teams competing. Boston wins – the second year in a row the host city has done so – and Patricia Smith, now competing for Boston, wins her second individual title. A documentary film is shot at the event, but is never released. Slam continues to grow nationally, largely due to ‘92 Nationals organizer Michael Brown, who, along with Patricia Smith, spearhead the slam movement in the Northeast, and Asheville, NC’s Allan Wolf and Ginger West, who do similar groundbreaking in the Southeast.

1993. 23 teams compete in the Nationals in San Francisco, including the first teams from Canada (Victoria, B.C.) and Europe (Finland), as well as American cultural hotbeds like Seattle, Portland, Los Angeles, and Washington, DC. For the first time, the hosts produce a number of side events, including the haiku slam, the sonnet slam, the erotic reading, and midnight readings. The first on-air radio slam is held on Berkeley’s KPFA
in conjunction with Nationals, and Nuyo/Imago Records releases the Best of Slam CD chronicling the competition. Boston and Patricia Smith repeat as champions.

1994. The fifth National Poetry Slam is held in Asheville, North Carolina, won by the Cleveland team and individual competitor Gayle Danley, representing Atlanta. Allan Wolf coins the phrase, “The points are not the point; the point is poetry,” which becomes one of the principal rallying cries for proponents of the movement. Meanwhile, poet and poetry organizer Juliette Torrez, currently based in San Francisco, coordinates the poetry stage for the Lollapalooza tour, exposing new audiences to contemporary spoken word performers. As a result, a number of slams start up, particularly in the Southwest and on the West Coast.

1995. Ann Arbor hosts the largest Nationals to date. 27 teams participate, including newcomers like Austin, Dallas, Detroit, Athens, GA, Key West, FL, and Albuquerque. Organizers Steve and Deb Marsh introduce several innovations, including computerized scoring and the three-team bout, a departure from the head-to-head competition of previous National Poetry Slams. Asheville, NC wins the team competition, before a then-record crowd of nearly 1300, on the strength of well-crafted group pieces. In the individual competition, Boston's Patricia Smith wins her fourth title in six years.

1996. Filmmaker Paul Devlin brings a documentary crew to the Nationals in Portland to shoot SlamNation, which will premiere at the Sundance Film Festival two years later. The competition brings the largest crowds to date for Nationals over 3,000 people during the four days of competition. 27 teams compete, with Providence winning Nationals after finishing in last place the year before. Patricia Johnson, representing Roanoke, VA, wins the individual championship.

1997. Nationals are held in Middletown, CT. 33 teams compete, including a team from Sweden and two Canadian teams. The Mouth Almighty team, a New York-based team named for the spoken word record label sponsoring them, wins the team competition. Taylor Mali, captain of the Mouth Almighty team and the previous year’s Providence team, wins his second straight Nationals, and becomes legendary in the slam community for his attention to strategy. In the individual competition, Cleveland's Boogie Man becomes the first man to win the individual title.

1998. The documentary SlamNation (focusing on finalist teams from New York, Providence, Berwyn, IL, and Austin at the '96 Nationals) premieres the Sundance Film Festival, and garners critical attention that includes positive reviews from the New York Times and the Chicago Sun-Times’ Roger Ebert. The Nationals, held in Austin, bring a record 45 teams into competition, including 13 first-time teams. Members of the national media, including writers from Time and the Wall Street Journal and a camera crew from CNN/Entertainment Weekly, converge on Austin to give the slam its highest profile media treatment to date. New York edges Dallas to win its first-ever team championship, and Chicago’s Reggie Gibson, whose work is prominently featured in the quasi-autobiographical 1997 movie Love Jones, wins the individual title.

1999. Poetry Slam, Inc. files for official non-profit status as the umbrella organization for slam, as the number of certified slams in North America reaches 75. The 10th Annual Nationals are held in Chicago, featuring 48 teams, and is chronicled by such media notables
as the *New York Times* and *60 Minutes*. For the first time in slam history, a New York poet, Roger Bonair-Agard, wins the individual championship. Nationals history is also made when two teams
San Francisco and San Jose slam to the first-ever first-place tie. Rather than compete in a
tiebreaker round, the teams decide to share the title. In front of the largest crowd to ever
witness a poetry slam championship (over 2000), the championship trophy, made from a pair
of boxing gloves and a stack of books spray-painted gold, is torn in half on stage at Marc
Smith's behest. Earlier in the day, Smith has announced he will take a leave of absence
from his leadership role as President of PSI's Executive Council, noting that the organization
behind slam is now strong enough to maintain slam without his hands-on involvement as
a leader.

2000. Under the direction of Gary Glazner, PSI launches the first-ever SlamAmerica bus
tour, which brings poetry shows to 32 cities across the nation in the month leading up to
Nationals. The tour, sponsored by Grand Marnier, involves over 100 poets (most of them
participating in four or five-city legs of the tour), and generates coverage in nearly 50
media outlets, including *Newsweek*, *the Dallas Morning News*, and the *Voice of
America Network*. Tazuo Yamaguchi, longtime volunteer videographer for PSI assembles
hundreds of hours of video of the tour, which ultimately becomes a feature length
documentary, *Busload of Poets*.

The National Poetry Slam, in Providence, involves 56 teams, and adopts the four-team
bou t structure for the entire competition. New York City sends three teams; all
three make the finals, with the team from the Urbana series edging the rookie San
Antonio team by a tenth of a point to win the title. Shane Koczyan, from Vancouver,
BC, becomes the first Canadian poet to win the indie title.

2001. The 12th National Poetry Slam, held in Seattle, draws audience numbers rivaling
the record numbers of Chicago, with the Dallas team becoming the first Texas team to win
Nationals. Mayda del Valle, from the Nuyorican team, becomes the first Latina to win an
individual title, and the first woman to win Indies in five years. *Def Poets*, an HBO series
produced by hip-hop legends Russell Simmons and Mos Def, premieres. Some of the
series' standout poets, including Kalamazoo, MI's Dawn Saylor, LA's Shihan, and New
York's Beau Sia and Taylor Mali, show off the skills they have honed in local and national
slams. Gary Glazner and Aaron Yamaguchi's documentary on the SlamAmerica bus tour
debuts at the Santa Fe Film Festival.

2002. Marc Smith announces his “un-retirement” from his leadership role and returns to PSI
as its President for Life. PSI Takes a greater hands-on approach with NPS 2002 in
Minneapolis, MN and is rewarded with the most smoothly run nationals in years. PSI
asserts its rights in regard to the show and puts hundreds of hours of digital video and
audio on tape and CD. Another tie for first place in the team competition leaves the title
shared between NYC Urbana and Detroit/Hamtramck. No trophy is torn in half as Bill
Macmillan, SlamMaster from Worcester and museum curator of armor, constructed it of
solid oak and welded steel. The teams agree to share the trophy for six months each.
Membership in PSI swells to over 500 poets in seven countries. PSI asserts its rights in
regard to the show and under the direction of long-time volunteer, Gabrielle Bouliane, puts
hundreds of hours of digital video and audio on tape and CD. Tazuo Yamaguchi
assembles and edits the first of the World's Greatest Poetry Slam video series.
2003. PSi receives its first NEA grant in support of NPS 2003 to be held in Chicago. Local venue certification breaks records in both number and distribution with over 100 local slams supported in eight different nations. NPS is held in Chicago again, this time with a record 63 teams in attendance necessitating a late change in both format and structure for the tournament. Team Los Angeles wins the team trophy while San Jose’s Mike McGee takes individual honors. Scott Woods compiles and edits the first ever NPS Poetry Anthology which is released with a companion CD by Ann Arbor based The Wordsmith Press in Spring of 2003.

2004. Continued growth presents internal challenges. Marc Smith re-retires and is named to the official post of Founder. PSi initiates its first ever Individual World Poetry Slam in Greenville, SC in February. Poets from around the world are invited and the first ever iWPS Individual Champion is named. Buddy Wakefield of Seattle takes the honors. PSi hosts its first-ever instructional event called Poetry Cross Training Conference at SUNY Oneonta in New York. National Poetry Slam is held in St. Louis with a record 69 teams in attendance and where team Los Angeles, having renamed itself Team Hollywood repeats as NPS Champ and Sonya Reneé from Washington, DC becomes the individual champion.

2005. Begins propitiously with iWPS in the snowy climes of Worcester, MA. Buddy Wakefield repeats as World Champion after claiming the World Slam championship title in Rotterdam the previous summer, thus unifying the world title. National Poetry Slam comes to Albuquerque, NM and for the first time since 1993 the “Home Team” wins the title. Individual honors are shared between Anis Mojgani and Janean Livingston.

2006. Starts like a NASCAR racer in Charlotte, NC where PSi crowns a previous NPS champion as the newest World Poetry Champion: Mike McGee from the largest field of poets representing 7 different nations from Europe, North America and Asia. NPS is hosted by Austin, TX the previous host of the 1998 NPS but this time with 75 teams, the most ever at a poetry event of any kind that we know of. Team Denver won the National Poetry Slam. Anis Mojgani was the NPS individual champion.

2007. iWPS goes international by being the first event PSi has ever hosted outside of the United States. It is in Vancouver BC Canada. NPS is hosted again in Austin, TX, the first time NPS has been hosted by the same city two consecutive years. Poetry Cross Training Conference completes its third year and its balance sheet finishes in the black for the first time. Slam Charlotte won the National Poetry Slam. Danny Sherrard was the NPS individual champion. The iWPS champion was Ed Mabrey.

2008. In the spring of 2008 the first ever Women of the World Poetry Slam is held with only women competitors and officials in the city Detroit, MI. Organizers receive the Spirit of Detroit Award from City government. Poetry Cross Training Conference faces its fourth year at SUNY Oneonta in June. NPS will be co-hosted by Milwaukee and Madison, WI with the physical hosting taking place in Madison. iWPS will be brought back inside the United States to Charlotte, NC in December. The first ever winner of the Women of the World poetry slam was Andrea Gibson.
PSi Deadlines
Venue Certification
New Venue certification – All year
Venue re-certification - October 1 - December 31
Late Venue certification deadline – January 31 (after which venues must re-certify as new)

Membership
Membership renewal: Annual on date of original membership

Women of the World Poetry Slam (WOWps)
WOWPS takes place in March
Registration opens (Certified Venues & Previous Year's Champion):
2nd Monday in December
Registration opens (Registered Venues/Storm):
1st Friday in January
Registration closes:
3rd Friday in January

National Poetry Slam (NPS)
NPS takes place in August
Registration opens (Certified Venues): 1st Monday in April
Registration opens (Registered Venues): 1st Monday in May
Registration closes: June 1

Individual World Poetry Slam (iWPS)
iWPS takes place in October
Registration opens (Certified Venues & Last Year's Champion): 3rd Monday in July
Registration opens (Registered Venues/Storm): 2nd Monday in August
Registration closes: 3rd Friday in August

SlamMasters / Slam Family Meetings
SlamMaster bi-annual meetings are held during WOWPS and NPS
Annual Slam Family meeting is held during NPS

Win & You’re In (W&YI)
W&YI season: October 1 – March 31
PSI HOLIDAYS (OFFICES CLOSED)
New Year's Day
Martin Luther King Day
President's Day
Memorial Day
Independence Day
Labor Day
Veteran's Day
Thanksgiving Day
Christmas

Refunds
Last day to cancel and receive any refund: 45+ days out =100% refund, 30+ days out = 50% refund, 29 days out =0% refund of tournament fees but not memberships dues.
Venue and Membership Info
Registering/Certifying Your Poetry Slam

Any regular Poetry Slam or Poetry Reading Series can become a cooperating organization with PSi. New registration costs $125 and can be accomplished over the Internet following the same steps outlined for becoming an individual member. Newly registered readings will be required to fill out an Application for Certification and will be asked to provide six pieces of “evidence” regarding the nature of their event. The act of paying the fee REGISTERS a venue as a cooperating organization. Registration alone does not qualify a reading series to send a team or an individual to a Poetry Slam, Inc. event.

To become eligible for inclusion in a Poetry Slam, Inc. event, a reading series must become “Certified.” Certification does not guarantee inclusion in a PSi competition, but all teams and individuals at PSi events must come from Certified Poetry Slams. Standards include:

1. The series must have conducted at least six events before certification and its benefits can accrue.

2. The reading series must meet the requirements outlined in the Equal Opportunity Statement.

3. The audience must average at least 30 members.
4. Any team or individual representing the Certified Poetry Slam at a PSi event must be selected from an open competition.

5. A Certified Poetry Slam need NOT be from the United States to participate in a PSi event.

Renewing Certification is only $50 prior to January 1, $75 between January 1 and January 31. If a venue fails to recertify by January 31 it must pay the new venue certification fee of $125 and resubmit six pieces of evidence to support their claim to meet the above standards. (In no circumstance can a venue become certified for the current PSi event after other slams have begun registering for it.)
Individual Membership

Any person who wishes to advocate, promote, support, witness, enjoy and/or practice the art of performance poetry may become a member of Poetry Slam, Inc. All participants in a Poetry Slam, Inc. event are required to be members of PSi.

To become a member all that is required is for a person to fill out an application form and pay a membership fee (starting at $20 per year) to PSi. This can be accomplished most easily at the website www.poetryslam.com, but for other options please e-mail executivedirector@poetryslam.com.

Memberships expire one year after payment of dues and are renewable on your anniversary date each year thereafter, except in the case of lifetime membership, which does not expire.

Membership (including lifetime membership) may be revoked by the Executive Council of Poetry Slam Inc. in accordance with our complaint policies and procedures, and for violations of the Code of Conduct.
Poetry Slam, Inc. Membership Code of Conduct

By being a member of Poetry Slam, Inc., I agree to the following statements:

I will know and understand the obligations stated in the PSi Values Statement and Policy, and the ideals expressed therein, and I will strive to incorporate them in my daily life.

I will respect the dignity of all persons; therefore, I will not physically, mentally, psychologically or sexually abuse any human being.

I understand that verbal harassment, physical aggression or intolerance are unacceptable in poetry slam.

I will comply with local, state and federal laws, especially those pertaining to individual civil rights and physical or sexual harassment.

I will revel in an environment in which freedom of speech, self-determination, and pursuit of creative excellence are inalienable rights.

I will participate in poetry slam events in a way that encourages, illuminates and supports established standards of good sportsmanship.

I refuse to allow the competitive challenge of the game to lead me to violence, interference, or direct threats.

I will allow all participants to pursue their craft peacefully and without censure, regardless of present team associations or past personal history.

I will abide by competition rules as defined by Poetry Slam, Inc., knowing that the consequences for breaking the rules exist and are upheld. Penalties will be determined by the severity of the infraction, and the ruling of the presiding NPS Protest Committee and/or the PSI Executive Council.

I will be a fair poet – one who in competition is fair and generous, one who in any connection has recourse to nothing illegitimate; a poet who in defeat demonstrates grace and in victory magnanimity.
I understand that if I am found engaging in activities that are contrary to the values and code of conduct stated here, this Code of Conduct will be enforced. If necessary, actions leading to individual suspension or expulsion, or to the suspension or revocation of a venue’s certification, may be initiated to ensure compliance.

Remember: “The show and the show’s effect upon the audience are more important than any one individual's contribution to it.”

- Marc Smith
**SlamMasters**
Certified Venues must have at least one designated SlamMaster, who is responsible for maintaining the certification and attending or designating a proxy for the SlamMaster meetings. SlamMasters are the primary point of contact between local slam venues and PSi, and have access to the SlamMaster forums at www.poetryslam.com. While some venues are run by committee, no more than two persons can be registered as SlamMaster of a venue in question, and each slam is allotted a single vote at SlamMaster meetings.

SlamMasters are required to uphold the PSi Equal Opportunity Statement to maintain their venue’s certification, as well as the SlamMaster Code of Conduct to maintain their role as SlamMaster.

**SlamMaster Code of Conduct**
*By being a SlamMaster of Poetry Slam, Inc. (PSi) Certified or Registered Venue, I agree to the following statements:*

I will know and understand the obligations stated in the PSi Values Statement and Member Code of Conduct, and the ideals expressed therein, and I will strive to incorporate them in my daily life.

I will uphold the PSi Equal Opportunity Statement in managing my venue.

If I should ban a PSi member from participating in and/or attending my venue, I will report the member’s name, the reason for the ban, and the length of the ban to the Executive Director or to a member of the Executive Council of PSi.

I understand that I must complete PSi SlamMaster Training annually to register, certify or re-certify/re-register my venue and maintain eligibility for participating in PSi events.
Equal Opportunity Statement

1. To provide a poetry event which is open to all people regardless of race, color, gender, sexual orientation, lifestyle, class, national origin, religion, ethnicity, age, or disability;
2. That Poetry Slam, Inc. will permit a registered venue to serve a specific segment of the population (e.g. an all women’s Poetry Slam) provided that the organizers demonstrate a need for such an event within that community to PSI, and provided that the municipality or geographical area in question is already represented by a regular Poetry Slam series open to all participants. Exceptions are also made for venues where local laws prohibit minors, or physical characteristics of the building cannot accommodate everyone. Demonstrable effort should be made to provide an opportunity for any legally protected group to participate, where no other local options to participate in a Poetry Slam exist. It is understood that Poetry Slam events which are open to all are given preference in selection for the National Poetry Slam;
3. That the SlamMaster must provide team members with a National Poetry Slam rulebook before participating in any sanctioned National Poetry Slam event, and encourage team members to read and understand the rules and guidelines;
4. To create a fair and equitable Poetry Slam while providing leadership which encourages, illuminates and supports established standards of good-sportsmanship;
5. To provide, to the best of his or her ability, a professional working environment for all poets and audience members;
6. To provide an atmosphere of mutual support and encouragement in which poets are invited to develop, network and grow;
7. To provide an atmosphere in which freedom of speech, self-determination, and pursuit of creative excellence is an inalienable right. It is understood that audience members not in competition or affiliated with the venues organization are unregulated;
8. To endeavor to create an environment in which all poets in good standing with PSI are allowed to pursue their craft peacefully and without censure;
9. To do his or her best to be a good host by providing necessary local information relevant to his or her guest poets travel, including but not limited to information about local hotels, restaurants and other points of interest;

10. To agree to comply with local, state and federal laws pertaining to individual civil rights and sexual harassment and to do his or her best to provide a safe environment for all participants. When artistic and creative expression on stage during a performance conflicts with legal statutes regarding physical or sexual harassment, it is understood that the poet may be creatively representing a voice or point of view other than his or her own and is not necessarily espousing the point of view of the poem and the poets rights to creative expression shall remain in effect.
Win and You’re In Structure for NPS

Win and You’re In (W&YI) is a system adopted by SlamMasters in 2006 for certified venues that prioritizes access to the National Poetry Slam.

Rules:
- Only certified venues are eligible for NPS, therefore venues must certify for the next NPS year before engaging in a Win & You’re In bout.
- Certified venues will formulate W&YI teams of four or five PSi member poets. The poets representing the venue do not have to be the same poets representing the venue at NPS.
- No PSi member may volunteer to be a member of more than one W&YI team. Poets declare venue affiliation with their local SlamMaster.
- If a venue fields a team with non-PSi members or before it is certified, the results of the contest are declared null and void.
- Each SlamMaster is responsible for the validation of all competing teams in a bout. Additional penalties may apply from the Code of Honour for repeated violations.

How it works:
All bouts are arranged by local SlamMasters on the local level from an available list of certified venues. (List will be posted and updated frequently on SlamMaster Files Forum.) Certified Venues may compete against any other certified venue by mutual agreement.

No venue is obligated to participate in this process. If they don’t participate, their venue’s registration for NPS is considered only after all other certified venues that participated in a W&YI bout are registered.

Registration for NPS will be prioritized as follows:
1. Certified Venues that beat two other certified venues in one or more four-poet team slam(s) and have no losses.
2. Certified Venues that beat two other certified venues in one or more four-poet team slam(s) and have one loss.
3. Certified Venues that beat one other certified venue in one or more four-poet team slam(s) and have two losses.
4. Certified Venues that beat one other certified venue in one or more four-
poet team slam(s) and have only one loss.
5. Certified Venues that beat one other certified venue in one or more four-poet team slam(s) and have no losses.
6. Certified Venues that have lost to two other certified venues in one or more four-poet team slam(s) and have no wins.
7. Certified Venues that have lost to one other certified venue in one or more four-poet team slam(s) and have no wins.
8. Teams that have not participated in a W&YI bout.

Structure:
Win & You’re In Bouts can be 2, 3 or 4 team events.

Two team bouts yield a one-win team and a one-loss team. Three team bouts yield a two win team (1\textsuperscript{st}) a one win – one loss team (2\textsuperscript{nd}), and a two-loss team (3\textsuperscript{rd}).

Because no certified venue can have more than two wins or two losses, four team bouts qualify two teams: 1\textsuperscript{st} (two wins), 2\textsuperscript{nd} (two wins) and one loss, 3\textsuperscript{rd} place has a record of 1-2 and 4\textsuperscript{th} place will have a record of 0-2.

Additionally, because of the number of wins and losses more than four certified venues in a single competition is both unnecessary and undesirable and therefore prohibited. Events of five or more certified venues are prohibited (for these purposes only) until the number of wins necessary to get to NPS is raised.

Teams with an existing record of either one win or one loss may not accept an invitation to a four-team meet. They may participate in duals or triples only.

Timeline:
All certified venues will have completed the process between October 1 and April 1.
All certified venues with 2 wins are placed on the list for NPS.
All certified venues with 2 losses are placed on the waiting list for NPS.

The waiting list will be used to fill out the remainder of the field (EC will
determine the number of teams invited to NPS each year).

**Waitlist Priority:**
Specific criteria to bring venues off the waiting list to be invited to NPS will include:

- Newly certified venues (limited for these purposes to 4 guaranteed each year). If there are fewer than 4 new slams in a given certification year, the extra slot(s) will be returned to the general admission process.
- Number of years certified since attendance at last NPS (a team is currently guaranteed to attend NPS at least every third year as long as they participate in W&YI).
- Unreasonably remote venues (currently defined as Hawaii, Mexico City, and Paris) will be given guaranteed access to NPS every other year.

Distance to nearest slam will be a tiebreaker.

This system is based on two wins until there are more than twice as many certified venues as slots available for NPS teams. Three wins until there are more than 2.5 times as many certified venues as slots at NPS. Four wins until there are more than three times as many certified venues. Etc. (e.g. If we have 75 teams at NPS, we have two wins for W&YI if we have 150 or fewer certified slams, we have three wins if there are 188 or fewer certified slam, etc.)

Protests are resolved on site locally by a person agreed upon by both or all SlamMasters of the teams involved. This agreement shall be made in writing BEFORE the beginning of the event. The SlamMaster’s name will appear on the standard W&YI Bout Reporting form. Standard NPS rules apply. Once a venue secures a slot in NPS, it will formulate the NPS team using existing rules and structures.
Win & You’re In Bout - Results

Location: Date: 

Team A Venue: SlamMaster: 

Poet 1 Name (Legal and otherwise)
Poet 2 Name (Legal and otherwise)
Poet 3 Name (Legal and otherwise)
Poet 4 Name (Legal and otherwise)

Team B Venue: SlamMaster: 

Poet 1 Name (Legal and otherwise)
Poet 2 Name (Legal and otherwise)
Poet 3 Name (Legal and otherwise)
Poet 4 Name (Legal and otherwise)

Winning Team: 
Signature Signature 

______________________ ________________________
SlamMaster A SlamMaster B

______________________ ________________________
Signature Ultimate Mediator of Protests (U.M.P.)

return this signed form to executivedirector@poetryslam.com
AGREEMENT TO ENGAGE IN A “WIN & YOU’RE IN” MATCH (TWO-TEAM)

WHEREAS the undersigned wish to qualify for PSi's National Poetry Slam, and WHEREAS PSi requires participation in the “Win & You’re In” process to qualify for the (year) ______________________ National Poetry Slam, NOW THEREFORE

________________________ Poetry Slam, represented by its SlamMaster, __
________________________ and
________________________ Poetry Slam, represented by its SlamMaster, __
________________________ agree to hold a two-

team “Win & You’re In” match on

(Date) ____________, at (Time) ____________, at (Location)
________________________

Both signatories to this contract acknowledge that failure to appear by (number) ____________ _ minutes before show time constitutes a forfeit on the part of the Poetry Slam who does not appear promptly and shall be recorded as a loss for the forfeiting team and a win for the team that appears on time.

If both teams appear on time, a bout of four poems from each team (4x2), scored on a scale of 0-10 points each by randomly selected judges from the audience, in accordance with current PSi rules shall determine the winner. The NPS tiebreaker rules are in effect for breaking ties within the context of this bout.

Following the conclusion of the bout, ______ (Name of SlamMaster) of ______________________ Poetry Slam agrees to notify PSi of the results of this bout by e-mail to the Secretary of PSi or the Executive Director of PSi.

Both SlamMasters agree that their team does not have two wins or two losses in a "Win & You're In" bout they participated in previously for the current "Win & You're In" period, and that they are eligible to compete under the "Win & You're In" system. They also agree that their
venue is a currently active PSi certified or registered venue in good standing.

Both SlamMasters agree that all four members of each of their teams are current active members of PSi in good standing and that no member of either team is also a member of another team for the “Win & You’re In” process. Anyone may be a member of any other team for any other purpose. The names of each poet from each team shall be recorded legibly on the reverse of this document, with a clear indication of which team each poet represents.

If one of the teams in “Win & You’re In” bout fields a team with non-PSI members or before it is certified, the results of the contest are null and void. Each SlamMaster is responsible for the validation of all competing teams in the “Win & You’re In” bout.

Further, both SlamMasters agree that, should a protest of the rules of Poetry Slam be lodged in regard to this match, the services of (Name) __________________________ shall be utilized as the final authority to adjudicate the dispute. No appeal is possible beyond his/her authority in this matter.

Signed this ________________ day of ________________, 20__ by
__________________________, SlamMaster of
_________________________ Poetry Slam and

__________________________, SlamMaster of
_________________________ Poetry Slam.
AGREEMENT TO ENGAGE IN A “WIN & YOU’RE IN” MATCH (MULTI-TEAM)

WHEREAS the undersigned wish to qualify for PSi’s National Poetry Slam, and WHEREAS PSi requires participation in the “Win & You’re In” process to qualify for the (year) __________________________ National Poetry Slam, NOW THEREFORE

________________________ Poetry Slam, represented by its SlamMaster, __________________________ and
________________________ Poetry Slam, represented by its SlamMaster, __________________________ and
________________________ Poetry Slam, represented by its SlamMaster, __________________________ and
________________________ Poetry Slam, represented by its SlamMaster, __________________________ agree to hold
a multi-team “Win & You’re In” match on
(Date)______________________, at (Time)____________, at (Location)
______________________________.

All signatories to this contract acknowledge that failure to appear by (number) __________ minutes before show time constitutes a forfeit on the part of any Poetry Slam who does not appear promptly and shall be recorded as a loss for the forfeiting team(s) and a win for the team(s) that appears on time.

If all teams appear on time, a bout of four poems from each team (4x3 or 4x4), scored on a scale of 0-10 points each by randomly selected judges from the audience, in accordance with current PSi rules shall determine the winner. The NPS tiebreaker rules are in effect for breaking ties within the context of this bout.
Following the conclusion of the bout, ______ (Name of SlamMaster) of ________________ Poetry Slam agrees to notify PSi of the results of this bout by e-mail to the Secretary of PSi or the Executive Director of PSi.

All SlamMasters agree that their team does not have two wins or two
losses in a "Win & You're In" bout they participated in previously for the current "Win & You're In" period, and that they are eligible to compete under the "Win & You're In" system. They also agree that their venue is a currently active PSI certified or registered venue in good standing. The names of each poet from each team shall be recorded legibly on the reverse of this document, with a clear indication of which team each poet represents.

All SlamMasters agree that all four members of each of their teams are current active members of PSI in good standing and that no member of any team is also a member of another team for the “Win & You’re In” process. If one of the teams in “Win & You’re In” bout fields a team with non-PSI members or before it is certified, the results of the contest are null and void. Each SlamMaster is responsible for the validation of all competing teams in the “Win & You’re In” bout.

Further, all SlamMasters agree that, should a protest of the rules of Poetry Slam be lodged in regard to this match, the services of (Name) ___ shall be utilized as the final authority to adjudicate disputes. No appeal is possible beyond his/her authority in this matter.

Signed this________________________day of________________________, 20___ by
_____________________________________, SlamMaster of
_____________________________________, SlamMaster of
_____________________________________, SlamMaster of
_____________________________________, SlamMaster of
_____________________________________, SlamMaster of
_____________________________________, SlamMaster of
_____________________________________, SlamMaster of

_____________________________________, Poetry Slam and

_____________________________________, Poetry Slam and

_____________________________________, Poetry Slam and

_____________________________________, Poetry Slam.
Events Info

Official MC Spiel
Welcome Everyone, this is a Poetry Slam. My name is [say your name clearly] and I will be your MC for the evening. The poetry slam is a competition invented in the 1980s by a Chicago construction worker named Marc Smith [“So what.”] in which performed poetry is judged by five members of the audience. Poets have three minutes to present their original work and may choose to do so accompanied by other members of their team. The judges will then score the piece anywhere from 0 to 10, evaluating such qualities as performance, content, and originality. The high and low scores of each performance are tossed, and the middle three are added giving the performer their score. Points are deducted for violating the three-minute time limit. We beseech the judges to remain un-swayed by the audience—audience, try to sway the judges—and score each poet by the same set of criteria, ignoring whatever boisterous reaction your judgment elicits. Audience: Let the judges and the poets know how you feel about the job that they are doing, but be respectful in your exuberance; there could be no show without them. Now let me introduce you to the judges.

Judge Instructions
You have been enlisted in the service of poetry. This is supposed to be fun, and we don’t expect you to be an expert, but we can offer certain guidelines that might help to make this more fun for everyone involved, especially you.

We use the word “poem” to include text and performance. Some say you should assign a certain number of points for a poem’s literary merit and a certain number of points for the poet’s performance. Others feel that you are experiencing the poem only through the performance, and it may be impossible to separate the two. You will give each poem only one score.

Trust your gut and give the better poem the better score.

Be fair. We all have our personal prejudices, but try to suspend yours for the duration of the slam. On the other hand, it’s okay to have a prejudice that favors the true and the beautiful over the mundane and superficial, the fascinating and enchanting over the boring and pedestrian.
It’s hard not to be influenced by the audience, just try to stay true to your scoring standards regardless of what the audience says.

The audience may boo you, that’s their prerogative; as long as the better poem gets the better score, you’re doing your job well.

Be consistent with yourself. If you give the first poem a seven and the other judges give it a nine, that doesn’t mean you should give the second poem a nine—unless it’s a lot better than the first poem. In fact, if it’s not as good as the first poem, we count on you to give it a lower score.

Although the high and low scores will be thrown out, don’t ever make a joke out of your score thinking that it doesn’t really matter. A poem about geometry does not automatically deserve $\pi$ as a score. Nor does one about failing a breathalyzer test deserve 0.08.

You may feel the urge to allow your scores to rise as the night progresses. That’s called “Score Creep.” But don’t give in to that urge. As long as you stay consistent, you’re doing your job well.

The poets have worked hard to get here; treat them with respect. They are the show, not you (although there could be no show without you). All of us thank you for having the courage to put your opinions on the line.
THE RULES OF THE NATIONAL POETRY SLAM

PSi gratefully acknowledges our “Guru of the Gray Area,” Taylor Mali, the primary author of (and some say, impetus for) these rules, as well as the SlamMasters’ Council who developed and adopted them.

“I have to submit to much in order to pacify the touchy tribe of poets”
- Horace, 14 B.C.

These rules have been revised and tweaked at every SlamMasters’ meeting since the first Chicago National Poetry Slam in 1991. Some debates have been ongoing for more than a decade. Loopholes have continually been closed, and many gray areas have been made either black or white. In the process, new loopholes and gray areas were probably created. But the rulebook was never intended to put an end to the healthy controversy that has always been an integral part of the slam. It will always be an attempt to agree on the wording (if not the spirit) of the rules of the National Poetry Slam as well as the consequences and penalties for breaking those rules. All we can hope for is to make the playing field as level as our trust in one another will allow.

These rules, along with the Code of Honour, constitute a body of standards by which we agree to engage each other in this wacky thing we call Poetry Slam.

I. POEMS & PERFORMANCE

1) Poems can be on any subject and in any style.
2) Each poet must perform work that s/he has created.
3) No props.

Generally, poets are allowed to use their given environment and the accoutrements it offers microphones, mic stands, the stage itself, chairs on stage, a table or bar top, the aisle as long as these accoutrements are available to other competitors as well. The rule concerning props is not intended to squelch the spontaneity, unpredictability, or on-the-fly choreography that people love about the slam; its intent is to keep the focus on the words rather than objects. Refer to Section V (Definitions) for further clarification on what is and is not a prop. Teams or individuals
who inadvertently use a prop (for example, a timely yet unwitting grab at a necklace) can be immediately penalized two points if the MC of the bout deems the effect of the violation to have been appreciable, but sufficiently lacking in specific intent. A formal protest need not be lodged before the MC can penalize a poet or team in this way, however, the decision of the MC can be appealed after the bout. Teams or individuals whose use of props in a poem appears to be more calculating and the result of a specific intent to enhance, illustrate, underscore, or otherwise augment the words of the poem will be given a retroactive score for the poem equal to two points less than the lowest scoring poem in that bout.

This deduction, which can only be applied after a formal protest has been lodged against the offending team, will not be made by the MC, but by a special committee assembled for this purpose.

4) No musical instruments or pre-recorded music.
5) No costumes. The protest committee may apply a two-point deduction for violation of the costume rules.

**Sampling.**

It is acceptable for a poet to incorporate, imitate, or otherwise “signify on” the words, lyrics, or tune of someone else (commonly called “sampling”) in his own work. If he is only riffing off another’s words, he should expect only healthy controversy; if on the other hand, he is ripping off their words, he should expect scornful contumely.

**The No Repeat Rule.**

A poem may be used only once during the entire tournament, with the exception of finals, where poems used earlier in the tournament may be repeated.

**The Three-Minute Rule.**

No performance should last longer than three minutes. The time begins when the performance begins, which may well be before the first utterance is made. A poet is certainly allowed several full seconds to adjust the microphone and get settled and ready, but as soon as s/he makes a connection with the audience (“Hey look, she’s been standing there for 10 seconds and hasn't even moved”), the timekeeper can start the clock. The poet does not have an unlimited amount of “mime time.”
Poets with ambiguous beginnings and endings to their performances should seek out the timekeeper at each venue to settle on a starting & ending time. After three minutes, there is a 10-second grace period (up to and including 3:10:00). Starting at 3:10:01, a penalty is automatically deducted from each poet’s overall score according to the following schedule:

- 3:10 and under: no penalty
- 3:10:01 - 3:20: -0.5
- 3:20:01 - 3:30: -1.0
- 3:30:01 - 3:40: -1.5
- 3:40:01 - 3:50: -2.0

and so on [-0.5 for every 10 seconds over 3:10]
(An additional 10 seconds is permitted in the finals without penalty.)

The announcement of the time penalty and its consequent deduction will be made by the MC or scorekeeper after all the judges have reported their scores. The judges should not even be told that a poet went overtime until it is too late for them to adjust their scores.

**Maximum Time Limit.**
After four minutes, only the MC must stop a poet from continuing to perform.

**Influencing the crowd before the bout begins.**
Poets are allowed to talk casually with anyone in the crowd before the bout begins (except the judges, if they have already been chosen). They are not, however, allowed to give anything to the audience or have anyone do this for them. Furthermore, inside the venue (in the presence or within earshot of the audience) they must not act in any way that would make more of an impression than another competitor waiting for the competition to begin. Poets who violate this rule will be given one warning by the MC, Bout Manager, or house manager. Further violation will result in a two-point penalty for that poet’s score (or his team).

**Rotations.**
Each bout will have 4 rotations. In each rotation, each team will perform once. Every rotation must represent the work of a different primary author. Refer to Section VI (Definitions) for further clarification on primary authorship. No individual poet may perform solo more than once in a bout, except in the case of a tiebreaker. Teams violating this rule will receive a score of zero for the offending rotation.

II. TEAMS

Team Eligibility.
NPS is open to poets 21 and older. The Host City may elect to have NPS be open to poets 18 and older the year that they host NPS. All certified/registered venues are expected to uphold the Equal Opportunity Statement. Team members must be chosen through some form of competition; how that competition is structured is up to the local venue or SlamMaster so long as anyone who considers him/herself to be a part of the community fielding the slam team has the competitive opportunity to join it.

Because Poetry Slam is growing, not all certified venues can necessarily be included in the National Poetry Slam. To accommodate as many poets as possible, from as diverse a geographic base as can be achieved, some certified Poetry Slams will be encouraged to share an invitation to the National Poetry Slam. A person participating at the NPS can only be a member of one and only one team.

Team Pieces.
Duos, trios, quartets and quintets (otherwise known as team, group, or collaborative pieces) are allowed, even encouraged, so long as all of the primary authors perform them. Refer to Section V (Definitions) for further clarification on primary authorship.

1. A group piece may feature two to five performers.

2. All primary authors of a given poem must take part in the performance of that poem. However, not all performers of a given poem need to claim primary authorship of that poem. In this way, it is possible for one person to claim primary authorship over a three-person performance, and it is also possible for three people to share primary
authorship of a three-person group piece. It is not, however, possible for three people to share authorship of a piece with only one performer.

3. Every poet who performs during a bout must be able to claim primary authorship of at least one poem during that bout.

4. By the end of a bout, each team's poem selection must represent at least four primary authors, and each poem must represent a different primary author. If a five-person team wishes to have all of its members perform during a bout, at least one of the four poems performed during the bout must have two or more primary authors such that all team members are represented.

5. A poet who claims sole authorship of a poem performed in a bout may not claim sole authorship of any other poem during that bout, regardless of the number of performers in either poem, except in the case of a tie breaker. They may, however, share authorship. Teams that violate this rule will receive a score of zero for the offending rotation.

Team Designation.
By the end of the registration period all teams must designate 4 or 5 poets as their team members. Teams may use their poets in any combination allowed by all other rules in their preliminary rounds. There shall be no substitutions for registered team members after the end of the registration period without prior approval of the Tournament Director. Any team violating this rule will be disqualified.

III. JUDGING & SCORING

Judging.
All efforts shall be made to select five judges who will be fair. Competing poets, coaches, SlamMasters, and any persons who are associated with a specific poet or group of poets are not eligible to judge.

Once chosen, the judges will: 1) be given a set of printed instructions on how to judge a poetry slam, 2) have a private, verbal crash course by the MC or Bout Manager on the art of poetry slam judging (where they can ask questions), and 3) hear the standardized Official MC Spiel, which, among other things, will apprise the audience of their own
responsibilities as well as remind the judges of theirs.

Having heard, read, or otherwise experienced these three sets of instructions, a judge cannot be challenged over a score. Complaints, problems, and/or disagreements regarding the impartiality of the judges should be brought privately to the attention of the MC or Bout Manager BEFORE the bout begins. Having heard and understood the complaint, the Bout Manager or MC will then make a decision (also privately) that cannot be further challenged.

**Replacing a Judge.**

In the event that a judge leaves the bout, a replacement judge will be found and a sorbet poet will be selected to share a poem, which will not be scored, and the bout will continue normally. If there are any judging pairs, the pair will be split to replace the missing judge. The poet affected by the judge’s leaving will have the option to repeat their current poem or use a different one, and the poet will have the ability to repeat the initial poem if they advance to Finals or semi-Finals.

**Scoring.**

The judges will give each poem a score from 0 to 10, with 10 being the highest or “perfect” score. They will be encouraged to use one decimal place in order to preclude the likelihood of a tie. Each poem will get five scores. The high and the low scores will be dropped and the remaining three scores will be added together. Team scores will be displayed or otherwise publicly available during the bout.

**Breaking Ties.**

If, at the conclusion of all rotations in a bout a tie exists for first place, each team tied for first place shall be required to send one more poem to the stage. The poem may be performed by any poet or poets on the teams who are tied, but the poem must not have been used in competition previously in this tournament.

Teams in the tiebreaker will draw for order. Judges will listen to all poems in the tie breaker rotation and at the conclusion of all poems, will assign a rank for each poem, starting with 1 for the best poem and increasing the rank by one for each additional poem in the rotation assigning each number exactly once (1 for the best, 2 for the second
best, 3 for the third, etc.). The poem with the lowest total rank wins the tiebreaker, and their team wins the bout.

If this results in another tie, judge preference will be used to determine the winner. Example: In a bout with a three-way tie see the table below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Poet A 1</th>
<th>Poet B</th>
<th>Poet C</th>
<th>Preference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Poet A</td>
<td>Each poem performed in such a circumstance shall be subject to the “no repeat” rule. No ties for higher than first place shall be broken.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Poet B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Poet B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Poet A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Poet A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Normal time penalties apply but will be enforced in the following manner. Instead of a numeric half point penalty per ten seconds over time, one rank will be added for each ten seconds over time.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Poet A 1</th>
<th>Poet B</th>
<th>Poet C</th>
<th>Preference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Poet A</td>
<td>While breaking a four-way tie, this process could result in a second tie in that case randomly eliminate the rank of one judge.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Poet B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Poet B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Poet A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Poet A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time Penalty</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ties in the Team Finals are not required to be broken. If a tie for first occurs on Finals night, the Bout Manager will confer with the coach or previously agreed upon representative for each team confidentially. If either of the teams elects to break the tie, the above is the procedure that they will use.

**Relative Strength.**
The top twenty teams in the preliminary rounds advance to the semi-finals. The teams are placed first by their total from the two preliminary bouts in which they performed. If they won the first bout (rank 1) and came in second in their last bout (rank 2), their total rank would be three (3). Often this results in ties, as many teams can receive the same total rank. To break ties, we employ the "Relative Strength" system.
At the end of preliminary rounds, the rank of every opponent a team has faced is averaged together, and that average is used for the tiebreaker.

For example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Team A, Bout 1</th>
<th>Team A, Bout 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Team A 2nd</td>
<td>Team A 1st</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team B 1st + 3rd</td>
<td>Team E 2nd + 1st</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team C 3rd +2nd</td>
<td>Team F 3rd + 1st</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team D 4th + 4th</td>
<td>Team G 4th + 3rd</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Opponent's total ranks = 31, Average Rank = 5.17
So on the final score sheet, Team A would have a rank of 3 with 5.17 tiebreakers.

In determining semi-final placement, Relative Strength is used as a tie-breaker. Teams with lower relative strength ranks are seeded higher than teams with higher relative strength ranks. In the event that a second tie-breaker is necessary, raw scores are used.

IV. OFFICIALS MCs.
The MC will announce to the audience each poet’s name and the team he is from. She will also require that all judges hold their scores up at the same time and that no judge changes his score after it is up. She is expected to move the show along quickly and keep the audience engaged and interested in the competition. Since she must be completely impartial, any witty banter directed at individual poets, poems, teams, or scores is inappropriate. Even genuine enthusiasm has to be carefully directed. The safest thing to do is encourage the audience to express their own opinions.

V. DEFINITIONS
Bout: a competition between two or more teams.

Order: refers to the sequencing of poets during a bout. Teams draw for their spot on a schematic designed to give each team a balanced performance order.

Primary Author(s): Those writers/performers whose contributions to a
particular group piece are so fundamental that they have at least as much of a right as any other writer/performer of the piece to claim ownership of it at any time. Primary authors must perform their pieces; if a writer/performer is watching other members of his team perform a group piece, then any contributions s/he might have made to it must not be significant enough to constitute primary authorship.

**Prop:** an object or article of clothing introduced into a performance with the effect of enhancing, illustrating, underscoring, or otherwise augmenting the words of the poem.

**Rotation:** when each team’s first poet has read in a bout, the first rotation is over. There are as many rotations in a bout as there are opportunities for each team to perform.

**Rotation in Prelims:** ABCD/CADB/DCBA/BDAC

**Rotation in Semis:** the rotation order of semi finals goes from high to low, not cumulative, and if two teams have a tied score in the previous round, they then go in reverse of the order they went in.

**Round:** a complete set of bouts in which every team that is still eligible to compete does so. Eligibility to compete in successive rounds may be contingent upon success in earlier rounds.

**Team Piece:** a poem performed by two, three, four or all five members of the same team.

**Costume:** A costume is any piece of clothing or accessory that is worn on the stage which is not part of the poet’s regular street clothing. A costume is worn to enhance the performance. A clear indication of costume would be something that a poet changes into after arriving at the venue specifically for the poem or if the poet wears a camouflage cap to perform a hunting poem and then takes it off to do a poem where the poet doesn’t portray a hunter. Taking off outerwear (coat, jacket, boots, hat, scarf, etc.)should not be considered when determining costuming.

**VI. SOME FAQs**
1. **Can a team protest if they do not have enough working microphones on stage?**
   No, technical difficulties cannot be anticipated, nor can they be immediately fixed. For example, if a mic goes out during a performance it would probably be worse for the performer to have the tech person stop his/her performance to work on the mic.

2. **Can I put a poet on stage who is not a primary author?**
   Yes and no. Teams are encouraged to perform multi-voiced poems, for the good of the art and the good of the audience. Often, a poet who could not be considered a primary author is used to add to a performance, much like a back-up singer or dancer might be used. Though (as of the Spring 2008 SlamMaster's meeting) this is a contentious point, use of these back-up poets is allowed. The majority of SlamMaster’s stipulated that every poet who steps onto the stage at NPS must be a primary author somewhere in the bout, to discourage the potential practice of bringing a poet to NPS, then using them only for their vocal or physical talents, but not for their writing talent.

   To reiterate, YES a poet can perform in a group piece who is not a primary author of that piece, BUT the poet MUST perform in another rotation as a primary author.

3. **Doesn’t that make it harder to strategize?**
   Yes.

**MC**
As MC, it is your job to run the show, and you are therefore responsible for most of the aspects of getting the show going and keeping it successful.

- Please be at the venue at least an hour before the bout is scheduled to start. Check in with the Venue Manager so he/she knows you are there, and with the Bout Manager. The Venue Manager will be certain that all of the volunteers are there and that the sound and light systems are working. The bout Manager will assist you in all of the aspects of getting the show going and of recording all of the times and scores as you progress.
- One of your primary tasks (with help from the Bout Manager if you choose) is to line up five judges. You should find a fair mix of
male/ female, of age ranges, of people from a variety of places (meaning, if there are some out-of-towners there who are not
associated with any team, -any team - not just the one’s
competing in that bout.) Try to line up judges who are sitting in
locations spread around the venue, not all bunched up. Please
be certain to ask the judges a series of questions that will assure
you of their impartiality, such as whether they know or have had
relations with any of the poets in this bout. Or what city they are
from, or especially if it is a bout that includes a Minneapolis team,
whether they have been to a slam before and if they have a
favorite poet who is going to perform in the bout. In other words,
please try to get a pool of judges that will be as fair and impartial
as possible.

• Introduce yourself to the scorers/ timekeepers. Let them know
how you like to read off the scores from the judges, low to high,
high to low, or most helpful to them if not a problem for you, the
three middle scores first, and then the high and the low, so they
have the scores they need to add right away.

• Choose a calibration poet not associated with the tournament.

• The host city or PSi will have given prior instructions about who
to choose.

• Call representatives of each team to the stage to draw for order
of performance. (Draw orders vary from contest to contest.)

• As you finish the draw with the team representatives, call the
judges to the side of the stage for a brief meeting. The team
representatives may meet the judges at this point to see if there
are any big problems. A team may not veto a judge but may
raise an issue to you before the round starts, upon which you
should use your best judgment to decide.

• Be certain that each team has the color-coded cards to indicate
who is performing.

• As you begin the rotation, introduce the judges, the scorers, the
Bout Manager. Read the Official MC Spiel, and begin with the
calibration poet. Be aware that your comments influence the
judges (positively or negatively) so try to stay as impartial as
possible.

• Once the poetry begins, please keep yourself in position to see
and hear the performance on the stage, as you are the first level
of deciding protests that may be raised.
• If a protest is raised, and the violation, or lack of violation, is clear and obvious to you and the Bout Manager and you have the jurisdiction to rule, you may decide the matter immediately. If there is a violation that calls for a specific penalty in the rules, you may apply it. If there is any question of the validity of the protest, tell the teams involved that the official protest process will be followed and that they should each meet with you at the conclusion of the bout. (Please read the entire protest process info sheet before you get to the bout.) You should then make the following statement from the stage:

**MC COMMENT UPON PROTEST BEING RAISED AND NOT RESOLVED WITHIN THE COMPETITION:**

“An issue has been raised about one of the poems or performances that you have seen in this bout. Tournament Headquarters has a process for resolving this issue, and it will not interfere with the remainder of this round. Each of the teams involved in the issue has been told, and they should see me at the conclusion of this bout.”

• Please be familiar with the Protest Process and follow it as well as possible. This is our way of trying to deal fairly with all of the issues and also of keeping the performance of poetry as the most important element of the night.

• At the conclusion of the bout, please ask the teams to send representative to the stage to sign the Bout Manager’s record of the scores.

• Also at the end of the Bout, be certain to collect the markers and cards from the judges.

**BOUGHTMANAGER**

Your job as Bout Manager is to be the right hand of the MC and to be the official record keeper of the bout.

• Please be at the venue where you are working at least one hour before the bout is scheduled to begin. Tell the Venue Manager that you are there and find the MC to begin your tasks.

• Locate the scorers/ timekeepers; be sure they are in a workable spot for giving the scores to the MC during the show.
• Help the MC line up judges for the bout. One of your primary tasks is to line up five judges. You should find a diverse group of genders, races, age ranges, and of people from a variety of places (meaning, if there are some out-of-towners there who are not associated with any team - any team, not just the ones competing in that bout). Finding judge pairs is a great idea - in case a judge needs to be replaced later, splitting the pair is the best immediate option. If no judging pairs are available, refer to the judge replacement rules. Try to line up judges who are sitting in locations spread around the venue, not all bunched up. Please be certain to ask the judges a series of questions that will assure you of their impartiality, such as whether they know or have had relations with any of the poets in this bout. Or what city they are from, or especially if it is a bout that includes a host city team, whether they have been to a slam before and if they have a favorite poet who is going to perform in the bout. In other words, please try to get a pool of judges that will be as fair and impartial as possible.

• You will receive a packet of the Official Bout Sheets from the Venue Manager; give one each to the MC, and the 2 scorekeepers. You should be certain you have a spot where you may write down all of the pertinent information as the bout progresses. You need to be certain that each team and each poet’s name is recorded with the appropriate score. If there is a team piece performed in an individual’s slot, the word “GROUP” should appear next to the poet’s name on the bout sheet. If the group spot is not assigned to one individual at the time of the performance, be certain to get that info at the end of the bout.

• Be in the meetings that the MC has with the judges to explain their jobs, and in the meeting the MC has with the team representatives as they draw for performance order.

• Once the poetry begins, please keep yourself in position to see and hear the performance on the stage, as you are the first level of deciding protests that may be raised.

• If a protest is raised, and the violation (or lack of violation) is clear and obvious to you and to the MC, you together may decide the matter immediately. If there is a violation that calls for a specific penalty in the rules, you may apply it. If there is any question of the validity of the protest, tell the teams involved that the official protest process will be followed and that they should each meet with you and
the MC at the conclusion of the bout.

- Please be familiar with the Protest Process and follow it as well as possible. This is our way of trying to deal fairly with all of the issues and also of keeping the performance of poetry as the most important element of the night.
- At the conclusion of the bout, please be certain the team representative signs the Official Bout Sheet with all of the scores and times recorded on it.
- Also at the end of the bout, collect all of the paper work from the scorekeeper/ timers and be sure it coincides with all of the scores that you have recorded. Give all of this paperwork to the Venue Manager as soon as you have it collected so he may get it to headquarters.
- Also at the end of the Bout, be certain to collect the markers and cards from the judges,
- Please do anything else that would help the bout run smoothly and efficiently.
The Rules of the Individual World Poetry Slam and Women of the World Poetry Slam

“The void yields up nothing. You have to be a great poet to make it ring.”
- Jules Renard, 1906.

I. POEMS & PERFORMANCE

1) Poems can be on any subject and in any style.
2) Each poet must perform work that s/he has created.
3) No props. Generally, poets are allowed to use their given environment and the accouterments it offers microphones, mic stands, the stage itself, chairs on stage, a table or bar top, the aisle as long as these accouterments are available to other competitors as well. The rule concerning props is not intended to squelch the spontaneity, unpredictability, or on-the-fly choreography that people love about the slam; its intent is to keep the focus on the words rather than objects. Refer to Section V (Definitions) for further clarification on what is and is not a prop. Poets who inadvertently use a prop (for example, a timely yet unwitting grab at a necklace) can be immediately penalized two points if the MC of the bout deems the effect of the violation to have been appreciable, but sufficiently lacking in specific intent. A formal protest need not be lodged before the MC can penalize a poet in this way, however, the decision of the MC can be appealed after the bout. Individuals whose use of props in a poem appears to be more calculated and the result of a specific intent to enhance, illustrate, underscore, or otherwise augment the words of the poem will be given a retroactive score for the poem equal to two points less than the lowest scoring poem in that bout. This deduction, which can only be applied after a formal protest has been lodged against the offending poet, will not be made by the MC, but by the Protest Committee.
4) No musical instruments or pre-recorded music, a poem which violates this rule will be assessed a score of zero.
5) No costumes. The Protest Committee may apply a two-point deduction for violation of the costume rule.

Sampling.
It is acceptable for a poet to incorporate, imitate, or otherwise “signify on” the words, lyrics, or tune of someone else (commonly called “sampling”)
in the poets own work. If the poet is only riffing off another’s words, the poet should expect only healthy controversy; if on the other hand, the poet is ripping off their words, the poet should expect scornful contumely.

**The No Repeat Rule.**
A poem may be used only once during the entire tournament.

**The Time Limit.**
No performance should last longer than the time limit specified for the rotation. Time begins when the performance begins, which may be before the first utterance is made. A poet is certainly allowed several full seconds to adjust the microphone and get settled, but as soon as s/he makes a connection with the audience (“Hey look, she’s been standing there for 10 seconds and hasn’t even moved”), the timekeeper can start the clock. The poet does not have an unlimited amount of “mime time.” Poets with ambiguous beginnings and endings to their performances should seek out the timekeeper at each venue to settle on a starting & ending time. After x minutes, there is a 10-second grace period (for example: (in the 3 minute rotation) up to and including 3:10:00). Starting at one hundredth of a second over the grace period, a penalty is automatically deducted from each poet’s overall score according to the following schedule: Where x is the time limit for the rotation:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>x:10 and under</th>
<th>no penalty</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>x:10:01 x:20</td>
<td>-0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>x:20:01 x:30</td>
<td>-1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>x:30:01 x:40</td>
<td>-1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>x:40:01 x:50</td>
<td>-2.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

and so on [-0.5 for every 10 seconds over x:10]

An additional 10 seconds is permitted in the finals without penalty.

The announcement of the time penalty and its consequent deduction will be made by the MC or scorekeeper after all the judges have reported their scores. The judges should not even be told that a poet went overtime until it is too late for them to adjust their scores.

**Maximum Time Limit.**
After one minute beyond the time limit for the round, only the MC must
stop a poet from continuing to perform.

**Influencing the Crowd Before the Bout Begins.**
Poets are allowed to talk casually with anyone in the crowd before the bout begins (except the judges, if they have already been chosen). They are not, however, allowed to give anything to the audience or have anyone do this for them. Furthermore, inside the venue (in the presence or within earshot of the audience) they must not act in any way that would make more of an impression than another competitor waiting for the competition to begin. Poets who violate this rule will be given one warning by the MC, Bout Manager, or house manager. Further violation will result in a two-point penalty for that poet’s score.

**The Individual Rule.**
iWPS and WOWps are individual competitions. Any less than genuine effort to elicit a response from the audience performed by anyone other than the performer may result in the poet’s disqualification. Poets are cautioned to warn their entourage to make no attempt to sway audience or judges on their behalf.

**II. TOURNAMENT**

**Eligibility.**
iWPS Any PSI Member aged 21 and older is eligible to compete. The Host City may elect to have iWPS be open to poets 18 and older the year that they host iWPS. All certified/registered venues are expected to uphold the Equal Opportunity Statement. Poetry Slam, Inc. will set entrance requirements, and restrictions on a yearly basis. Please check poetryslam.com for eligibility requirements prior to the event.

WOWps Any PSI Member aged 21 and older who lives her life as a woman is eligible to compete. The Host City may elect to have WOWps be open to poets 18 and older the year that they host WOWps. Poetry Slam, Inc. will set entrance requirements, and restrictions on a yearly basis. Please check poetryslam.com for eligibility requirements prior to the event.

**III. JUDGING & SCORING**
Judging.
All efforts shall be made to select five judges who will be fair. Competing poets, coaches, SlamMasters, and any persons who are associated with a specific poet or group of poets are not eligible to judge.

Once chosen, the judges will: 1) be given a set of printed instructions on how to judge a poetry slam, 2) have a private, verbal crash course by the MC or Bout Manager on the art of poetry slam judging (where they can ask questions), and 3) hear the standardized Official MC Spiel, which, among other things, will apprise the audience of their own responsibilities as well as remind the judges of theirs.

Having heard, read, or otherwise experienced these three sets of instructions, a judge cannot be challenged over a score. Complaints, problems, and/or disagreements regarding the impartiality of the judges should be brought privately to the attention of the MC or Bout Manager BEFORE the bout begins. Having heard and understood the complaint, the Bout Manager or MC will then make a decision (also privately) that cannot be further challenged.

Replacing a Judge.
In the event that a judge leaves the bout, a replacement judge will be found and a sorbet poet will be selected to share a poem, which will not be scored, and the bout will continue normally. If there are any judging pairs, the pair will be split to replace the missing judge. The poet affected by the judge’s leaving will have the option to repeat their current poem or use a different one, and the poet will have the ability to repeat the initial poem if they advance to Finals or semi-Finals.

Scoring.
The judges will give each poem a score from 0 to 10, with 10 being the highest or “perfect” score. They will be encouraged to use one decimal place in order to preclude the likelihood of a tie. Each poem will get five scores. The high and the low scores will be dropped and the remaining three scores will be added together.

Breaking Ties.
If, at the conclusion of all rotations in a bout a tie exists for first place in the bout, each poet tied for first place shall be required to send one
more poem to the stage. A coin flip, or random draw will determine who
goes first in the tiebreaker. Judges will listen to each poem and score
the poems like every other poem in the bout. Normal time penalties
would apply. The poet with the highest scoring poem (after time
deductions) would win the bout. If this results in a second tie, judges will
be asked to choose the poet, whose tie-breaking poem they preferred.
Further ties resulting from this process will not be broken. Cumulative
points will not be affected by tie-breaking poems. Each poem performed
in such a circumstance shall be subject to the “no repeat” rule. No ties
for ranks other than first shall be broken. Ties in the finals are not
required to be broken, but if a poet elects to break the tie, the above is
the procedure they will use.

IV. OFFICIALS MCs.
The MC will announce to the audience each poet’s name. The MC will
also require that all judges hold their scores up at the same time and that
no judge changes his/her score after it is revealed. The MC is expected
to move the show along quickly and keep the audience engaged
and interested in the competition. Since the MC must be completely
impartial, any witty banter directed at individual poets, poems, or scores
is inappropriate. Even genuine enthusiasm has to be carefully directed.
The safest thing to do is encourage the audience to express their own
opinions.

V. DEFINITIONS

Bout: a competition between two or more poets.

Order: the schematic that determines the order in which poets will read.

Prop: an object or article of clothing introduced into a performance with
the effect of enhancing, illustrating, underscoring, or otherwise
augmenting the words of the poem.

Rotation: when each poet has read in a bout, the first rotation is over.
There are as many rotations in a bout as there are opportunities for
each poet to perform.

Round: a complete set of bouts in which every poet that is still eligible
to compete does so. Eligibility to compete in successive rounds may be contingent upon success in earlier rounds.

**Costume:** A costume is any piece of clothing or accessory that is worn on the stage which is not part of the poet’s regular street clothing. A costume is worn to enhance the performance. A clear indication of costume would be something that a poet changes into after arriving at the venue specifically for the poem or if the poet wears a camouflage cap to perform a hunting poem and then takes it off to do a poem where the poet doesn’t portray a hunter. Taking off outerwear (coat, jacket, boots, hat, scarf, etc.) should not be considered when determining costuming.

**VI. A Frequently Asked Question**

1. **Can a poet protest if they do not have a working microphone on stage?**
   No, technical difficulties cannot be anticipated, nor can they be immediately fixed. For example, if a mic goes out during a performance it would probably be worse for the performer to have the tech person stop his/her performance to work on the mic.
MC – PRELIMINARY BOUT
As MC, it is your job to run the show, and you are therefore responsible for most of the aspects of getting the show going and keeping it successful.

• Please be at the venue at least one hour before the bout is scheduled to start. Check in with the Venue Manager so he/she knows you are there, and with the Bout Manager. The Venue Manager will be certain that all of the volunteers are there and that the sound and light systems are working. The bout Manager will assist you in all of the aspects of getting the show going and of recording all of the times and scores as you progress.

• One of your primary tasks (with help from the Bout Manager if you choose) is to line up five judges. You should find a fair mix of male/female, of age ranges, of people from a variety of places (meaning, if there are some out-of-towners there who are not associated with any team, -any team - not just the one’s competing in that bout.) Try to line up judges who are sitting in locations spread around the venue, not all bunched up. Please be certain to ask the judges a series of questions that will assure you of their impartiality, such as whether they know or have had relations with any of the poets in this bout. Or what city they are from, or especially if it is a bout that includes a Minneapolis team, whether they have been to a slam before and if they have a favorite poet who is going to perform in the bout. In other words, please try to get a pool of judges that will be as fair and impartial as possible.

• Introduce yourself to the scorers/timekeepers. Let them know how you like to read off the scores from the judges,

• i.e. low to high, high to low, or most helpful to them if not a problem for you, the three middle scores first, and then the high and the low, so they have the scores they need to add right away.

• Performance order for the first rotation is on the bout sheet.

Second rotation is by score, high to low. (The highest scoring poet from the first rotation goes first in the second rotation).

• Choose a calibration poet not associated with the tournament.

• The host city or PSI will have given prior instruction about who to choose.

• As soon as they are selected, call the judges to the side of the stage for a brief meeting. The poets may view the judges at this point to
see if there are any problems. A poet may not veto a judge but may raise an issue to you before the round starts, upon which you should use your best judgment to decide.

- As you begin the rotation, introduce the judges, the scorers, the Bout Manager. Read the Official MC Spiel, and begin with the calibration poet. Be aware that your comments influence the judges (positively or negatively) so try to stay as impartial as possible.
- Once the poetry begins, please keep yourself in position to see and hear the performance on the stage, as you are the first level of deciding protests that may be raised.
- If a protest is raised, and the violation, or lack of violation, is clear and obvious to you and the Bout Manager, you may decide the matter immediately. If there is a violation that calls for a specific penalty in the rules, you may apply it. If there is any question of the validity of the protest, tell the poets involved that the official protest process will be followed and that they should each meet with you at the conclusion of the bout. (Please read the entire Protest Process info sheet before you get to the bout.) You should then make the following statement from the stage:

**MC COMMENT UPON PROTEST BEING RAISED AND NOT RESOLVED WITHIN THE COMPETITION:**

“An issue has been raised about one of the poems or performances that you have seen in this bout. Tournament Headquarters has a process for resolving this issue, and it will not interfere with the remainder of this round. Each of the poets involved in the issue has been told, and they should see me at the conclusion of this bout.”

- Please be familiar with the Protest Process and follow it as well as possible. This is our way of trying to deal fairly with all of the issues and also of keeping the performance of poetry as the most important element of the night.
- At the conclusion of the bout, please ask the poets to the stage to sign the Bout Manager’s record of the scores.
- Also at the end of the Bout, be certain to collect the markers and cards from the judges.
BOUT MANAGER – PRELIMINARY ROUNDS
Your job as Bout Manager is to be the right hand of the MC and to be the official record keeper of the bout.

- Please be at the venue where you are working at least one hour before the bout is scheduled to begin. Tell the Venue Manager that you are there and find the MC to begin your tasks.
- Locate the scorers/ timekeepers; be sure they are in a workable spot for giving the scores to the MC during the show.
- Help the MC line up judges for the bout.
- You will receive a packet of the Official Bout Sheets from the bout package or box; give one each to the MC, and the 2 scorekeepers. You should be certain you have a spot where you may write down all of the pertinent information as the bout progresses. You need to be certain that each poet’s name is recorded with the appropriate score.
- Be in the meetings that the MC has with the judges to explain their jobs, and in the meeting the MC has with poets.
- Once the poetry begins, please keep yourself in position to see and hear the performance on the stage, as you are the first level of deciding protests that may be raised.
- If a protest is raised, and the violation or lack of violation is clear and obvious to you and to the MC, you together may decide the matter immediately. If there is a violation that calls for a specific penalty in the rules, you may apply it. If there is any question of the validity of the protest, tell the poets involved that the official protest process will be followed and that they should each meet with you and the MC at the conclusion of the bout. (Please read the entire Protest Process info sheet before you get to the bout.)
- Please be familiar with the Protest Process and follow it as well as possible. This is our way of trying to deal fairly with all of the issues and also of keeping the performance of poetry as the most important element of the night.
- At the conclusion of the bout, please be certain the poets sign the Official Bout Sheet with all of the scores and times recorded on it.
- Also at the end of the bout, collect all of the paper work from the scorekeeper/timers and be sure it coincides with all of the scores that you have recorded. Give all of this paperwork to the Tournament Director.
- Also at the end of the Bout, be certain to collect the score
materials from the judges.

- Please do anything else that would help the Bout run smoothly and efficiently.
The Official Protest Process
All PSi events will continue the use of a Rules/Protest Committee.

A protest may be raised to the Bout Manager or to the MC during the course of the bout. If the rules violation, or lack of violation, is obvious, is not contentious, and has a penalty specified in the official rules of the slam, the MC and the Bout Manager may agree upon enforcement of the penalty and enact or dismiss the prescribed penalty. If there is any contention of the penalty at all, the MC shall announce the existence of a protest and inform everyone that it will not interfere with the procedure of the show, and that each of the parties involved should see her after the conclusion of the bout (see below). The show should continue, and the protest process shall be followed.

At the conclusion of the bout, the MC should gather as much information as possible from each side, limiting the discussion from each party to 5 minutes. If any party to the protest feels as if he/she has not been heard, he/she may fill out a written form that will go to the Protest Committee. The MC shall then inform each side that she will present both sides and her recommendation to the protest committee after the evening’s bouts are over. The MC and Bout Manager must attend protests from their bouts if possible. The MC should also inform all parties involved that if they wish to be heard by the Protest Committee after she has made her presentation, that they should appear at tournament headquarters after all bouts have been concluded. Once there, they will be given 5 to 10 minutes to make their point; remember the committee has already heard the details from the MC; the committee may then have a few questions for each side and then all parties will leave the room so that the committee may come to a fair conclusion.

If a protest is not raised during the course of the bout it may be presented to the MC or the Bout Manager within 15 minutes of the conclusion of the bout. At the earliest possible time the MC or the Bout Manager shall report to tournament headquarters with information about the issue that has been raised, so that the Protest Committee may meet and resolve the issue before scores are posted. If there is an issue that requires a statement from, or consultation with, another team, that team will be notified that a Protest Committee meeting will take place on the day that immediately follows the bout.
The Official Protest Form

If you have an issue with some aspect of a bout that you feel cannot be worked out in discussions with the MC or Bout Manager, then please tell us the following information. The protest process will begin and your concerns will be addressed this evening if we get this before midnight, or by mid-day tomorrow. You may hand this form to the MC, or the Bout Manager, or you may bring it to the Tournament Headquarters. You may be present when the committee meets if you wish to present your perspective on the events that caused you to file this protest. We will keep your oral presentation to about 5-10 minutes so that we may consider and decide this issue in a timely manner. Please be specific and concise here. Thank you for your concerns and for taking the time to present them.

DAY:

VENUE:

BOUT:

YOUR NAME:

YOUR TEAM:

OTHER INDIVIDUAL OR TEAM INVOLVED IN THIS ISSUE:

WHAT RULE DO YOU BELIEVE WAS BROKEN:

PLEASE EXPLAIN WHAT YOU SAW OR HEARD:

WERE ANY SOLUTIONS OFFERED BY THE MC OR THE BOUT MANAGER?
Appendices

SlamMasters, Slammers, Patrons, This is a two-fold opportunity:

1) Don’t forget that PSi is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation and as such can accept your donations, providing you with substantial tax advantages. Your gift can go a long way toward funding both operations and programming of PSi.

2) If you have potential local donors who would like to support your local efforts or who would like to subsidize your participation in a Poetry Slam, Inc. sponsored event (NPS, iWPS, WOWps), they can receive the tax advantages associated with nonprofit giving by channeling those contributions through Poetry Slam, Inc. Contact the Executive Director for more information on our new, expanded “GrantBack Program.” This may be one of the biggest potential benefits of PSi certification. And remember, those donor tax benefits extend to contributions that go toward conducting any essential PSi business.
BYLAWS

of

Poetry Slam, Inc.

ARTICLE I
Location

The principal executive office of the corporation in the State of Illinois shall be located in the City of Berwyn and County of Cook. The corporation may have such other offices, either within or without the State of Illinois, as the Executive Council may from time to time determine or the business of the corporation may require.

ARTICLE II
Slam Family

Section 1. Membership. Any person who wishes to advocate, promote, support, witness, enjoy and/or practice the art of performance poetry may become a member of Poetry Slam, Inc. Members need not be residents of Illinois or citizens of the United States. Membership, with all benefits, commences upon the payment of an initiation fee. Dues are renewable at any time. Unless renewed, membership shall expire on the annual anniversary of payment of dues. Payment of dues entitles a member to full voting privileges at Slam Family meetings, the right to run for election to Executive Council, the right to participate in the National Poetry Slam (pursuant to local regulation for qualification) and such additional benefits as fixed from time to time by the Executive Council. First time members are entitled to a handsome certificate suitable for framing and a wallet sized poetic license.

Section 2. Place of Meetings. Meetings of the Slam Family shall be held concurrently with the annual National Poetry Slam or at such other place, within or without the State of Illinois, as the Executive Council shall determine.

Section 3. Annual Meeting. The annual meeting of the Slam Family shall be held on the Saturday of the National Poetry Slam at 11:00 A.M. in each year, for the purpose of reviewing and discussing procedures associated with the National Poetry Slam or Poetry Slam, Inc.; for reviewing and discussing the actions of the Executive Council and the SlamMaster Council; for discussing and voting on all issues presented to the Slam Family by either the Executive Council or the SlamMaster
Council; and/or for the transaction of such additional business as necessary. If the day' fixed for the annual meeting shall be inconvenient for the director of the National Poetry Slam, the meeting shall be held, with appropriate notification, at his/her convenience during the National Poetry Slam.

Section 4. Special Meetings. Special meetings of the Slam Family may be called by the president, by the Executive Council, or by not less than a simple majority of all members of the SlamMaster Council.

Section 5. Meeting of the Slam Family. If all of the Slam Family shall meet at any place and time, either within or without the State of Illinois, and consent to the holding of a meeting at such place and time, such meeting shall be valid without call or notice, and at such meeting any corporate action may be taken.

Section 6. Fixing of Record Date. For the purpose of determining members of the Slam Family entitled to notice of or to vote at any meeting of the Slam Family, or in order to make a determination of Slam Family members for any other purpose, the Executive Council shall cause to be maintained an official list of addresses. The Executive Council may fix in advance a date as the record date for any such determination of Slam Family membership, such date in any case to be not more than sixty days and, for a meeting of Slam Family, not less than ten days, or in the case of a merger, consolidation, dissolution or sale, lease or exchange of assets, not less than twenty days, immediately preceding the meeting. If no record date is fixed for the determination of Slam Family members entitled to notice of or to vote at a meeting of Slam Family, or Slam Family entitled to receive payment of a dividend, the date on which notice of the meeting is mailed or the date on which the resolution of the Executive Council declaring such dividend is adopted, as the case may be, shall be the record date for such determination of Slam Family membership.

Section 7. Voting Lists. The officer or agent having charge of membership shall make, by the Friday night prior to the annual Slam Family meeting, a complete list of the membership entitled to vote at such meeting, arranged in alphabetical order, with the address of each, which list, for a period of ten days prior to such meeting, shall be kept on file at the registered office of the corporation and shall be subject to inspection by any SlamMaster, and to copying at the SlamMaster’s expense, at any time during usual business hours. Such list shall also be produced and kept open at the time and place of the meeting and shall be subject to the inspection of any SlamMaster during the whole time of the meeting. The original membership list, or a duplicate thereof kept in this State, shall be prima facie evidence as to who are the SlamMasters entitled to examine such list or to vote at any meeting of
the SlamMasters or of members entitled to vote at any meeting of the Slam Family. Failure to comply with the requirements of this section does not affect the validity of any action taken at such meeting. An officer or agent having charge of the membership list who shall fail to prepare the list of membership, or keep the same on file for a period of ten days, or produce and keep the same open for inspection at the meeting, as provided in this Section, shall be liable to any member suffering damage on account of such failure, to the extent of the damage.

Section 8. Quorum of Slam Family and Voting by Slam Family. Unless a greater or lesser quorum is provided in the Articles of Incorporation, a majority of the outstanding votes, represented in person or by proxy, shall constitute a quorum at a meeting of Slam Family, but in no event shall a quorum consist of less than five (5) percent of the votes represented on the membership list. If a quorum is present, the affirmative vote of a 3/5 majority of the shares represented at the meeting and entitled to vote on a matter shall be the act of the Slam Family, unless the vote of a greater number or voting by classes is required by The Business Corporation Act or the Articles of Incorporation. The Articles of Incorporation may require any number or percent greater than a majority up to and including a requirement of unanimity to constitute a quorum.

Section 9. Voting of Individual Members. Subject to the provisions of Section 10 of this Article, each person present, regardless of class, shall be entitled to one vote upon each matter submitted at a meeting of Slam Family, unless the Articles of Incorporation provide otherwise. The Articles of Incorporation may limit or deny voting rights or may provide special voting rights as to any class or classes of members of the corporation.

Section 10. Proxies. At all meetings of Poetry Slam, Inc., a member may vote either in person or by proxy executed in writing by the member or by his/her duly authorized agent or representative. No proxy shall be valid after 11 months from the date of its execution, unless otherwise provided in the proxy.

Section 11. Voting of Slam Family Membership standing in the name of another corporation—domestic or foreign—may be voted by such officer, agent, or proxy as the Bylaws of such corporation may prescribe, or, in the absence of such provision, as the Executive Council of such corporation may determine. Membership registered in the name of a deceased person, a minor ward, or a person under legal disability, may be voted by his or her administrator, executor, or court-appointed guardian, either in person or by proxy. Membership standing in the name of a trustee may be voted by him or her, either in person or by proxy.
Section 12. Voting. Unless specifically limited or eliminated in the Articles of Incorporation, every member shall be entitled to exercise voting rights. In so doing, each member shall have the right to vote, in person or by proxy, on all matters brought before the Slam Family.

Section 13. Inspectors. At any meeting of the Executive Council, the SlamMaster Council or the Slam Family, the chairman of the meeting may, or upon the request of any member shall, appoint one or more persons as inspectors for such meeting. Such inspectors shall ascertain and report the number of votes represented at the meeting, based upon their determination of the validity and effect of proxies; count all votes and report the results; and do such other acts as are proper to conduct the election and voting with impartiality and fairness to all the Slam Family. Each report of an inspector shall be in writing and signed by him or by a majority of them if there be more than one inspector acting at such meeting. If there is more than one inspector, the report of a majority shall be the report of the inspectors. The report of the inspector or inspectors on the number of members represented at the meeting and the results of the voting shall be prima facie evidence thereof.

Section 14. Action without Meeting. Any action which may be taken at any annual or special meeting of the Executive Council, the SlamMaster Council or the Slam Family may be taken without a meeting and without prior notice if a consent in writing setting forth the action so taken shall be signed by the members entitled to vote or signed by such lesser number of members as may be provided for in the Articles of Incorporation that would be necessary to authorize or take such action at a meeting.

ARTICLE III
Executive Council Members

Section 1. Powers. Subject to any provision in the Articles of Incorporation, including the stipulation that the corporation be run under a shareholder’s agreement according to the Close Corporation Act of 1977, the business and affairs of the corporation shall be managed by an Executive Council.

Section 2. Number. The authorized number of voting members serving on the Executive Council shall be seven (7) until changed by amendment to these Bylaws. Additionally, the Executive Director shall serve on the Executive Council in a non-voting status.

Section 3. Election and Term of Directors. Election and Term of Directors. Each Executive Council member, excluding the Executive Director shall hold office until
the second annual meeting of the SlamMaster Council after his/her election or until his/her successor shall have been elected and qualified, or until his/her prior resignation or removal. Unless otherwise provided in the Articles of Incorporation, an Executive Council member may be removed, with or without cause, by vote of a majority of the SlamMaster Council members entitled to vote at an election of Executive Council members, subject to Section 8.35 of The Business Corporation Act. Executive Council members need not be residents of Illinois. The Executive Director shall be appointed by the voting members of the Executive Council and shall serve, at the will of the Executive Council, a renewable term not to exceed one year.

Section 4. Vacancies. Any vacancy occurring in the Executive Council and any Executive Council membership to be filled by reason of an increase in the number of Executive Council members may be filled by election at an annual meeting or at a special meeting of the SlamMaster Council called for that purpose. An Executive Council member elected to fill a vacancy shall serve until the next annual meeting of SlamMaster Council at which Executive Council members are to be elected. Should any member of the Executive Council or any other elected official of PSI resign, withdraw or be removed from consideration to take office such that the President determines that the effectiveness of the Executive Council is compromised, the person with the next highest vote total in the election at the previous annual meeting shall be given the first consideration to assume the office. If that person should refuse to serve or be found to be ineligible for service, or if the elected individual had run unopposed, the position shall be filled by appointment of the President, with advice and consent of the Executive Council, for a period ending at the next annual meeting. Succession to office in this circumstance shall be immediate.

Section 5. Regular Meetings. A regular meeting of the Executive Council shall be held without other notice than this Bylaw, immediately after and at the same place as the annual meeting of Slam Family. The Executive Council may provide, by resolution, the time and place, for the holding of additional regular meetings without other notice than this Bylaw.

Section 6. Manner of Convening Special Meetings. Special meetings of the Executive Council may be called by or at the request of the president or any two Executive Council members.

Section 7. Place of Special Meetings. The person or persons authorized to convene special meetings of the Executive Council may fix any place, either within or without the State of Illinois, as the place for holding any special meeting of the Executive Council.
Section 8. Notice of Executive Council Meetings. Special meetings of the Executive Council shall be held upon at least four days’ prior notice in writing, delivered personally or mailed to each Executive Council member. Any Executive Council member may waive notice of any meeting. Attendance of an Executive Council member at any meeting shall constitute a waiver of notice of such meeting except where an Executive Council member attends a meeting for the express purpose of objecting to the transaction of any business because the meeting is not lawfully called or convened. Neither the business to be transacted at nor the purpose of any regular or special meeting of the Executive Council need be specified in the notice or waiver of notice of such meeting.

Section 9. Quorum of Executive Council. A simple majority of the number of Executive Council voting members fixed by the Bylaws shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business. The act of the majority of the Executive Council voting members present at a meeting at which a quorum is present shall be the act of the Executive Council.

Section 10. Informal Action by Executive Council. Unless specifically prohibited by the Articles of Incorporation, any action required to be taken at a meeting of the Executive Council may be taken without a meeting if a consent in writing, setting forth the action so taken, shall be signed by all the Executive Council members entitled to vote.

Section 11. Dissent. An Executive Council member of the corporation who is present at a meeting of its Executive Council at which action on any corporate matter is taken is conclusively presumed to have assented to the action taken unless his/her dissent is entered into the minutes of the meeting or unless s/he files his/her written dissent to such action with the person acting as the secretary of the meeting before the adjournment thereof or forwards such dissent by registered mail to the secretary of the corporation immediately after the adjournment of the meeting. Such right to dissent does not apply to an Executive Council member who voted in favor of such action.

Section 12. Compensation. By the affirmative vote of a majority of Executive Council members, the council shall have authority to establish reasonable compensation for all Executive Council members in payment for actual services to the corporation as Executive Council members, officers, or otherwise. A fixed sum and expenses for actual attendance at each regular or special meeting of the council may also be authorized. Beginning with the Spring meeting of 1998, Executive Council officers and trustees shall receive a $1 per diem for attendance at each regular or special meeting of the Executive Council.
ARTICLE IV
Officers

Section 1. Number. The officers of the corporation shall be a president, a vice-president, a secretary and a treasurer and three trustees, as well as other additional officers whose titles and duties shall be determined by the Executive Council. Annually, Council shall appoint an Executive Director who shall serve on the Executive Council as an ex officio member. The Executive Director may be removed from office, or replaced at any time by a simple majority vote of the Executive Council. Any two or more offices may be held by the same person.

Section 2. Election. An officer of the corporation shall be chosen by the Executive Council. Each officer shall hold office until his/her death, resignation or removal as hereinafter provided. A vacancy in any office because of death, resignation or removal or other cause shall be filled by the Executive Council at either an annual or special meeting.

Section 3. Resignation and Removal. An officer may resign at any time upon written notice to the corporation. An officer may be removed at any time, either with or without cause, by the Executive Council, but such removal shall be without prejudice to the contract rights, if any, of the person so removed.

Section 4. President. The president shall be the chief executive officer of the corporation, and, subject to the direction and control of the Executive Council, shall manage the business of the corporation and shall see that all orders and resolutions of the Executive Council are carried out. He or she shall preside at all meetings of the Slam Family and Executive Council and shall have such other powers and duties as may from time to time be prescribed by the Executive Council or Bylaws.

Section 5. Vice-President. During the absence or disability of the president, the vice-president, or, if there are more than one, the executive vice-president, shall possess all powers and functions of the president. Any vice-president may sign, with the secretary, certificates for membership in the corporation, and shall perform such other duties as may from time to time be prescribed by the Executive Council or the Bylaws.

Section 6. Secretary. The secretary shall keep or cause to be kept, at the principal executive office of the corporation, the minutes of all meetings of the Slam Family and of the Executive Council. The secretary shall see that all notices of meetings are given in accordance with the
provisions of these Bylaws or as required by law. The secretary shall have charge of the corporate seal and shall affix it to any instrument when authorized by the Executive Council. The secretary shall keep or cause to be kept, at the principal executive office of the corporation or at the office of the corporation’s transfer agent, a membership register, showing the names of the Slam Family and their addresses, and the date of membership held by each. The secretary shall keep or cause to be kept, at the principal executive office of the corporation, the original or a copy of the Bylaws and amendments, the resolutions of the Slam Family, and other documents of the corporation, and shall certify that all such documents of the corporation are true and correct copies. The secretary shall perform whatever other duties as may be prescribed by the Executive Council.

Section 7. Treasurer. The treasurer shall have charge of the corporate funds and securities; shall keep or cause to be kept complete and accurate account books of corporate receipts and payments; deposit all money and other valuables in the name of the corporation in such banks, trust companies or other depositories as designated by the Executive Council; prepare and present financial reports to the annual meeting of the Slam Family and the regular meetings of the Executive Council, and perform such other duties as are assigned to him or her from time to time by the Executive Council.

Section 8. Executive Director. The Executive Director shall assist the officers in the performance of their duties. Duties shall include, but not be limited to: maintaining the corporate non-profit status with the Internal Revenue Service; complying with all regulations and filing requirements; acting as an advisor to the Executive Council to be sure they, the Slam Family, and the SlamMasters fulfill all the requirements of the corporation by-laws; in coordination with the Treasurer, maintaining an accounting record of all day to day business transactions; making sure all contract obligations are fulfilled; assisting the Executive Council in the venue certification process and maintaining records of certified venues; in coordination with the Secretary, maintaining a record of membership; supervising the Publicist’s work and maintaining a press archive; in coordination with the Executive Council, supervising the process for securing public and private funding for Poetry Slam, Inc.; in coordination with the Executive Council, protecting any intellectual property of Poetry Slam, Inc.; maintaining an up-to-date file of all business correspondence.

Section 9. Sureties and Bonds. If required by the Executive Council, any officer of the corporation shall give to the corporation a bond for the faithful performance of his or her duties in such sum and with such surety or sureties as the Executive Council shall determine.
Section 10. Compensation. The salaries of the officers shall be fixed from time to time by the Executive Council. No officer shall be prevented from receiving such salary due to the fact that he or she is also a member of the Executive Council of the corporation.

ARTICLE V
SlamMaster Council

Section 1. Eligibility. Subject to any provision in the Articles of Incorporation, members of the SlamMaster Council shall be comprised of any individual who legitimately runs and organizes a regular Slam event. The Executive Council will determine an individual SlamMaster's eligibility for council membership.

Section 2. Number. The authorized number of individuals serving on the SlamMaster Council shall be unlimited until changed by amendment to this Article of these Bylaws.

Section 3. Appointment and Removal. Each SlamMaster shall maintain membership on the SlamMaster Council so long as s/he continues to organize or host a regular slam event and/or the Executive Council removes him/her from the SlamMaster Council. Unless otherwise provided in the Articles of Incorporation, a SlamMaster may be removed, with or without cause, by vote of a majority of the Executive Council members entitled to vote at any Executive Council meeting, subject to Section 8.35 of The Business Corporation Act. SlamMasters need not be residents of Illinois.

Section 4. Challenges of Legitimacy. Any member of the corporation may challenge the legitimacy of a SlamMaster's inclusion on the SlamMaster Council at any meeting of the Slam Family. All determinations of legitimacy by the Executive Council are considered to be prima facie evidence of an individual member's legitimacy.

Section 5. Regular Meetings. A regular meeting of the SlamMaster Council shall be held without other notice than this Bylaw, at least twice a year, one of which will take place on a weekend in the Spring before May 4, each year for the purpose of electing Executive Council members and for the transaction of such additional business as necessary. The Executive Council may provide, by resolution and public notification, either personally, via mail or electronic methods at least four days prior, the time and place, for the holding of additional regular
meetings without other notice than this Bylaw.

Section 6. Manner of Convening Special Meetings. Special meetings of the SlamMaster Council may be called by or at the request of the president or any two directors of the Executive Council or by five members of the SlamMaster Council representing five different cities.

Section 7. Place of Special Meetings. The person or persons authorized to convene special meetings of the SlamMaster Council may fix any place, either within or without the State of Illinois, as the place for holding any special meeting of the SlamMaster Council. Meetings may be held either in person or via electronic methods.

Section 8. Notice of Special SlamMaster Council Meetings. Special meetings of the SlamMaster Council shall be held upon at least four days’ prior notice in writing, delivered personally or via electronic methods, or mailed to each SlamMaster. Any SlamMaster may waive notice of any meeting. Attendance of a SlamMaster at any meeting shall constitute a waiver of notice of such meeting except where a SlamMaster attends a meeting for the express purpose of objecting to the transaction of any business because the meeting is not lawfully called or convened. Neither the business to be transacted at nor the purpose of any regular or special meeting of the SlamMaster Council need be specified in the notice or waiver of notice of such meeting.

Section 9. Quorum of SlamMaster Council. At least fifteen cities must be represented at SlamMaster Council meetings (either through personal attendance or through letters of proxy) for official business to be conducted. The act of the majority of the SlamMasters present at a meeting at which a quorum is present shall be the act of the SlamMaster Council.

Section 10. Duties. The duties of the SlamMaster Council shall include, but not be limited to the following: to permit the President of Poetry Slam, Inc. to be the presiding chairperson and to permit the Secretary of PSi to serve as secretary at each of its meetings in the absence of nominations for other candidates for presiding officer and/ or secretary. The presiding officer shall prepare and distribute reports of its proceedings and actions to the Slam Family and the Executive Council; to monitor the actions taken by the Executive Council; to solicit from membership and propose to the Executive Council new projects; to establish committees for ongoing projects; to review and propose revisions and additions to the bylaws of Poetry Slam, Inc.; al Poetry Slam; to review and vote upon all financial considerations presented to it by the Executive Council; to review and discuss presentations made by cities
wishing to host the National Poetry Slam and to vote on the site of the next annual National Poetry Slam.

ARTICLE VI
Limitation on Liability

Section 1. Liabilities.

(a) Liability to Corporation. A member of the Executive Council who is a volunteer director (defined herein as anyone elected to and serving on Executive Council as President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Trustee, and who receives less than $100 (one hundred dollars) per year in salary or wages from Poetry Slam, Inc.) is not personally liable to the corporation or its members for monetary damages for breach of the Executive Council member’s fiduciary duties; provided, however, this does not pertain to and the Executive Council member remains liable for:

1. Breach of the member’s duty or loyalty to the corporation or its members;
2. Act or omissions not in good faith or that involve intentional misconduct or a knowing violation of the law;
3. A violation of any local, state or federal law restricting or relating to making unauthorized dividends or distributions;
4. A transaction from which the member derived an improper personal benefit;
5. An act or omission that is grossly negligent.

(b) Claims by Third Parties. The corporation assumes liability to any person other than the corporation or its members for acts or omissions of an Executive Council Member who is a volunteer director (as defined above) incurred in the good-faith performance of the Executive Council’s duties. The corporation also assumes the liability for all acts or omissions of a non-director volunteer if all the following are met:

1. The volunteer was acting or reasonably believed he or she was acting within the scope of his or her authority.
2. The volunteer was acting in good faith.
3. The volunteer’s conduct did not amount to gross negligence or willful and wanton misconduct.
4. The volunteer’s conduct was not an intentional tort.

5. The volunteer’s conduct was not a tort arising out of the ownership, maintenance, or use of a motor vehicle for which tort liability may be imposed under local, state or federal laws.

(c) Indemnification. The corporation indemnifies all Executive Council members, officers, and non-director volunteers of the corporation in any
action, suit or proceedings applicable under local, state and federal law, in the
manner permitted and to the extent not prohibited either by local, state or
federal law, or by Chapter 42 of the Internal Revenue Code. The Executive
Council may contract for the purchase of insurance against liability as permitted
by Section 567 of that Act. Section 2. Reimbursement.

(a) To the extent that an Executive Council member, officer,
employee, non-director volunteer or agent of the corporation has been successful
on the merits or otherwise in the defense of any action, suit or proceeding referred
to in Section 1 or in defense of any claim, issue or matter therein, he or she
shall be indemnified against expenses (including attorneys’ fees) actually and
reasonably incurred by him or heir in connection with the defense.
(b) Any indemnification under Section 1 (unless ordered by a court)
shall be made by the corporation only as authorized in the specific case upon a
determination that indemnification of the Executive Council member, officer,
employee, non-director volunteer, or agent is proper in the circumstances because
he or she has met the applicable standard of conduct set forth in Section 1. Such
determination shall be made in either of the following ways:
(1) By the executive Council by a majority vote of a quorum
consisting of Executive Council members who were not parties to such action, suit
or proceeding; or
(2) If such quorum is not obtainable, or, even if a
quorum is obtainable if a quorum of disinterested Executive Council members
so directs, by written opinion of independent legal council.

Section 3. Advancement of Expenses. Expenses incurred in defending a civil or
criminal action, suit or proceeding described in Section 1 may be paid by the
corporation in advance of the final disposition of such action, suit or proceeding as
authorized in the manner provided in subsection
(b) of Section 2 upon receipt of an undertaking by or on behalf of the Executive
Council member, officer, employee, non-director volunteer, or agent to repay such
amount unless it shall ultimately be determined that he or she is entitled to be
indemnified by the corporation.

Section 4. Limitations. The corporation shall make no provisions to indemnify
Executive Council members, officers, employees, non-director volunteers, or
agents in any action, suit or proceeding referred to in Section 1 which shall be in
conflict with the provisions of this Article. Nothing contained in this Article shall
affect any rights to indemnifications to which persons other than Executive Council
members, officers, and non-director volunteers may be entitled by contract or
otherwise by law. The indemnification provided for in this Article shall continue as
to a person who has ceased to be an Executive Council member, officer,
employee, non-director volunteer, or agent and shall inure to the benefit of the heirs
and personal representative of such person.
Section 5. Insurance. The Executive Council may, in the exercise of its discretion, from time to time authorize by resolutions duly adopted, purchase and maintain insurance on behalf of any person who is or was an Executive Council member, officer, employee, non-director volunteer, or agent of the corporation, or is or was serving at the request of the non-director volunteer, or agent of the corporation, or is or was serving at the request of the corporation as an Executive Council member, officer, employee, non-director volunteer, or agent of another corporation, partnership, joint venture, trust or other enterprise against any liability asserted against him or her and incurred by him or her in any such capacity or arising out his or her stature as such, whether or not the corporation would have power to indemnify him or her against such liability under Section 1 of this Article.

Section 6. Merger and Reorganization. For the purposes of Section 1 through 5 of this Article, references to the corporation include all constituent corporations absorbed in a consolidation merger and the resulting or surviving corporation, so that a person who is or was an Executive Council member, officer, employee, non-director volunteer, or agent of another corporation, partnership, joint venture, trust or other enterprise shall stand in the same position under the provisions of this Section with respect to the resulting or surviving corporation as he or she would if he or she had served the resulting or surviving corporation in the same capacity.

Section 7. Application of the Articles of Incorporation. The provisions of this Article shall apply except to the extent they may be inconsistent with and prohibited by the Internal Revenue Code and the Regulations promulgated thereunder or any other applicable law or regulations.

ARTICLE VII
Waiver of Notice

Any notice required to be given under the provisions of these Bylaws, the Articles of Incorporation, or the provisions of The Business Corporation Act may be waived by the individual entitled to such notice. A waiver in writing signed by said individual, whether before or after the time stated in the notice, shall be deemed equivalent to the giving of such notice.

ARTICLE VIII
Parliamentary Authority

All meetings of the Slam Family, the Executive Council and the Slam-Masters, whether regular or special, live or virtual, shall be conducted according to the rules contained in the current edition of Robert’s Rules of Order Newly
Revised and shall govern the corporation in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with these bylaws and any special rules of order the corporation or its individual governing bodies may severally adopt.

ARTICLE IX
Amendments of Bylaws

Bylaws may be adopted, altered, amended, or repealed at any meeting of the Executive Council of the corporation by a 3/5 majority vote of the Executive Council voting members present at the meeting, said change in Bylaws to be enacted after a 3/5 majority ratification vote of the SlamMaster’s Council and after a 3/5 majority ratification vote of the Slam Family at its regular annual meeting.

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of the Bylaws of the corporation named in the title thereto and that such Bylaws were duly adopted by the Executive Council of said corporation on the date set forth below.

DATED: Secretary (seal)
PSi Membership Application Form

Make check or money order payable to Poetry Slam, Inc.
Mail application to:
Poetry Slam, Inc., P.O. Box 18504, Denver, CO 80218
or bring with you to an event.

New Member [ _] Renewal [ _]
Name: ___________________________ Date: __________

Address: ______________________________

City: _______________ State: _____ Zip Code: ______

Phone: ______________________________

E-mail Address: ______________________________

Your home Poetry Slam: ______________________________

Membership level: If paid online, indicate date. ______

_____ Basic ($20) Associate ($35) Booster ($50)

_____ Sustainer ($100) ____ Patron ($500) ____ Benefactor ($1000)
Video/Film/Audio Rights and Clearance Agreement
between Poetry Slam Inc. and Individuals making video, film or audio
recordings at a Poetry Slam, Inc. event:

I, ________________________________________________, (PRINT) an individual
making video, film, or audio recordings at any event produced as part of the ___________ held
in ____________________________, warrant that I am taping,
filming, videotaping, or otherwise recording for home use only. I agree I do not hold and
cannot confer any audio and/or video or film broadcast rights, or rights of distribution.

I agree to indemnify, defend, and hold harmless Poetry Slam Inc. (hereinafter PSI), and/or
any employee or representative of PSI from and against any and all claims,
damages, liabilities, costs and expenses, including but not limited to attorney’s fees,
which may be incurred by reason of any breach, or claim of breach, of the within
representations and warranties or arising out of any matter contained in the recording
or by use of said recording as agreed hereunder.

I understand that in order to gain any rights for broadcast or sale of any recorded
material or footage, I must provide notification in writing of prior intent to generate
footage or a product from footage obtained at this PSI event. Such notification will
contain a detailed outline describing the project and what footage will be included, and
will include a description of the intended market or audience for same. Notification will
be sent to the Business Office of PSI, which can be found at www.poetryslam.com. I further
understand that in order to proceed with the project, I will need PSI’s express written
approval to proceed with the project and that PSI retains the rights to all footage used in
such manner. Before I may release the final footage or product for sale or broadcast,
PSI must receive a true and exact copy of said footage or product and provide express
written consent for release signed by either the President of PSI or the Executive Director
of PSI or their designated agent(s). This document is subject to the conditions outlined
in a document labeled “Release to Record Likeness for Poetry Slam, Inc. event.”

By submission of this entry and my signature below, I agree to the above stated
conditions and warranties described in the Video/Film/Audio Rights and Clearance.

Name: (PRINT LEGIBLY) ________________________________________________

Address: ___________________________________________________________________

City, State, Zip Code: ____________________________

Phone Numbers: ___________________ Email: ________________________________

Signature: __________________________ Date: __________
Poetry Slam, Inc. Audio/Video Release Form

1. In consideration of the ability to perform at a PSi event I, the undersigned, (herein after *Poet*) hereby grant permission to Poetry Slam Inc., (herein after *PSi*) to photograph or video and/or audio record me and record my voice, performances, poses, acts, plays and appearances at this PSi event, and to use my picture, photograph, silhouette and other reproductions of my physical likeness and sound as part of the archiving (for historical preservation as well as for the prospect of use in future commercial ventures) of the event (herein after *the Project*). Further, I agree, that if any of my performances or portions of my performances appear in the final product(s) used for either commercial or educational purposes, depicting the audible portion of any of my performances, I shall receive one (1) copy of said product for the price of shipping and handling only.

2. I understand that the poet does have the rights to film their own performances in preliminary and semi-final bouts (when applicable) for non-commercial use, provided that filming does not interfere with venues, bouts, audience, or other competitors. It is a violation for any entity other than PSi to photograph or video and/or audio record any portion of final bouts and performances.

3. It is a violation and breach of this agreement for the Poet to assign, sell or transfer footage or audio of his or her PSi event performance, with or without consideration, to any entity that the Poet knows or has reason to believe will use such footage in a commercial product or for any commercial purpose. I understand that if any entity other than PSi wishes to use any footage of the Poet's PSi performances for commercial use, that entity must obtain the written permission of PSi.

4. For the above consideration, and the continued potential exposure of my poetry and performance, I grant Poetry Slam Inc. the right to use any video or audio reproduction of my performances at this PSi event for archival, promotional, educational or commercial purposes and use in future commercial products of PSi. I understand that I retain the copyright to the poems themselves.

5. I warrant and represent that all of the material that I will perform at this PSi event is my own original material. I further warrant and represent that no other person or entity holds any interest in that material, or my performance of it, whether by contract, common law, or statute, and that I have full and complete authority to convey the rights under this Agreement to PSi, without the need for approval, permission, or authority from any other person or entity. I understand that breach of these warranties and representations may subject PSi to demands or liabilities, and I agree to indemnify PSi for any such demands or liabilities resulting from, directly or indirectly, a breach of these warranties and representations.

6. I agree that I will not maintain or assert against PSi, its successors, assigns, agents, employees, directors, affiliates, or licensees, any claim, action, suit, or demand of any kind or nature whatsoever, including but not limited to, those grounded upon invasion of privacy, rights of publicity or other civil rights, or for
any other reason in connection with PSi’s authorized use of my physical likeness and sound in this PSi event as herein provided. I hereby release PSi and its successors, assigns, agents, employees, directors, affiliates, or licensees, and each of them, from and against any and all claims, liabilities, demands, actions, cause(s) of action, costs and expenses whatsoever, at law or in equity, known or unknown, anticipated or unanticipated, which I ever had, now have, or may, shall or hereby after have reason, matter, cause or thing arising out of PSi’s use as herein provided.

7. The Poet understands and agrees that Illinois law shall govern the interpretation and enforcement of this agreement and consents to a jurisdiction of any competent court within the state of Illinois.

8. The Poet understands and agrees that breach of this agreement will be remedied by appropriate injunctive relief and consents to the entry of said injunctive relief in the event of his or her breach by a court of competent jurisdiction.

Signature ___________________________________________ Date __________________________

Please Print your name LEGIBLY here:

_______________________________________________________________________________

Mailing address:

_______________________________________________________________________________

_______________________________________________________________________________

E-mail address: _______________________________________________ Phone: ______________

_______________________________________________________________________________