



# The Eleanor Taylor Bland Crime Fiction Writers of Color Award

## Call for Applications

**T**he Eleanor Taylor Bland Crime Fiction Writers of Color Award is a one-time grant of \$1,500 for an emerging writer of color. An unpublished writer is preferred, although publication of one work of short fiction or academic work will not disqualify an applicant. This grant is intended to support the recipient in activities related to writing and career development. These activities include workshops, seminars, conferences, and retreats; online courses; and research activities required for completion of the work.

The grant is administered by Sisters in Crime. After contacting the grant recipient, Sisters in Crime will make an official announcement of the award, including an article in *inSinc*.

A report must be submitted to the Sisters in Crime president one year after receipt of the award. The friends of Eleanor who contributed to the fund will want to know how the grant was used.

Eleanor Taylor Bland was a pioneer in crime fiction. In 1992 she was the first in a series of crime fiction novels that feature Marti MacAlister, an African American female police detective who works and resides in a Midwestern American town that closely resembles Bland's own adopted home town, Waukegan, Illinois, was published.

Bland also published several works of short crime fiction and edited a collection titled *Shades of Black: Crime and Mystery Stories by African-American Authors* (2004).

When she passed away in 2010, she was one of the most prolific African American authors in the genre. With Marti MacAlister, Bland created an enduring and much beloved heroine who went against the grain of perpetuated stereotypes related to African American women in much of U.S. popular culture.

Although Bland focused primarily in her work on stories about African American characters and their lives, bringing both complexities and comforts of familiarity to her readership, she also included in-depth interactions with other kinds of characters that reflect the broad spectrum of identities that is US society.

Bland saw crime fiction as an especially accessible literary vehicle for bringing into the genre characters that before her work had been peripheral to or simply missing from the genre. She understood that crime fiction could continue over time broadening its appeal to new reading audiences by opening its doors to the kinds of characters, societal situations and perspectives, and potential for creativity that authors of color would bring. 🍀

### Guidelines

#### Deadline for applications

July 4, 2014. The winner will be selected and announced in the fall of 2014.

#### Requirements for application

- An unpublished work of fiction, which may be a short story or first chapter(s) of a manuscript in-progress, 2,500 to 10,000 words.
- A resume or biographical statement.
- A cover letter that gives some sense of the applicant as an emerging writer in the genre and briefly states how the grant money would be used. No prior writing or publishing experience is required, but the applicant should include any relevant studies or experience.

#### Submission

An electronic copy of the full application in Word should be sent, with email attachments, to

Norlisha F. Crawford, Ph. D.  
Associate Professor of English  
University of Wisconsin  
Oshkosh  
[crawforn@uwosh.edu](mailto:crawforn@uwosh.edu)

#### More information

Contact Dr. Crawford for updates, inquiries, and additional information about the award.