

## Customer Spotlight

## The Poetry Foundation

### In a Nutshell

Established in 2003, the Poetry Foundation works to promote poetry and lyricism through digital and print publications, live events like poetry readings and concerts, digital programs, and mobile applications as well as educational initiatives and awards. VITAC's accessibility solutions helped the Poetry Foundation to make sure their online events could reach a wide audience.

### The Challenge

The Poetry Foundation has been offering live concerts, poetry readings, classes, and exhibitions as part of their mission for many years. But when the organization made the switch to offering those events online, it quickly became clear that finding a reliable accessibility partner who could meet the specific needs of their virtual events was more difficult.

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“Having a reliable accessibility partner has made a huge difference in limiting the amount of stress and coordination involved in planning their events. Before VITAC came in, the amount of time within my job that was dedicated to just coordinating captions was unsustainable.”

Noa/h Fields,  
Poetry Foundation Events and  
Accessibility Coordinator



The Poetry Foundation's roots were planted in 1912 when *Poetry Magazine* started publication. In 1941 the Modern Poetry Association was founded to support the publication of the magazine. In 2003 it evolved into what is now The Poetry Foundation and is committed to discovery and celebration of the best poetry, as well as placing it before the largest possible audience.

# The Solution

VITAC's flexibility and quality, powered by a large staff of human captioners and high caption accuracy standards, enabled the Poetry Foundation to continue offering their events and programs online and continue ensuring that their events were accessible for deaf and hard of hearing participants and attendees.

## VITAC offers the Poetry Foundation:

- ▶ Professional human captioners who understand the nuances of language, and who bring human sensitivities and contextual awareness to the captioning table.
- ▶ The option to send poems and other pieces to be read or sung at live events to live captioners ahead of time to be used as references while creating captions in realtime.
- ▶ A dedicated and responsive support team, available 24/7.
- ▶ A straightforward caption ordering and invoicing process.

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“Poetry is challenging to caption — it's highly imaginative and condensed language that is often outside familiar registers of speech.”

Noa/h Fields,  
Poetry Foundation Events and  
Accessibility Coordinator



# The Results

**On the Benefits of Accessible Communications**  
Fields points out that captioning for poetry, while essential for accessibility, also opens up additional opportunities for a piece to resonate with an audience including those who require captions and those who do not. “Many people prefer captions to follow along with poems to help process them.”

## On Choosing VITAC

“In the pivot to virtual programming, captioning was essential,” says Fields. “One of our access priorities was providing Zoom integrated captions in all of our public programs and all staff meetings. We rotated through a number of captioning vendors in 2019 who were unreliable or couldn't fulfill our captioning needs even with lots of advanced notice. By comparison, we have appreciated how responsive and dependable VITAC has been.”

## On How Accessible Communications Touches Everyone

The Poetry Foundation's programs include providing resources and professional development opportunities for educators of all levels, including K-12 teachers around the country. Making the switch to VITAC meant ensuring that those programs could continue virtually and educators could continue to find new and creative ways of teaching poetry. “One of our major captioning challenges was our Poetry Summer Institute, a two week intensive program for K-12 educators that required captioning for up to seven simultaneous Zoom webinars! Having a reliable captioning vendor that could meet those needs without oversight was a huge relief.”

- ▶ For more information, visit: [vitac.com](https://www.vitac.com)

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