



EARLY MOUNTAIN

EMV WINE WRITER FELLOWSHIP

Application Packet — 2026

The 2026 Early Mountain Vineyards Wine Writer Fellowship supports emerging and established writers interested in exploring wine through the lenses of agriculture, geography, hospitality, and sense of place. Applicants should demonstrate a track record of publishing reported stories, essays, or features in recognized print or digital publications. While prior wine-writing experience is not required, applicants should have strong reporting and storytelling credentials.

For the inaugural 2026 Early Mountain Wine Writer Fellowship, one Fellow will be selected to participate in this educational and immersive residency.

Fellowship Eligibility:

- Open to U.S.-based writers who will be age 21 or over at commencement of the Fellowship
- Staff writers and freelancers are eligible.
- Applicants must be able to travel to Madison, Virginia for the full Fellowship period.
- Preference will be given to writers with placements in national or leading regional publications.
- Wine, agriculture, hospitality, food, and culture writers are encouraged to apply.
- Employees of Early Mountain Vineyards (and their immediate family members) are not eligible.

Submission Requirements:

1. Completed and signed Application Form (attached below)
2. Three published pieces of writing (PDFs or direct links)
3. 500–1000 word statement of interest addressing the following:
 - What story, topic, or question do you hope to explore during the fellowship?
 - What aspects of wine, agriculture, culture, hospitality, or geography interest you most?
 - How might your proposed story contribute to a broader conversation about wine, agriculture, culture, hospitality, history, or geography?

Applications will be evaluated based on:

- Quality of writing
- Originality of story ideas
- Demonstrated reporting ability and diversity of perspectives and outlets
- Potential to contribute meaningful coverage of wine, agriculture, hospitality, or geography

Fellowship Components:

- September 30-October 4, 2026, residency at Early Mountain Vineyards
- Hands-on harvest experience alongside winemaker Maya Hood White
- Visits to some of Virginia's most respected wineries
- All lodging provided
- Round-trip flight from any US destination
- All meals during scheduled fellowship programming
- Attendance at "Taste of Virginia" Grand Tasting at Early Mountain on October 4
- A \$5,000 unrestricted stipend intended to support the selected Fellow's reporting and writing projects following the residency, paid at completion of the Fellowship

Note: Fellows are not expected to produce a finished article during the residency. We are interested in curiosity, perspective, and potential for meaningful storytelling.

Application Deadline and Timeline:

- June 16—Applications open
- July 5—Submission deadline
- July 15—Fellow Announced

Submission Instructions:

Please combine all materials into a single PDF and submit to:
charlotte@cmilancomm.com

Subject Line: EMV Fellowship Application – [Applicant Name]

Application Deadline: July 5, 2026

The Fellowship takes place at a working farm and production facility with uneven, unpaved terrain and active equipment areas. Madison County Wines LLC dba Early Mountain Vineyards ("Early Mountain Vineyards") is committed to making the Fellowship accessible and will provide reasonable accommodations; applicants who anticipate needing an accommodation are encouraged to contact charlotte@cmilancomm.com at any point in the process.

All applicants will be considered equally. Early Mountain Vineyards does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, or marital/familial status.

The stipend is payable only to an individual who is a U.S. person for federal income tax purposes (i.e., able to complete an IRS Form W-9) and whose immigration status, if applicable, permits attendance at the Fellowship and acceptance of the stipend. Applicants with questions about stipend eligibility should contact charlotte@cmilancomm.com before applying.

The selected applicant must sign Early Mountain Vineyards's Fellowship Agreement before the Fellowship begins; the Fellowship is not awarded until that agreement is fully executed.



EARLY MOUNTAIN

APPLICATION FORM

Early Mountain Vineyards Wine Writer Fellowship — 2026

Applicant Information

Full legal name: _____

Name as it should appear publicly, if selected: _____

Mailing address: _____

Email: _____

Phone: _____

Social handles: _____

Website / portfolio / publication link (optional): _____

How did you hear about the Fellowship? (optional): _____

Availability

Confirm availability for the anticipated Fellowship dates (September 30-October 4, 2026); note any conflicts: _____

Applicant Certifications and Application Terms

By signing below, I certify and agree as follows:

1. Accuracy. The information in my application is true and complete, and the writing samples are my own work. Misrepresentation is grounds for disqualification or rescission of the Fellowship.
2. Age. I am, or will be, at least 21 years of age as of the first day of the Fellowship.
3. No Obligation; No Employment. Submitting an application creates no obligation on Early Mountain Vineyards to select me or any applicant, and creates no employment, agency, or contractual relationship. Early Mountain Vineyards may modify, postpone, or cancel the Fellowship at any time before a Fellowship Agreement is signed.
4. My Materials. I retain all copyright and other rights in my application materials and writing samples. I grant Early Mountain Vineyards a limited, non-exclusive license to reproduce and share my materials internally solely to evaluate applications. Early Mountain Vineyards will not otherwise publish or use my materials without my written permission.
5. Fellowship Agreement Required. If selected, I will be required to sign Early Mountain Vineyards's Fellowship Agreement, which will include, among other things, an assumption of risk and release relating to Fellowship activities to the extent permitted by Virginia law, and a release permitting Early Mountain Vineyards to use my name, photograph, and likeness in its marketing. I understand the Fellowship is contingent on signing that agreement.
6. Privacy. Early Mountain Vineyards will use my contact information to administer the Fellowship and will not sell it.
7. No Reimbursement. Early Mountain Vineyards will not reimburse costs of preparing or submitting an application.

Printed name: _____

Applicant signature: _____ Date: _____