

NEW WRITING  
NORTH

NORTHERN WRITERS '   
AWARDS

**Press release for immediate release**

**Thursday 16 November 2017**

**The Northern Writers' Awards open for entry  
with £40,000 of support for new writing from  
the North of England**

Writers from across the North of England are invited to submit their work in progress to the Northern Writers' Awards 2018, which are now open for entry until **Thursday 1 February 2018**.

The poet Imtiaz Dharker, literary agent Jonathan Ruppin, and authors Kerry Hudson and Lisa Williamson will judge the 2018 awards.

The Northern Writers' Awards have been running since 2000 and exist to recognise talent and **support new work towards publication or broadcast**. The awards are the **largest of their kind in the UK** and have a reputation for identifying some of the best unpublished writing in the country, with recent winners including the novelists Chloe Daykin, Sarah Dunnakey and Benjamin Myers, short story writer Carys Davies, and poets Zaffar Kunial, Andrew McMillan and Kim Moore.

The awards are produced by New Writing North with support from Northumbria University and Arts Council England. The full suite of awards is made possible by a range of vital partnerships with And Other Stories, Arvon, Bonafide Films, Channel 4, Lime Pictures, The Literary Consultancy, Oneworld Publications, The Society of Authors, and Word Factory.

There are awards for writers at different stages of their careers, including mentoring, developmental support and cash awards to buy time to write. New awards for 2018 include the **Northern Book Prize**, worth £5000, is a major new prize for writers in the North of England, which will see its winner's book-length work of literary fiction published by the much-acclaimed, Sheffield-based independent publisher And Other Stories. This prize will be judged by And Other Stories editor Tara Tobler, writers Conor O'Callaghan and Ian McMillan, and chief executive of New Writing North, Claire Malcolm.

Another new award, the **Word Factory Apprentice Award**, will award one outstanding short story writer from the North of England a £1000 bursary, mentoring from the writer Jenn Ashworth; and a year's free access to all Word Factory events and masterclasses.

In addition to individual awards, New Writing North supports its winners with ongoing tailored support. In 2018 selected winners will be offered additional opportunities including the chance to pitch work to literary agents and editors at the Summer Talent Salon in London; membership of The Society of Authors; and a professional development session with the leading independent publisher, Oneworld Publications.

The awards available for 2018 are:

- The flagship **Northern Writers' Awards**, which offer cash prizes of up to £5,000 to support writers of fiction, narrative non-fiction, children's, YA, graphic novels, short stories and poetry.
- The **Northern Book Prize** is for a fiction writer with a completed manuscript. The winning writer will receive £5000, editorial support and a contract for worldwide publication from And Other Stories. The writer will also have access to other developmental opportunities offered by New Writing North.
- **TLC Free Reads Scheme**, which offers up to five poets, prose writers and children's writers an in-depth editorial report from The Literary Consultancy.
- The **Northumbria University Student and Alumni Award**, worth £2000, for fiction or poetry, open to final year students and recent graduates of the university.
- The **Channel 4/Northumbria University Writing for Television Awards** offers two writers development

opportunities within television. One writer will work closely with Lime Pictures through a mentoring placement on the serial drama *Hollyoaks*. The other writer work closely with Bonafide Films, an independent northern production company involved in creating original TV drama. Each winner will receive a bursary of £3000.

- The **Word Factory Apprentice Award** is open to short story writers who have not yet published a collection. The winner will receive £1000; mentoring from the writer Jenn Ashworth; and a year's free access to all Word Factory events and masterclasses.
- The **Andrea Badenoch Fiction Award**, worth £2000, is open to debut female writers over the age of 42 (Andrea's age when she was first published).
- The **Arvon Award**, which offers a prose writer the chance to undertake an Arvon residential creative writing course.
- The **Cuckoo Young Writers Award**, worth £200, will recognise one young writer between 14 and 18 years old whose work shows exceptional promise.
- The **Matthew Hale Award**, for writers aged 12-18 and worth £500, is by nomination only. Parents, teachers and other adults are invited to nominate talented young writers who might otherwise lack the opportunity to pursue their talent.

**Claire Malcolm, Chief Executive of New Writing North, said:**

“We are delighted to once again throw open our doors to the writers of the North of England. Every year we marvel at the range and diversity of our region's literary talent and we know there will be many more surprises in store for us this time. We are looking forward to working with our specialist judges and industry partners to take forward another generation of writers from the North.”

**Professor Tanja Buelmann, Associate Pro-Vice Chancellor for Strategic Planning and Engagement (Arts, Design and Social Sciences), said:** “These excellent awards for writers are at the heart of Northumbria's partnership with New Writing North and demonstrate our continued investment in celebrating and supporting creative talent in the region.”

“The University will be excited to see who wins this year’s awards and will have a special interest in the Northumbria Student and Alumni Award, which launched for the first time in 2016 and is open to final year students and alumni of the University.”

**Northumbria University’s Head of Humanities, Professor Julian Wright added:** “Each year, the University’s partnership with New Writing North grows stronger as we develop new and innovative collaborations for our students, staff and the wider cultural community. This allows us to share knowledge, develop our research agenda and provide a wide range of specialist creative opportunities. We’re delighted to support these great awards for another year.”

#### **Judges’ comments:**

**Poet Imtiaz Dharker** said: “It is an honour and a pleasure to be the poetry judge for the Northern Writers’ Awards this year. I look forward to hearing from new poets as well as more experienced ones, to reading work in progress and to coming across some of the freshest writing in the country today.”

**Author Kerry Hudson** said: “Winning a short story prize when I was just starting out was key to believing my stories about ‘non-traditional’ literary characters and worlds might have an audience. I believe that our literary culture is best served by writers who represent the full and unique spectrum of potential stories that might be told. Therefore, I couldn’t be prouder to contribute to a prize which has inclusivity and accessibility at its heart, offering the opportunity of professional validation and industry access to writers from all backgrounds.”

**Literary agent Jonathan Ruppin** said “I’m delighted to playing a part in highlighting great writing from the north of England - the publishing world doesn’t pay enough attention to writing from outside its South East base. I’m also thrilled to be on the panel with Kerry Hudson – it would wonderful to discover a writer as original as she is.”

**Author Lisa Williamson** said: “I feel so proud and privileged to judge the children's and young adult

category. I'm hugely passionate about homegrown literature for young people so the thought of potentially discovering a brand new talent is very exciting indeed!"

Enter online at [www.northernwritersawards.com](http://www.northernwritersawards.com) by Thursday 1 February 2018.

**For all media enquiries, please contact Laura Fraine [laurafraine@newwritingnorth.com](mailto:laurafraine@newwritingnorth.com) 07411 164 837**

## NOTES TO EDITORS

**New Writing North** is the writing development agency for the north of England, and is an Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisation [www.newwritingnorth.com](http://www.newwritingnorth.com). The Northern Writers' Awards are its central platform for discovering and developing new writers from across the region, and were founded in 2000. More information about the Northern Writers' Awards is available at [www.northernwritersawards.com](http://www.northernwritersawards.com). New Writing North works with writers to develop career opportunities, new commissions, projects, residencies, publications and live events.

**Northumbria University, Newcastle** is a research-rich, business-focused, professional university with a global reputation for academic excellence.

One of the largest institutions in the UK with almost 34,000 students from more than 132 countries and over 186,000 alumni worldwide, Northumbria was shortlisted for University of the Year in 2017 and was also named 48th in the UK in 2017/18 by the Guardian – its highest league table position. Northumbria has invested more than £250 million in its estate since 2005 to improve the student experience. Northumbria is ranked top 50 in the UK for research power and had the 4th largest increase in quality research funding (REF 2014). According to Times Higher Education, Northumbria had the biggest rise in research power of any university in the UK. Northumbria's cultural partners include New Writing North, Live Theatre, BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art, Tyneside Cinema and Tyne and Wear Archives and Museums.

## Our Partners

