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NorthBound Book Award opens search for unpublished Northern titles

New Writing North is pleased to announce the University of York as the supporter of the NorthBound Award, in partnership with Saraband, as part of this year's Northern Writers' Awards

The search is on for the next great Northern book, as the NorthBound Book Award 2021 launches today (Tuesday 15 December).

The NorthBound Book Award was created in 2019 to celebrate the richness of writing from the North of England and the innovative spirit of independent publishing. The award is offered in partnership by New Writing North, independent publisher Saraband and the University of York.

The award is open to writers based in the North of England with an unpublished full-length manuscript for a fiction or narrative non-fiction book. The University of York will award the winning writer with an advance of £5,000 and an invitation to present their work as part of the University's Writers at York series. The winner will also receive a publication contract with Saraband and a package of support from New Writing North.

The NorthBound Book Award is presented as part of the Northern Writers' Awards, an industry-leading writer development programme produced by New Writing North and offering £40,000 worth of awards in 2021. The awards are open for entry until Thursday 18 February 2021 and offer a range of publication, broadcast and professional development opportunities for writers from the North of England at all stages of their careers.

Newcastle writer JA Mensah, now a lecturer at University of York, was the first winner of the NorthBound Book Award in 2019. Her novel, *Castles from Cobwebs*, will be published by Saraband in February 2021. It tells the story of Imani, a foundling who is rescued as a baby and raised by nuns on a remote Northumbrian island, growing up with an ever-increasing feeling of displacement. Lancashire writer John D Rutter won the award in 2020 for his first full-length novel, *Approval*.

Professor Helen Smith, Head of Department, English and Related Literature, University of York, said: 'We're delighted to support the NorthBound award, celebrating and promoting the vibrancy of writing and publishing in and about the North of England. Our regional literary heritage is a source of constant inspiration to the University and our students, and we're proud to be part of an award bringing the best new northern writing to audiences across the world.'



Sara Hunt, Publisher, Saraband, said: ‘We are thrilled to begin a new chapter of the NorthBound Book Award in working with the University of York. The combination of the university's history, tradition, excellence and its progressive, outward-looking approach to literature make this a dream partnership for us. We look forward very much to working together to celebrate outstanding new writing within our region.’

Will Mackie, Senior Programme Manager (Writing and Awards), New Writing North, said: ‘We’re delighted to welcome the University of York as the supporter of the Northbound Book Award as we enter into our third year of working alongside Saraband. This unique award acknowledges that our region has a rich heritage of independent publishing and provides a potentially life-changing opportunity for the winner. We enter into our arrangement with the University of York and Saraband with excitement and optimism, knowing from our experience how creative partnerships have lasting and much sought-after benefits for all involved.’

The NorthBound Book Award will open for entry on Tuesday 15 December until Thursday 18 February. For full details on applying, visit <http://northernwritersawards.com/>

Ends

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The Northern Writers’ 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 Arvon, Bonafide Films, Channel 4, Hachette Children’s Group, Lime Pictures, The Literary Consultancy, Madeleine Millburn Agency, Newcastle University, The North Literary Agency, Oneworld Publications, Saraband, The Society of Authors, University of York, as well as generous donations from individual donors.

The winners of the Northern Writers’ Awards, including the NorthBound Book Award, will be announced in June 2021.