

NEW WRITING NORTH

Press release

For release Wednesday 6 July

Northern Writers' Awards 2022: Twenty-nine writers win publication, mentoring and cash awards to support outstanding new works from the North of England

Twenty-nine writers from the North of England received awards worth more than £50,000 at the Northern Writers' Awards on Tuesday (5 July) evening, as the annual awards programme held its first live celebration since 2019, with a hybrid in-person and digital event.

The Northern Writers' Awards were founded in 2000 and exist to recognise talent and support new work towards publication or broadcast. Now in their 23rd year, the awards are the largest writing development programme of their kind in England and have a reputation for identifying some of the country's best unpublished writing. Selected from a record-breaking 2035 entries in 2022, this year's winners will join an impressive list of 360 writers who have been previously supported through the programme, many of whom have gone on to critical acclaim.

The Northern Writers' Awards are produced by New Writing North with support from Northumbria University and Arts Council England.

Awards partners Channel 4, Hachette Children's Group and University of York work with New Writing North to create transformational opportunities for writers.

Additional financial support for individual awards comes from Newcastle University, The North Literary Agency, the writer Benjamin Myers and the families and friends of Andrea Badenoch, Sid Chaplin and Matthew Hale. Several of the awards are enhanced by partnerships with Saraband, Arvon, the Literary Consultancy, the Society of Authors, Rollem Productions, Lime Pictures, Bonafide Films, Out-Spoken Press, Oneworld, Madeleine Milburn Agency and the Soho Agency.

The Northern Writers' Awards 2022: Celebration and Showcase event took place at Northumbria University and was hosted by 2013 winner Andrew McMillan. Andrew was supported by the awards for his debut poetry collection, *physical*, which went on to win the 2015 Guardian First Book Award.

The event also featured previous winners including Yvonne Battle-Felton, whose Northern Writers' Awards-winning book *Remembered* was longlisted for the

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Women's Prize; Jayshree Patel, who won a Channel 4 Writing for Television Award in 2016 launching her career as a television writer on *Hollyoaks*; Shaun Wilson, a two-time award winner who read from his work-in-progress *Malc's Boy*; and the acclaimed poet Linda France, who won an award for her poetry in 2012.

Claire Malcolm, Chief Executive of New Writing North, said: "We are very proud of the awards and the impact that they have on writers – taking many talented people on the journey from aspiring to published authors. Our talent spotting is of the highest calibre and the alumni of the awards now tells its own story of how many talented writers there are in the North to be discovered. Writing from the North continues to flourish and New Writing North's role as the discovery agent continues to strengthen. I've been especially touched this year that Benjamin Myers, a former recipient of an award, has returned this year to sponsor his own award. A wonderful demonstration of how valuable writers find our support and how they want to pass it on when their own careers take off. The Northern Writers' Awards, spanning as they do Rotherham to Berwick and everywhere in between continue to be a very special programme. It is fantastic this year to return to a live event in Newcastle and to bring writers, publishers, agents and friends to the city to celebrate the North."

Professor Katy Shaw, Professor of Contemporary Writings and Director of Cultural Partnerships at Northumbria University, said: "Across more than a decade, Northumbria have proudly sponsored the Northern Writers' Awards and helped grow the suite of work-in-progress awards. Today the Northern Writers' Awards are a landmark in the literary industry calendar and a shorthand for quality assurance in identifying the best new writing from the North of England. The range of categories shows the inclusivity and reach of the awards and is a testament to their growth in supplying a new talent pipeline to the cultural and creative industries. Research by Northumbria academics evidences that the 'value' of the NWAs is as much about pounds and pence as it is hearts and minds, with winning authors experiencing significant uplifts in income, professional development and industry networks. We look forward to returning to our live celebratory event on campus this year and raising a glass to the next generation who will write from the North, for the world."

Kevin Blacoe, Channel 4's Head of Partnerships & Skills, Nations and Regions, said: "We are really proud of our partnership with New Writing North. They provide amazing support and opportunities for writers from across the North of England and this aligns perfectly with our aims at 4Skills to nurture and support diverse talent from all parts of the UK which is why we have increased our support this year. The awards have played a vital role in bringing through some key talent over the years, voices which otherwise might never have been discovered, and we congratulate all of this year's winners."

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Fiction and narrative non-fiction judge Tahmima Anam said: “I'm delighted to have been given the opportunity to judge the Northern Writers' Awards. I was very impressed with all the submissions: writers tackling everything from their identity to larger issues. The quality of the writing was overall very impressive, and we actually had some pretty tough decisions to make. It was a really satisfying process and I congratulate all the writers and wish them all the best.”

Poetry judge Helen Mort said: “It was a huge privilege to judge the Northern Writers' Awards for Poetry; I'm also a former winner of these awards, so I know exactly how much this means and how transformative the prize can be. Thank you so much to everybody who entered. What struck me the most in the range of entries was how distinct each of them was. I didn't read any two that felt stylistically similar, every one had a really distinctive voice. I think in the end I was looking to be surprised. I was slightly looking to have the rug pulled from under my feet and to have that sense of how did they get there? How did they arrive at that idea? I was also looking for a perfect blend of form and content, something finding its exact mode of expression. Congratulations to all of the winners and to everyone else. It was a great privilege to judge.”

The Northern Writers' Awards offer a wide range of support and opportunities for writers at all stages of their careers, including publication, mentoring, manuscript assessment, writing placements, retreats and cash awards to buy time to write.

The full list of winners is:

Northern Writers' Award for Fiction

Katie Hale

Northern Writers' Awards for Poetry

Kit Fan

Hannah Hodgson

Suzanne Batty

NorthBound Book Award

Julia Rampen

Hachette Children's Novel Award

Karon Alderman

Channel 4 Writing for Television Awards - Lime Pictures

Tom Smith

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Channel 4 Writing for Television Awards - Rollem Productions

Natalie Beech

Channel 4 Writing for Television Awards - Bonafide Films

Natalie Mirosch

Northern Debut Awards for Fiction and Narrative Non-Fiction

Gráinne O'Hare

Stephanie Gavan

Northern Debut Award for Young Adult Fiction

Anna Quirke

Northern Debut Awards for Poetry

Gregory Kearns

Nicky Kippax

Northern Debut Award for Poetry: Out-Spoken Press Programme

Elizabeth Chadwick Pywell

Andrea Badenoch Award

Ally North

Northumbria University Student and Alumni Award

Susannah Ronnie

Sid Chaplin Award

Andrew Ballantyne (Winner)

Ruskin Smith (Highly commended)

Finchale Award for Short Fiction

Jack Joslin

TLC Free Read

Jessie Jacobs

Khatijah Balu

Arvon Award

Catherine Spooner

Young Northern Writers' Awards

Izzy Baillie Smith (Winner, 11-14)

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Ella Youngs (Highly commended, 11-14)
Sawyer Brook (Winner, 15-18)
Hala Mukhair (Highly commended, 15-18)

Matthew Hale Award

Nefeli Frida (Winner)
Isabelle Pollard (Highly commended)

Winners' comments (for a full list of winners' quotes and bios, see attached document)

Northern Writers' Awards for Poetry winner Kit Fan is based in Yorkshire and was born in Hong Kong, the setting of his debut novel *Diamond Hill* (2021), for which he won a Northern Writers' Award in 2018. This year's award supports his third poetry collection. **Kit Fan said:** "I'm incredibly honoured to be awarded this year's Northern Writers' Award for Poetry for my next collection *The Ink Cloud Reader*. It means the world to me that my poems speak to this year's judge Helen Mort, a poet I deeply admire. I can't distinguish what is more important to me – being a poet or a resident in the north of England, as both forces have changed my life fundamentally and temperamentally. Thank you, New Writing North for supporting my writing, and Helen Mort and readers of the prize entries for recognising my poems."

Karon Alderman lives and works in Newcastle upon Tyne. She is a dyslexia specialist and teaches English to teens and adults, and adult creative writing in a small FE college. She wins the **Hachette Children's Novel Award**, receiving £5000 and a publication contract with Hachette Children's Group for her novel *Dark Flood*. **Karon Alderman said:** "I'm delighted to be given the Hachette Children's Novel Award. It's a great encouragement to keep writing and to never give up hope that someone will enjoy reading your work."

The **NorthBound Book Award** was created in 2019 to celebrate the richness of writing from the North and the innovation of independent publishers. The Award is supported by the University of York and Saraband, rewarding the winner with £5000 and publication.

Winner Julia Rampen is a Scottish-Canadian writer based in Liverpool. **Julia Rampen said:** "I'm totally overwhelmed to be awarded this prize. Writing this novel around a day job has not been easy, and I might have given up many times if not for the encouragement of friends and writing networks. I'm incredibly excited to have the chance to be published, and thrilled it's through a publisher and prize that champions the North."

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New Writing North and Channel 4 introduced a third Writing for Television Award in 2022, which added a placement at Rollem Productions to existing partnerships with Lime Pictures and Bonafide Films. The winner of the **Channel 4 Writing for Television Awards - Rollem Productions** is Natalie Beech from Manchester. She wins a bursary of £3000 and a long-term placement with Rollem Productions.

Natalie Beech said: “I’m thrilled to have been selected for this award; it’s hard to explain how much it means to me. I’ve been writing television scripts for years and have only dreamt of opportunities like this, so to have my writing recognised in this way is overwhelming and I’m beyond delighted. It just goes to show that you never know what can happen when you put your work out there. I can’t wait to get started!”

Jack Joslin from Bradford wins the inaugural **Finchale Award for Short Fiction**, founded by writer Benjamin Myers, and receives £1000 for a single short story. **Jack Joslin said:** “After dousing myself in cold water to prove this isn’t a dream, I am beyond honoured and excited to receive this award. Winning the Finchale Award for Short Fiction has not only helped quell that gnawing voice of self-doubt, but made the world of writing feel fresh, accessible, and exciting to an extent I didn’t think was possible. I am — and will forever be — hugely grateful.”

Find out more about all of the 2022 winners at www.northernwritersawards.com

Donate to the Northern Writers’ Awards to support new writing from the North of England at <http://northernwritersawards.com/donate/>

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NOTES TO EDITORS

For all media enquiries, please contact
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For full bios and quotes from all Northern Writers’ Awards 2022 winners, see attached document. Photos are also available – please contact Laura Fraine .

Recently published books which previously received Northern Writers’ Awards support as work-in-progress include:

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- *Zeina Starborn and the Sky Whale* by Hannah Durkan (Hachette Children's)
- *163 Days* by Hannah Hodgson (Seren)
- *Cold Fish Soup* by Adam Farrer (Saraband)
- *The Unbelievable Biscuit Factory* by James Harris (Hachette Children's)
- *Diamond Hill* by Kit Fan (Dialogue)
- *Castles from Cobwebs* by J.A. Mensah (Saraband)
- *Approval* by John D Rutter (Saraband)
- *The River Within* by Karen Powell (Europa)
- *Much With Body* by Polly Atkin (Seren)
- *Inscape* by Kathleen Bainbridge (Vane Women)
- *Towards a General Theory of Love* by Clare Shaw (Bloodaxe)
- *The Private Joys of Nnenna Maloney* by Okechukwu Nzelu (Dialogue)

THE NORTHERN WRITERS' AWARDS AVAILABLE FOR 2022 ARE:

The **Northern Writers' Awards** flagship awards strand, which offers cash prizes of up to £5000 to support writers of fiction, narrative non-fiction, YA, graphic novels, short stories and poetry.

The **Hachette Children's Novel Award** is open to debut children's writers with a full-length manuscript. There is one winner for this award. The winning writer will be offered a publishing contract from Hachette Children's Group granting Hachette world rights in all languages, including audio, film, TV and merchandising, with an advance of £5,000 to be set against royalties. Royalties will be on Hachette Children's Group's standard terms. Additionally, the winner will receive access to New Writing North's programmes of support. HCG reserves the right to: (i) withdraw its offer of a contract to the winning writer if terms cannot be agreed (in these circumstances, the winning writer will still be paid £5,000); and (ii) offer an additional publishing deal to any of the shortlisted titles, on the same terms as the winning entry.

The **NorthBound Book 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 **Channel 4 Writing for Television Awards**, which award three writers per year a placement with an independent production company alongside mentoring and a bursary of £3000. North-based independent production companies Bonafide Films

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and Lime Pictures have been long-term partners in the awards. A third production company, Leeds-based Rollem Productions, joined the programme in 2022.

The **Northern Debut Awards** offer structured developmental support to writers of fiction, young adult fiction, narrative non-fiction or poetry who are yet to publish a full-length work. The package of support includes a £2000 bursary, mentoring and access to the Northern Writers' Awards Talent Network. This year, there are three Northern Debut Awards for poetry and three for fiction. One additional fiction place will be made in memory of the North East writer Andrea Badenoch (1951-2004), whose novels include *Blink* and *Loving Geordie*. This award is open to debut women and non-binary writers over the age of 42. One of the three poetry awardees will be admitted onto the Out-Spoken Press Emerging Poets Development Scheme, a new initiative to nurture and support poets, and will receive mentoring from Anthony Anaxagorou.

The **Finchale Award for Short Fiction** is a new opportunity that will award a short story writer a prize of £1000. The award is named after Finchale Priory, a place of retreat for the monks of Durham during the Middle Ages. It is made possible by the generosity of writer Benjamin Myers, who will judge alongside Wendy Erskine.

The **Northumbria University Student and Alumni Award**, worth £2000, for fiction or poetry, is open to final-year students and recent graduates of the university in any discipline.

The **Sid Chaplin Award**, in partnership with Newcastle University and the North Literary Agency, supports writers of fiction and narrative non-fiction who identify as originating from a working-class background. The winning writer will receive a bursary of £2000 and a comprehensive package of support. The award is made in memory of the writer Sid Chaplin (1916–1986) whose novels include *The Day of the Sardine* and *The Watchers and the Watched*. This year's judging panel will be joined by the writer Katy Massey.

TLC Free Reads Scheme offers up to three poets or prose writers an in-depth editorial report from The Literary Consultancy and a £500 bursary.

The **Arvon Award** offers a prose writer the chance to undertake an Arvon residential creative writing course.

The **Matthew Hale Award** is open to young writers who show promise but have had limited opportunities to pursue their talent. This award is for a young person aged 11-18 and consists of a package of support created by New Writing North, worth £500.

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The **Young Northern Writers' Awards** will recognise one young writer aged 11-14 and one aged 15-18 whose work shows exceptional promise. Each writer will be awarded £150. Up to two writers may also be highly commended across the age categories.

The Northern Writers' Awards Talent Network

In addition to the individual programmes of each award strand, all Northern Writers' Awards winners over the age of 18 will receive ongoing support (winners under 18 will receive separate support) as part of the Northern Writers' Awards Talent Network.

This support will be designed around your individual requirements as a writer. We will help you to identify your personal goals for your writing and support you as you work towards them.

The network may include a combination of the following:

- Consultations with a designated in-house contact at New Writing North.
- Advice and support for funding applications when appropriate.
- Support with brokering connections with literary agents and publishers.
- Professional development sessions for poets delivered by a publisher.
- A place on New Writing North's Pitching Workshop.
- Regular peer group meetings with fellow winners.
- A year's free membership of the Society of Authors.
- A professional development session with the Society of Authors.
- An in-person or Zoom visit to Oneworld Publications.
- An in-person or Zoom visit to the Madeleine Milburn Agency.
- An Arvon Masterclass.
- Specially designed seminars delivered by the Soho Agency.

About the partners

New Writing North is the development agency for creative writing and reading in the North of England. Based in Newcastle upon Tyne since 1996, it is an Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisation.

The organisation works in partnership with regional and national partners to produce a range of literary and performance activities including flagship projects

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such as the Northern Writers' Awards, Young Writers, the Gordon Burn Prize, Durham Book Festival and Read Regional.

New Writing North specialises in developing and investing in writers of all ages and act as a dynamic broker between writers, producers, publishers and broadcasters across the creative industries. Current partners include BBC Radio 3, Channel 4 Drama, Faber and Faber, Hachette Children's Group, Northumbria University and Durham University.

As a producer of new work, New Writing North commissions a wide range of writing from topical essays and publications to award-winning dance theatre productions, short films, live literature and broadcast projects.

New Writing North's extensive and award-winning Young Writers programme develops the creativity and skills of young people. Work in schools with children and their teachers is complemented by a large and diverse out-of-school programme that is open to all, with a special focus on areas with fewer opportunities.

As a promoter and producer of festivals and literary events and through its partnerships with schools, libraries, universities and prisons, New Writing North engages audiences with enriching and creative reading experiences.

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.

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 37,000 students from 137 countries and almost 220,000 alumni worldwide, Northumbria is empowering a new generation of innovators, visionaries and change-makers to transform lives, to make a remarkable impact on the world, and to take on tomorrow. Northumbria has invested almost £300 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 & Wear Archives and Museums.

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