

NEW WRITING NORTH

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Calling all writers and book lovers – New Writing North announces its Autumn Programme

New Writing North has announced its Autumn Season today, with a packed programme showcasing everything from literary events with stellar names, to community-led writing groups, to professional development courses and industry networking.

The programme teases the announcement of the Durham Book Festival line-up – revealed in full, later this month – and heralds the return of the Northern Writers' Awards, which offer support for writers in the North of England, at all points of their careers.

Commenting on the new programme, New Writing North's Executive Director of Programme and Impact, Anna Disley, said: "It's important to us that we're able to cater for readers and writers across our communities. We're bringing the most interesting writers and thinkers to the region. We're working with our young people and underserved communities to write creatively. We're uncovering, supporting, and providing career-making opportunities for writing talent at all stages.

"We're delighted to offer such a variety this Autumn, with support from our partners. We hope there is something for everyone with New Writing North this season."

New Writing North leads the development of creative writing and reading in the North of England. Based in Newcastle upon Tyne since 1996, it works with a diverse range of partners across higher education, publishing, literature, media, healthcare, and local government to create opportunities across the region.

Its Autumn programme is supported by vital partnerships with Northumbria University, Durham County Council, Durham University, the John S Cohen Foundation, Hachette Children's Group, Channel 4, University of York, English PEN, and with funding from Arts Council England, North of Tyne Combined Authority, Newcastle Culture Investment Fund, Paul Hamlyn Foundation, and the Kavli Foundation.

Programme highlights

Highlights include:

- [**The Writers' Space**](#): a vibrant new online network supporting writers, at all stages, to improve their craft, access to agents and influential professionals, and connect with peers. The Writers' Space offers monthly digital seminars from authors and industry experts, one-to-one surgeries with New Writing North staff, discounted tickets for events, and an online networking space.
- [**Sounds Good: From the Page to the Podcast**](#) is an innovative podcasting course designed especially for writers interested in developing their work for audio. Developed with podcaster and producer Lisa Mainwaring, the 7-week course combines online teaching workshops and professional studio time.

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The first iteration of the course begins on 19 September, with further dates planned soon.

It also features a schedule of literary events in Newcastle and online, such as:

- [Francis Spufford in conversation](#) (23 October, The Biscuit Factory) as the author of *Golden Hill* and *Light Perpetual* introduces his latest novel, *Cahokia Jazz*, a thrilling tale of murder and mystery in 1920s America.
- The livestream of [The Announcement of the David Cohen Prize for Literature](#) (9 November), one of literature's most prestigious honours, which is worth £40,000 and recognises a living writer from the UK or Republic of Ireland for a lifetime's achievement in literature. Recent winners have included Tom Stoppard, Edna O'Brien, and Colm Tóibín.
- [An Evening with Mary Beard](#) (14 November, Northern Stage), the leading historian whose latest book, *Emperor of Rome*, takes the reader into the corridors of power to share the secrets of those who ruled the Roman empire.
- [The PEN HG Wells Lecture with Monica Ali](#) (29 November, The Common Room, Newcastle), in which the acclaimed novelist of *Brick Lane* and *Love Marriage* will explore the threat AI may pose to writers and creatives in the future. The annual lecture, hosted by human rights organisation English PEN, showcases visionary writing and new thinking in the spirit of former PEN president, HG Wells.

Durham Book Festival

Other top picks this Autumn include **Durham Book Festival**, which will take place 13-15 October in central Durham and be livestreamed. The Durham County Council festival is produced by New Writing North with support from Durham University and Arts Council England.

The full festival programme will be announced on 17 August, but revealed today are events including:

- [Grace Dent](#), with her latest book *Comfort Eating*, a celebration of the food we eat when no-one's looking;
- internationally bestselling author [Jeanette Winterson](#), whose new book *Night Side of the River* is a collection of modern ghost stories;
- broadcaster and writer [Melanie Sykes](#), who offers an account of being a neurodivergent person in a neurotypical world in *Illuminate: Autism and all the Things I've Left Unsaid*; and
- [Durham University Festival Laureate: Zaffar Kunial](#) – a special event in which the Faber poet, author of *England's Green*, will read from new work commissioned for the festival.

Get writing!

New Writing North is offering 15 informal, community-led groups for writers and creatives across the North-East and online. There are groups for adults and young people:

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- [Read Them Your Writes](#), a monthly scratch-night-cum-literary-salon hosted by writer Adam Sharp
- [World Writes](#), a creative writing group for adults who speak English as a second or other language
- [Brown Girls Write](#), a creative writing group for women of colour
- [First Edition](#), a group for 18–25-year-olds looking to develop their writing skills and careers in the arts, and
- [Young Writers](#) groups across the North-East and online for young people aged 11-19.

Northern Writers' Awards

[The Northern Writers' Awards](#) are open to writers in the North of England and offer support, mentoring, placements, publication, and cash awards. They have year-round entry dates. The full suite of Awards is supported by Northumbria University and Arts Council England.

The Awards kick off with the **NorthBound Book Award** – supported by the University of York and in partnership with Saraband – which is open to writers of fiction or narrative non-fiction with a full-length manuscript. It offers publication with independent publisher, Saraband, and an advance against royalties of £5,000. New, emerging, or established writers may enter for this award now, which is open until 12 September.

Later in the Autumn (from 13 September), emerging writers can apply for the **Prototype Development Programme**, in partnership with Prototype Publishing, which offers six months of development with the publisher.

On 26 October, entries will open for the **Hachette Children's Novel Awards**, supported by Hachette Children's Group. Debut writers of middle-grade children's and early teen fiction can apply. The awards offer a package of support including a cash award of £3,000 and mentoring and professional development sessions including with Hachette editors and a literary agent.

The flagship Northern Writers' Awards, including a range of awards for all stages, will open later in November 2023.

Find out more

View the full [Autumn Season brochure](#) and see the [New Writing North website](#) for full listings

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For all media enquiries, including high res images, please contact Laura Fraine laurafraine@newwritingnorth.com 07411 164837

Notes to Editors

New Writing North leads the development of creative writing and reading in the North of England. We are based in Newcastle upon Tyne, where we have produced nationally significant work since 1996.

We are proud to be a charity and an Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisation.

NEW WRITING NORTH

We believe that writing talent is everywhere, but that opportunities are not. We work hard to both identify talent and create fantastic career-changing opportunities for people from across society.

We develop programmes and activities that inspire people to engage with creative writing and reading, whether this is to develop their skills and professional ambitions or for pleasure and wellbeing.

We help excellent writing find local, regional, national, and international audiences.