

NEW WRITING NORTH

For immediate release

£30,000 Combined Authority cash boost for local creative and climate projects – supported by New Writing North

Six local creative and climate projects are set to enter an exciting new phase today, after securing significant funding and support from the North of Tyne Combined Authority (NTCA) and Newcastle-based writing development charity, New Writing North.

The projects, and the writers, creatives, and community organisers leading them, are among the latest to join New Writing North's 'Creative Associate' initiative. The scheme forms part of the charity's Writing and Publishing Skills Hub programme, funded by NTCA.

Participants will each receive a £5,000 budget to develop their ideas and the chance to join the New Writing North team as part of a six-month residency. There, they will be enabled to access training, mentoring, and further fundraising, to help deliver their final project and ongoing work.

The new Creative Associates are:

- **Steph Lyttle:** Lyttle is a facilitator and award-winning writer who specialises in Young Adult fiction. As a Creative Associate, Lyttle will research and write a new Young Adult novel, as well as running creative activity for neurodiverse young people, in line with the themes of her work.
- **Lucy Farfort:** a children's book illustrator and author whose work often centres on themes of representation, community, and hope. Farfort's debut picture book, 'In Our Hands', was shortlisted for the prestigious Jhalak Prize and longlisted for The Little Rebels Award. As a Creative Associate she will collaborate with pupils from a local primary school to develop a new children's book inspired by Arthur's Hill.
- **Arlen Pettitt** is a non-fiction writer and policy consultant – and the author of a weekly newsletter, called 'Wor Room', on regional politics. He will develop a series of essays exploring North East masculinity, community, and identity.
- **Peter Groom** is a performer and artist, whose work has been commissioned by Battersea Arts Centre and Northern Stage. He will develop a new piece of writing for performance that depicts Newcastle in 2033 in the aftermath of an environmental catastrophe.

Alongside these up-and-coming individual writers and artists, two community organisations are also set to benefit from the programme.

- **Brown Girls Write:** based in the West End of Newcastle, Brown Girls Write is a writing group for women of colour who want to nurture their creative writing skills and see better representation of people of colour in literature.
- **Threads in the Ground** is a new 'climate hope' organisation, which uses creativity and collaboration to help people and communities to act against climate change in pursuit of a better future.

New Writing North's Executive Director of Programme and Impact, Anna Disley, welcomed the new associates and said: "Nurturing new Northern talent. Raising the voices of those less heard in the mainstream. Making a positive impact on social justice and the climate crisis. Sharing knowledge and learning new perspectives. This is exactly what our Creative

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Associates programme is all about – thanks to support from the North of Tyne Combined Authority.”

Councillor Glen Sanderson, North of Tyne Combined Authority portfolio holder of culture, creative and rural commented: “Congratulations to these new Creative Associates – I’m excited to follow their success. The North East is bursting with creative talent. This is true not just of the creative things our region produces. Our writing. Our art. Our poetry, plays, and performance. It is true of the ways in which we seek to tackle urgent social and environmental challenges, too. We know this. New Writing North does, too. That makes for a great partnership.”

New Writing North leads the development of creative writing and reading in the North of England. An Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisation, it works to identify talent and create career-changing opportunities for people from across society. It helps excellent writing find local, regional, national, and international audiences.

For more information on New Writing North’s programmes, courses, and activities visit newwritingnorth.com.

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