

NEW WRITING
NORTH

NORTHERN WRITERS'
AWARDS

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Northern Writers' Awards open for entries in 25th anniversary year

The Northern Writers' Awards will celebrate their 25th anniversary year in 2024, with many of the award categories now open for entry until 12 February 2024.

Founded and produced by New Writing North, the Northern Writers' Awards are the largest and longest-running writer development programme of their kind in England, with a reputation for identifying some of the country's best unpublished writing. Previous winners include Katie Hale, Kit Fan, Benjamin Myers, Okechukwu Nzelu, Andrew McMillan, Helen Mort, Sharma Walfall and Hannah Hodgson.

By supporting writers at an earlier stage than most literary awards – usually before an agent or publisher is involved – the Northern Writers' Awards offer crucial support for writers at a pivotal stage of their careers, as well as providing a pipeline of new talent to the publishing and broadcast industries.

Mari Hannah won a Northern Writers' Award in 2010 for the draft manuscript of her novel, *Settled Blood*, leading to her signing with her literary agent Oli Munson at AM Heath. Her fifteenth novel, *The Longest Goodbye*, will be published by Orion in January 2024. **Mari Hannah said:** "I have often wondered where I'd be without winning a Northern Writers' Award at a time when my debut was on the desk of Pan Macmillan's then commissioning editor, Wayne Brookes. The publishing industry regard New Writing North as the gold standard in terms of writer development in our region. Back in 2010, they recognised my potential, launching my career as a crime writer two years later. My fingers haven't left my keyboard since, so I'd urge writers to submit for these prestigious awards. It literally changed my life."

Judges for the 2024 awards include the poet Malika Booker, novelist Ashley Hickson-Lovence and literary agent Rachel Mann.

Malika Booker said: "I am delighted to be the poetry judge for the Northern Writers' Awards. It is gratifying to be associated with a prize that has made such a difference to so many poets lives, and launched the careers of some notable northern writers. I really admire the developmental and interventionist nature of this prize and am looking forward to reading the poems you all submit to the prize. I am particularly looking for imaginative, and ambitious poems from poets whose voices are distinctive and unique."

Ashley Hickson-Lovence said: "It's a great honour to be a judge for the Northern Writers' Awards. I am looking forward to discovering new stories written with heart and crafted with flair. It's such a great privilege to be given unrestricted access to new words, new worlds,

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new wonders and I'm particularly looking forward to reading bold, original and innovative works that aren't afraid to push the boundaries a bit. Can't wait to get reading."

Rachel Mann said: "It is a sad rarity to be a literary agent based in the North of England, and so I'm very pleased to be supporting the wonderful work of New Writing North alongside Ashley and Malika. Excellent literature knows no borders, despite the restrictions of the industry, and I'm so looking forward to reading the nominees' submissions."

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, Newcastle University, The North Literary Agency, Oneworld Publications, The Society of Authors, University of York, the Word Factory as well as generous donations from individual donors including the Chaplin family, the Hale family, Andrew McMillan, and Benjamin Myers.

Will Mackie, Senior Programme Manager (Talent Development) and Programme Leader (MA in Publishing), said: "We're hugely grateful to our lead partners Northumbria University and Arts Council England for their continued support of the Northern Writers' Awards. Over the course of the last 25 years, the Northern Writers' Awards have helped to transform the creative and professional lives of hundreds of writers and have contributed to an enrichment of the UK's writing culture. The awards themselves have evolved during these ever-changing years, responding to the challenges writers face in progressing their work and navigating their way through the trade. As an organisation, we have built up a significant body of learning that informs our specialist approach to talent development. We have helped to build and sustain thriving networks in our writing communities and are immensely proud of all our award winners. We are hugely grateful to the partners and donors who make our work possible, our amazing judges and readers, and the industry professionals who give their time and expertise to supporting this programme."

Richard Kelly, Associate Professor in English and Creative Writing at Northumbria University, said: "The Northern Writers' Awards are precious, unique prizes, altogether a lifeblood for up-and-coming creative writers in the region, and Northumbria University is hugely proud to be a lead partner for what promises to be another tremendous unveiling of new talent in 2024."

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.

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The following Northern Writers' Awards, made possible through New Writing North's partnership with its lead award partner Northumbria University, are now open until 12 February 2024:

- **Northern Writers' Awards**

Cash prizes of up to £5000 to support writers of fiction, narrative non-fiction, YA, graphic novels, short stories and poetry.

- **Northern Debut Awards**

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 and mentoring.

- **Northumbria University Student and Alumni Award**

Worth £2000, for a single standalone piece of fiction, narrative non-fiction or poetry, or an extract of a longer work, is open to final-year students and recent graduates of Northumbria University in any discipline.

- **Matthew Hale Award**

Open to young writers aged 11-18 who show promise but have had limited opportunities to pursue their talent. This award is funded by the Hale family and consists of a package of support created by New Writing North, worth £500.

- **Young Northern Writers' Awards**

Recognises young writers aged 11-14 and 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.

In addition, the **Hachette Children's Novel Awards** opened for entry in October 2023 and are accepting entries until 4 January 2024. These awards are open to debut writers of middle-grade children's fiction and early teen fiction. Two winners will receive £3000 each; and a nine-month programme of mentoring opportunities with professionals at Hachette Children's Group. Judges for this award are JJ Arcanjo, Sadie Cheshire, Sarah Lennon Galavan, Aliyana Hirji and Jordan Lees.

Later in 2024, further awards will include the Channel 4 Writing for Television Award; Tempest Prize for LGBTQ+ writers, funded by the poet and novelist Andrew McMillan; the Finchale Award for Short Fiction, funded by the novelist Benjamin Myers; and the Sid Chaplin Award.

Entry is now open via the New Writing North website
<https://newwritingnorth.com/northern-writers-awards/>

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Notes to Editor

New Writing North

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. The organisation works in partnership with regional and national partners to produce a range of literary and performance activities including flagship projects such as the Northern Writers' Awards, Young Writers, the Gordon Burn Prize, Durham Book Festival and Read Regional.

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

UNIVERSITY OF THE YEAR 2022 (Times Higher Education Awards)

Northumbria is a research-intensive university that unlocks potential for all, changing lives regionally, nationally and internationally. Find out more about us at www.northumbria.ac.uk