

NEW WRITING NORTH

Press Release: 26 November 2024

Northern Writers' Awards 2025 Open for Entries

The largest and longest-running writer development programme in England is now open for entries, deadline 6 February 2025.

Founded and produced by New Writing North with support from Northumbria University and Arts Council England, the Northern Writers' Awards are now in their 26th year.

The Northern Writers' Awards comprise a suite of awards covering a range of genres including poetry, fiction, narrative non-fiction, young adult, middle-grade fiction and short stories. The submission window for the awards varies but all winners will be announced in June 2025.

The Northern Writers' Awards deliver crucial support for writers at an earlier stage than most literary awards, usually before an agent or publisher is involved.

As such, they have an enviable track record for identifying some of the country's best unpublished writing, providing a pipeline of new talent to the publishing and broadcast industries.

Previous winners include Mari Hannah, Tawseef Khan, Gráinne O'Hare, Katie Hale, Kit Fan, Benjamin Myers, Okechukwu Nzelu, Andrew McMillan, Helen Mort, Sharma Walfall and Hannah Hodgson.

Will Mackie, Senior Programme Manager (Talent Development) and Programme Leader (MA in Publishing), said: "Launching the Northern Writers' Awards is always a highlight of the year for New Writing North. We continue to build the reputation of this flagship programme and could not be more proud of the impact of our Awards.

"We identify talented writers, create opportunities and guide writers towards their individual goals. We act as a bridge between industry and the exceptional artistic talent in the North. This work is made possible through the support of our lead partners, Arts Council England, Northumbria University, Hachette Children's Group, Channel 4 and a wide range of industry partners and individual donors. I am also grateful for the expertise of our amazing judges and the continued dedication of the highly skilled team at New Writing North."

The winners of the Northern Writers' Awards receive a wide range of support and opportunities, including mentoring, manuscript assessment, writing placements, and cash awards to buy time to write.

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Richard T. Kelly, novelist and Associate Professor in English and Creative Writing at Northumbria University, said: "There are no limits on what northern writers are capable of, though sometimes the broader culture looks only so far and sees no further. But the Northern Writers' Awards are an invaluable platform to ensure that writing talents from the region are properly recognised, across their diversity of styles, genres, and formal approaches. Northumbria University remains, as always, very proud and thrilled to support New Writing North's invaluable initiative, and we eagerly await all the fine writing that this year's programme will bring forth."

Judges for 2025 include the Scottish poet and essayist Kathleen Jamie for the Northern Writers' Awards for Poetry and the Northern Debut Awards for Poetry.

Kathleen Jamie's poetry collections include *The Overhaul*, which won the 2012 Costa Poetry Prize, and *The Tree House*, which won the Forward prize. From 2021-24, Kathleen served as Scotland's Makar, or National Poet.

Kathleen said: "It's always exciting, and challenging, to see new writers emerge. I'm greatly looking forward to judging this award, and would urge all emergent poets in the North of England to apply."

The novelist and poet Kit Fan and interdisciplinary artist Tice Cin will judge the Northern Writers' Awards for Fiction and Narrative Non-Fiction, the Northern Debut Awards for Fiction and Narrative Non-Fiction and the Northumbria Student and Alumni Award.

Tice Cin is a music journalist, DJ, music producer, filmmaker, and author of *Keeping the House*, named as one of the Guardian's Best Books of 2021. Kit Fan's first novel is *Diamond Hill*, and his poetry collection *The Ink Cloud Reader* was shortlisted for the Forward Prize and T.S. Eliot Prize.

Kit Fan said: "I'm thrilled to join the judging panel for 2025 Northern Writers' Awards. My first novel wouldn't have seen the light of day without getting a Northern Writers' Award for Fiction in 2018. I look forward to reading well-crafted narratives with vivid characters caught up in the beauty and chaos of our times."

Agent Sandra Sawicka has been announced as a judge of the Northern Debut Award for Young Adult Fiction and the Young Northern Writers' Awards. Sandra joined the Marjacq literary agency in 2014, with an interest in genre fiction, including horror, gothic, crime, and Young Adult fiction.

Sandra Sawicka said: "I'm delighted to be one of this year's judges for New Writers North. I can't wait to see what talent we are going to discover."

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Also, already open for entries is the Hachette Children's Novel Awards, for debut writers of middle-grade children's fiction and early teen fiction. Submission deadline is 13 January 2025, with two winners receiving £3000 cash prize and a programme of mentoring opportunities within Hachette Children's Group and New Writing North.

Georgina Mitchell, editor at Hachette Children's Group who was born in West Yorkshire and is one of the judges for the Hachette Children's Novel Award, said: "As a northerner, I know the talent that the north of England has to offer, so I am excited to be a judge for the Hachette Children's Novel Award, supporting that very talent and encouraging diversity in children's publishing. Every child should be able to see themselves in the books they read, and every author should have the chance to tell their story."

The full suite of awards is made possible by a range of vital partnerships with Arvon, Bonafide Films, Channel 4, Hachette Children's Group, Rollem Productions, Red Production Company, The Literary Consultancy, Newcastle University, The North Literary Agency, Oneworld Publications, The Society of Authors, ALCS, the Michael Marks Charitable Trust as well as generous donations from individual donors including the Hale family, Andrew McMillan and Benjamin Myers.

Further award categories open in February 2025, including the Tempest Prize for LGBTQ+ writers based in the North, The Finchale Award for Short Fiction, the Arvon Award, the Northern Promise TLC Read Awards and the Sid Chaplin Award for writers from working-class backgrounds.

To find out more and enter, go to the New Writing North website:

<https://newwritingnorth.com/northern-writers-awards>

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For further media info, contact ann@causeuk.com m: 0753 489 2715

Notes to Editors

Awards opening in this submissions window

Northern Writers' Awards for Fiction and Narrative Non-Fiction

Winners will receive awards of between £2000 and £5000 to support them to develop work in progress and to complete promising manuscripts. They will also be given access to the Northern Writers' Awards Network.

These awards are open to applications from both emerging and established writers, but we recommend that as-yet-unpublished writers consider entering the Northern Debut Awards: Fiction programme or the Hachette Children's Novel Award. Please read the Eligibility criteria carefully to see if you can enter this award.

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This award is made possible through New Writing North's partnership with our lead partner Northumbria University.

The Northern Writers' Awards will close on 6 February 2025.

Northern Debut Awards for Fiction, Narrative Non-Fiction, and Young Adult

This programme will offer a package of support to two writers of fiction or narrative non-fiction and one writer of young adult fiction who are yet to publish a full-length novel or collection of short stories.

The programme has been devised by New Writing North to offer structured developmental support to writers with a work in progress showing potential for publication. Each winner will receive £2000, mentoring and access to the Northern Writers' Awards Network.

This award is made possible through New Writing North's partnership with our lead partner Northumbria University.

The Northern Debut Awards will close on 6 February 2025.

Northern Writers' Awards for Poetry

Winning poets will receive awards of between £2000 and £5000 to support them to develop work in progress and to complete promising collections. These awards are open to applications from both emerging and established poets but poets yet to publish a full-length collection should consider entering the Northern Debut Awards: Poetry.

This award is made possible through New Writing North's partnership with our lead partner Northumbria University.

Winners will also receive access to the Northern Writers' Awards Network.

The Northern Writers' Awards will close on 6 February 2025.

Northern Debut Awards for Poetry

This programme will offer a package of support to three poets who are yet to publish a full-length collection.

The programme has been devised by New Writing North to offer developmental support to poets with a work in progress showing potential for publication.

Three awards will be made in this category. Each winner will receive £2000, mentoring and access to the Northern Writers' Awards Network.

This award is made possible through New Writing North's partnership with our lead partner Northumbria University.

The Northern Debut Awards will close on 6 February 2025.

Northumbria University Student and Alumni Award

This award, worth £2000, is open to writers of poetry, fiction and narrative non-fiction who are either final-year students or graduates of Northumbria University who are based in the North of England. Writers can be at any stage in their career.

The award is open to students and graduates from any discipline who are: final-year undergraduates; current postgraduate students; or alumni who have graduated from

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an undergraduate or postgraduate programme at Northumbria University within the last ten years.

This award is made possible through New Writing North's partnership with our lead partner Northumbria University.

The Northumbria Student and Alumni Award will close on 6 February 2025.

Young Northern Writers' Awards

This award is open to young writers aged 11-18 in the North of England. Young writers can submit creative work in any form including prose, poetry, scriptwriting, blogging, songwriting and rap.

There are two age categories, 11-14 and 15-18. Entrants must be 18 years or under on 12 February 2024 when the awards close. The winner in each category will receive prize money of £150. Up to two writers may also be highly commended across the age categories.

This award is made possible through New Writing North's partnership with our lead partner Northumbria University.

The Young Northern Writers' Awards will close on 6 February 2025.

Matthew Hale Award

The Matthew Hale Award is open to young writers who show promise but have had limited opportunities to pursue their talent. This could be due to a number of factors, including physical or mental ill-health, family circumstances, financial circumstances, lack of access to cultural opportunities or other reasons.

This award is for a young person aged 11-18 based in the North of England. Entrants must be 18 years or under on 12 February 2024 when the awards close. Young writers can submit creative work in any form including prose, poetry, scriptwriting, blogging, songwriting and rap.

There is one award winner each year. The winner will receive a package of support created by New Writing North to the value of £500. The package will be tailored to the specific interests and needs of the winner, but could include anything from one-on-one mentoring with a professional writer, enrolment on a course, books, theatre tickets or a pass to a literature festival.

We're grateful to the Hale family for generously supporting this award.

This award is judged by the family of Matthew Hale and New Writing North.

The Matthew Hale Award will close on 6 February 2025.

About New Writing North

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.

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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.

[Home - New Writing North](#)