

Nero New Writers Prize in association with Brunel University of London

Terms and Conditions

FINAL

About the Nero New Writers Prize

The Nero New Writers Prize in association with Brunel University of London aims to discover emerging writing talent, recognising unpublished and aspiring writers and supporting them as they develop into the writing stars of the future.

A shortlist of five will be announced on 22nd October 2026, followed by an overall winner at an awards ceremony at Brunel on 18th November 2026.

In addition, the winner of a new award, the Brunel Prize – dedicated to students who are currently studying at, or have recently graduated from, Brunel University of London – will be announced alongside the Nero New Writers Prize shortlist in October. Both winners will be celebrated at the ceremony at Brunel on 18th November 2026.

What you need to do

Entrants are asked to submit a previously unpublished short story (a piece of fiction or narrative non-fiction) of max 5,000 words. It can be written for children or adult audiences and should be a self-contained piece of work.

Submissions will open on Friday 24th July 2026 and close on Friday 11th September 2026. All entrants will use the same submissions form to enter their work.

What you can win

The winner of the Nero New Writers Prize will receive a total cash prize of £3,000, presented at a ceremony at Brunel University of London on Wednesday 18th November. They will also receive a scholarship to study for an MA in Creative Writing at Brunel and an introductory meeting with a literary agent, facilitated by the university.

Four shortlisted authors will receive £1,000 each.

The winner of the Brunel Prize will receive a cash prize of £1,000, presented at the ceremony on Wednesday 18th November. They will also receive a scholarship to study for an MA in Creative Writing at Brunel.

Terms & Conditions

- Please read all terms and conditions carefully before submitting an entry.
- We will confirm receipt of all submissions, and you will be notified as to whether you have been successful or not. Due to the large volume of entries, we will not be able to respond to all individual queries. Emails sent to any other address found on the Nero Book Awards or Brunel University of London websites or to judges or their representatives will not receive a response.
- All relevant updates about the Nero New Writers Prize will be posted on www.nerobookawards.com and via [X](#), [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#).
- Submission of an entry is taken as acceptance of all the terms and conditions of entry.
- Incomplete entry forms and entries not submitted in accordance with these terms and conditions will not be eligible for consideration.

Note: Proof of any of the following conditions of eligibility may be requested from entrants at any time and will be checked at shortlist stage.

1 ELIGIBILITY

1.1. The Nero New Writers Prize and the Brunel Prize are open to submissions from **unpublished**

writers who are citizens of, or living in, the UK and Ireland. The definition of 'unpublished' in this context means that the writer has not had their **fiction or non-fiction writing** previously published by an established book publisher (including e-book and audio publication), published in print or online by an established printed newspaper, magazine, journal, periodical, or broadcast. For the avoidance of doubt, 'established publisher' means a publishing house or company that publishes a list of titles by different authors, that produces titles with an ISBN and distributes them through established retail outlets. For the avoidance of doubt 'established newspaper, magazine, journal or periodical' means a periodical that is printed regularly (at least annually) that has been in circulation for at least the past 12 months, has an ISBN or ISSN number and is not self-published; or has a paid subscription-based website.

- 1.2. Those who have a publication pending in the form of a publishing agreement or contract are eligible to submit.
- 1.3. UK or Irish nationality is not a requirement.
- 1.4. Submissions should not have been previously published elsewhere in any form; in print or online or broadcast.
- 1.5. All submissions should be written by a single author who must be alive on 24th July 2026.
- 1.6. All entrants must be a minimum age of 18 years old on 24th July 2026.
- 1.7. The Nero New Writers Prize and the Brunel Prize are for an unpublished short story (a piece of fiction or narrative non-fiction) of max 5,000 words. It can be written for children or adult audiences and should be a self-contained piece of work.
- 1.8. Entries must not exceed the maximum word count of 5,000 words.
- 1.9. No more than one entry per author may be submitted. If more than one entry is submitted, only the first will be considered.
- 1.10 The entry submitted should:
 - Be written in English.
 - Be original and entirely the author's own work.
 - Not infringe the copyright or any other rights of any third party. It must not be libelous, unlawful or defamatory of any living person or corporate body. The author is entirely responsible for any potential copyright or other legal issues in their story.
 - Note: Translations of work already published in another language are not eligible.
- 1.11. Entries for the Nero New Writers Prize will not be eligible where the author:
 - is a member of the judging panel;
 - is involved in the management or administration of the Nero Book Awards;
 - has been employed by or studied at Caffè Nero, Brunel University of London or Booksellers Association in the past 2 years;
 - or is a close family relative of any such person.
- 1.12. Entries for the Brunel Prize will be eligible only where the author:
 - is a student enrolled in an undergraduate programme at Brunel as of Friday 24th July 2026 (full-time or part-time);
 - or has graduated from an undergraduate degree at Brunel in the past two years – no earlier than 24th July 2024.
 - any past Brunel students who graduated prior to 24th July 2024 are eligible to enter the New Writers Prize.
- 1.13. Entrants will also be asked to confirm that their entry is not AI-generated.

2 ENTRY

2.1 Entries may only be submitted online via the specific entry form on the Nero Book Awards website (www.nerobookawards.com). Entries submitted in any other form will not be accepted.

2.2 Entries for the Nero New Writers Prize and the Brunel Prize can be submitted at **www.nerobookawards.com** from 24th July 2026. Submission of entries will be acknowledged by email. The closing date for entries to be submitted is **5pm BST on Friday 11th September 2026**. **Entries submitted after this date will not be accepted.**

Entrants for the Brunel Prize will be asked to confirm that they are undergraduate students, or that they have graduated from Brunel since 24th July 2024, as part of the submissions process.

Failure to do so will lead to disqualification.

2.3 Entries must be submitted by the author.

2.4 Although the entries will be assessed anonymously, they should be submitted in the author's own name.

2.5 The submission of an entry will be taken as agreement by the author that they are willing for the submitted work to be considered, and that the entry complies with these terms and conditions.

2.6 No more than one entry per author may be submitted. It is the responsibility of the author to ensure that no more than one entry is submitted in total.

2.7 Authors may only enter individually and not as part of a team.

2.1. The entry submitted must be an original and previously unpublished short story (a piece of fiction or narrative non-fiction). It can be written for children or adult audiences and should be a self-contained piece of work.

3 ENTRY AND SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

3.1 Entrants should complete an **online entry form** available from www.nerobookawards.com

3.2 Entries must not exceed 5,000 (five thousand) words. Please note: 5,000 is the maximum word count but not a specific target.

3.3 There is no set theme for entries.

3.4 All entries must include an attached PDF file for each title.

3.5 The format of the entry must adhere to the following rules:

i) PDF format

ii) Typed in Arial 12 pt black font

iii) Double-spaced

iv) Hard returns between paragraphs (no indentations anywhere please and no page numbers)

v) The name of the author must not appear anywhere within the entry

vi) The name of the entry and word count to be included within the header on every page.

4 JUDGING

4.1 Entries will be judged anonymously; in other words, the name and other personal details of the author will not be linked to the entry/made available to either the initial readers or the judges.

4.2 The judges of the Nero New Writers Prize will be looking for what they think is the best entry on the basis of the quality and readability of the writing. They are also looking for entries which are self-contained i.e. not a chapter from a book in progress.

4.3 All entries will initially be read by a team of readers who will select a smaller number of entries for the judging panel to read. This is not deemed to be an official longlist (as each entry will have been selected at this stage by one reader rather than as a result of collective discussion and agreement), and the authors of these entries will not therefore be advised that their work has been selected for submission to the judging panel.

4.4. A judging panel will read the entries selected by the team of readers and will draw up a shortlist of five entries for the Nero New Writers Prize from which they will select the winning work. This will be announced on Thursday 22nd October 2026. A selection of entries for the Brunel Prize will be given to The Chair of Judges, to select one overall winner. Their name will be announced on 22nd October alongside the five shortlisted entries for the Nero New Writers Prize. Both winners will be celebrated at a ceremony at Brunel University of London on 18th November 2026.

4.5 The awards management team reserves the right to increase or reduce the numbers of entries selected for the judges to read and for the shortlist at its sole discretion.

4.6 The judging will be fair and independent. The decisions of the judges are final. Neither discussion nor correspondence concerning any decision will be entered into.

5 SHORTLIST AND WINNER

5.1 All five writers shortlisted for the Nero New Writers Prize, and one winner of the Brunel Prize, will be contacted personally by email or by telephone using the details provided at the time of entry. Unsuccessful entrants will also be notified by email. If the Prize management team is unable to contact a shortlisted or winning author despite making reasonable attempts to do so, the judges will be entitled to shortlist another entry.

5.2 By submitting an entry, the entrant agrees to be available in the event of being shortlisted and, in the event of winning, to undertake a mutually acceptable programme of activities to promote the Nero New Writers Prize particularly immediately after the announcement of the winner has been made.

5.3 For the avoidance of doubt, all five shortlisted writers for the Nero New Writers Prize and one winner of the Brunel Prize must ensure their attendance at the Nero New Writers Prize ceremony on 18th November 2026, and the Nero Book Awards ceremony on 10th March 2027, and any further activity agreed.

5.4 The five shortlisted writers for the Nero New Writers Prize will each receive:

- A cash prize of £1000
- A mentorship session with one of the Brunel University of London Creative Writing Faculty.
- Publication of their entry on the Nero Book Awards website.
- Invitation plus a guest to:
 - the Nero New Writers Prize ceremony on 18th November 2026 - *attendance at the event is essential.*
 - the Nero Book Awards ceremony in March 2027- *attendance at the event is essential.*
- A set of the Nero Book Awards category winning books.

5.5 The winner of the Nero New Writers Prize in association with Brunel University of London will be announced on Wednesday 18th November 2026 at a ceremony at Brunel.

- A cash prize of £3000 in total (including £1000 for being shortlisted)
- A winner's Certificate.
- A scholarship to study the MA Creative Writing at Brunel University of London. This scholarship takes the form of a tuition fee waiver, and no cash alternative will be offered.
- A meeting with a literary agent to discuss their work.

5.6 One winner of the Brunel Prize will be announced on 22nd October 2026 alongside the five shortlisted entries for the Nero New Writers Prize. They will be celebrated at a ceremony at Brunel on 18th November. They will receive:

- A cash prize of £1000
- A winner's Certificate
- A scholarship to study the MA Creative Writing at Brunel University of London. This scholarship takes the form of a tuition fee waiver, and no cash alternative will be offered.
- A mentorship session with one of the Brunel University of London Creative Writing Faculty.
- Publication of their entry on the Nero Book Awards website.
- Invitation plus a guest to:
 - the Nero New Writers Prize ceremony on 18th November 2026 - *attendance at the event is essential.*
 - the Nero Book Awards ceremony in March 2027- *attendance at the event is essential.*
- A set of the Nero Book Awards category winning books.

5.7 By submitting an entry, writers of all winning or shortlisted entries agree to ensure that in the event that any winning or shortlisted entry is subsequently published, including in any anthology publications, it will carry Nero New Writers Prize approved credits if requested to do so, provided that all materials bearing such approved credits, logos or trademarks are pre-approved by the Nero Book Awards management team. Such accreditation, if required, will be provided to the winning and shortlisted authors.

5.8 Entrants also agree that their writing may be selected for future publication by the Nero Book Awards e.g. in an anthology highlighting the best entries.

6 ADMINISTRATION

6.1 The Prize will be administered by The Booksellers Association.

6.2 All announcements in relation to the Nero New Writers Prize and the Brunel Prize will be published on www.nerobookawards.com.

6.3 Entrants must provide their name, email address, telephone number and postal address on the initial entry form. We will make use of this data, and other information we may collect about you, for the purposes of administering the Nero New Writers Prize and promoting the Prize. For more

information on how we use your data, and your rights, please see our privacy policy at www.nerobookawards.com/GDPR/.

6.4 Entrants must supply full details as required above and comply with all rules to be eligible for the Nero New Writers Prize and the Brunel Prize. Ineligible, obscene or fraudulent entries will be automatically disqualified.

6.5 The Prize management team reserves the right to refuse any entry for any reason considered justifiable and reserves the right to vary the Terms and Conditions of Entry, and alter the published programme, as may be deemed necessary to ensure the proper administration and integrity of the Nero New Writers Prize and where required for reasons beyond its control. Any amendments will be published on www.nerobookawards.com.

6.6 The Prize management team reserves the right to cancel, modify or supersede the Nero New Writers Prize and the Brunel Prize (including altering prizes) at any stage, if deemed necessary in its opinion to ensure the proper administration and integrity of the Nero New Writers Prize and the Brunel Prize, or if circumstances arise outside of its control.

6.7 By entering, all eligible entrants will be deemed to have accepted these rules and to agree to be bound by each and all of these Terms and Conditions. The management team reserves the right to either include or refuse entry for any reason considered justifiable and reserves the right to vary the Terms and Conditions of Entry and alter the prize schedule as may be deemed necessary to ensure the proper administration and integrity of the Nero New Writing Prize, and where required for reasons beyond the control of the management team. The decision of the management team on these issues shall be binding, and no correspondence will be entered into.

6.8 The Prize management team will not be liable for any failure of receipt of entries. The Prize management team have no responsibility for any entries which are lost, delayed, illegible, damaged, incomplete or otherwise invalid.

6.9 There is no alternative to the prizes stated and the prizes are not transferable, and no part or parts of any prize may be substituted for other benefits, items or additions.