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PRESS RELEASE

Immediate release

Writing scheme seeks next generation of successful fiction writers from the East of England

Writers' Centre Norwich (WCN) is searching for ambitious fiction writers in the East of England who have the potential to become the next generation of bestselling novelists.

Escalator is a writing competition that aims to give a step up to talented writers who wish to reach the next level on their professional writing journey.

Ten successful applicants will win a year long package of support including one-to-one mentoring from established writers, a residential retreat with tailored development workshops, peer support and a final showcase to agents and publishers.

It is a unique opportunity offered exclusively to fiction writers living in the Eastern region of England – Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Hertfordshire, Essex, Norfolk and Suffolk.

Escalator has been running for a decade and has already supported over 90 writers in their creative projects, with many going on to sign with agents, publish and receive awards for their writing.

Past winners include Megan Bradbury, author of the acclaimed novel *Everyone is Watching*; Guy Saville, author of the international bestseller *The Afrika Reich*; Nicola Upson, Tim Clare, Susan Sellers, Kate Worsley, Ruth Dugdall and Padrika Tarrant.

Chris Gribble, chief executive of WCN said:

'It's not easy to break into the world of being a published novelist, but Escalator can make the journey less challenging and a lot more fun!

'Escalator offers the chance for talented new writers to work with professional writers, meet people in the industry and spend time focusing on their work in a supported and creative way.

'It's a very special programme that has seen huge success over the last ten years, bringing writers and stories from the East of England to national and international readerships.'

Yvette Edwards is one of this year's Escalator mentors. She said:

'I can think of no greater resource for an emerging writer than access to a writer and mentor, someone interested in, focussed on, and invested in their development, happy to read their work

and provide support, encouragement and advice, who has faced and overcome the obstacles to writing and finishing a piece of work, and is familiar with the struggle to remain motivated and focussed during what can be a long and solitary process.

‘The Escalator talent development scheme is an incredible, free, validating, potentially life-changing opportunity for emerging writers, and it’s a pleasure and a privilege to be returning as a mentor.’

The Escalator Writing Competition is supported by Arts Council England and the Leverhulme Trust.

Applications are open now – deadline Friday 24 March 2017.

Further information can be found at <http://www.writerscentrenorwich.org.uk/main-events/escalator/> or by calling 01603 877177.

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Notes to Editors

1. Press enquiries to: Andrew Burton, Director of Communications, Writers’ Centre Norwich at andrew.burton@writerscentrenorwich.org.uk or 01603 877177
2. Writers’ Centre Norwich’s mission is to put literature at the heart of contemporary culture. Through pioneering and collaborative projects it explores the artistic and social power of creative writing and literary translation. www.writerscentrenorwich.org.uk
3. Writers’ Centre Norwich’s key stakeholder funders are Arts Council England, the University of East Anglia, Norwich City Council and Norfolk County Council.