



THEY SAY
EVERYONE
HAS A BOOK
IN THEM...



IN PARTNERSHIP WITH

audible



CURTIS
BROWN



CBC

FIND YOUR WRITING COMMUNITY WITH THE WOMEN'S PRIZE DISCOVERIES PROGRAMME



Pictured (left to right) our Discoveries alumna with publishing deals:
Genevieve Marengi, Longlisted 2021; India-Rose Bower, Shortlisted 2023; Elizabeth Kuligowski, Longlisted 2021;
Beena Nadeem, Longlisted 2025; Lorna Elcock, Shortlisted 2021; Olivia Ford, Longlisted 2021;
Rebecca Taylor McKay, Longlisted 2022; Sui Annukka, Winner 2022; Tara O'Sullivan, Longlisted 2022;
Georgia Moorhouse, Shortlisted 2024; Rue Baldry, Longlisted 2021; Emma van Straaten, Winner 2021;
Paige Cowan-Hall, Winner 2023; Rukky Brume, Longlisted 2021; Niamh Ní Mhaoileoin, Shortlisted 2022;

All photographs supplied by the authors.



WOMEN'S PRIZE DISCOVERIES

DISCOVERIES IS A UNIQUE WRITER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME SEEKING EXCITING AND ORIGINAL NEW VOICES FROM WOMEN OF ALL BACKGROUNDS – AND IS COMPLETELY FREE TO ENTER!

Set up in 2020 in partnership with Audible, Curtis Brown Literary Agency and Curtis Brown Creative writing school, Discoveries aims to seek out, inspire and support aspiring women writers from those early pages to long-term careers. Writers in the UK and Ireland are not required to have finished their novel to enter, but are instead invited to submit the opening of their novel in English (up to 10,000 words) along with a synopsis and a bit about you.

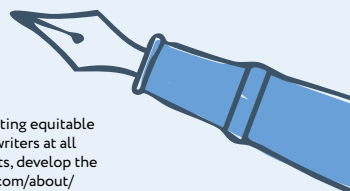
Each submission is read by a brilliant reading team made up of industry experts, before an approved selection is shared with our panel of judges to decide who will progress to

longlist, shortlist and ultimately announced as the 'scholar' or the winner. Don't worry if you haven't done much writing before; our readers and judges are looking for original new voices with exciting new ideas – their priority is promise, not polish!

Since its first year, Discoveries alumni have gone on to receive representation from agents, write chart-topping audiobooks and secure publishing deals – with four novels published to date and many more to come!

See the inside back cover of this booklet for more information about prizes and how to enter, or visit [womensprize.com/discoveries](https://www.womensprize.com/discoveries)

IT'S TIME TO GET WRITING



The Women's Prize Trust is a registered charity that enriches society by creating equitable opportunities for women in the world of books and beyond. We support writers at all stages of their writing journey, providing opportunities to engage with experts, develop the craft of writing and find your community. Find out more at [womensprize.com/about/](https://www.womensprize.com/about/)



THE 2026 JUDGES

MEET THE JUDGES



KATE MOSSE

The 2026 Discoveries judging panel is chaired by Kate Mosse, internationally bestselling novelist and Founder Director of the Women's Prizes for Fiction and Non-Fiction.

Joining Kate is award-winning, global bestselling author Dorothy Koomson; Women's Prize for Fiction shortlisted debut novelist, Nussaibah Younis; Curtis Brown literary agent Ciara Finan and Founder and Managing Director of Curtis Brown Creative, Anna Davis.



**DOROTHY
KOOMSON**



**NUSSAIBAH
YOUNIS**



**CIARA
FINAN**



**ANNA
DAVIS**

You can read more about the judges at:
womensprize.com/discoveries



WRITING PROMPTS AND TOP TIPS

Here's some inspiration from our judges to help you put pen to paper.

KATE MOSSE SAYS:

'Write something every day to get your writing muscles in shape – it doesn't have to be anything more than a description of someone you see on the bus, or a woman walking her dog in the park, just get used to putting words down. The more normal writing feels, the less pressurised you will be and the story, characters and ideas will flow.'

DOROTHY KOOMSON SAYS:

'Read a lot because you need to know what other stories are out there. Forget all your worries about what others will think, just focus on telling your story in the best way you can and keep going until you finish.'

NUSSAIBAH YOUNIS SAYS:

'Get your ass in that chair and write! If you're struggling to find somewhere to start, write a satirical scene using extreme bureaucratic language or jargon.'

CIARA FINAN SAYS:

'Try writing a few paragraphs about your life story – first of all, write in the first-person perspective and then rewrite it in the third person perspective, to see which you prefer.'

ANNA DAVIS SAYS:

'Fire up your imagination with some free-writing, long-hand: Find a title or opening sentence and write for 15 minutes, without stopping. Later you can go back and see if you've come up with something you'd like to develop further. Here's one to try: *She couldn't open the door.*

➤ DISCOVER MORE

For more writing inspiration, visit our **Writers' Toolkit** and **Curtis Brown Creative's blog**:

womensprize.com/category/writers-toolkit/
curtisbrowncreative.co.uk/blog



WRITERS'
TOOLKIT











ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

“I’m so proud and fortunate to be a part of this incredible initiative amplifying women’s voices and the stories we want to tell.”

EMMA VAN STRAATEN

Emma van Straaten won the inaugural Discoveries Prize in 2021. Four years later her debut novel, *This Immaculate Body* was published by Fleet, part of Hachette UK, to critical acclaim. Here, she talks about her writing journey.

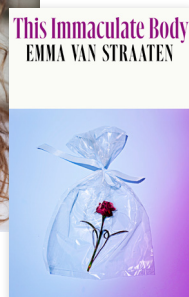
‘Discoveries helped me realise that I was a writer long before I was comfortable calling myself that. I was treated like one from the application form, which asked me to set out a synopsis, encouraging me for the first time to think about where I wanted my manuscript to go, and suggesting that I might, one day, finish it. Of course, I knew the prize for winning would be an offer of representation from an agent at Curtis Brown, which was beyond my wildest dreams, but I hadn’t expected the community that rose up around Discoveries, and the true friendships I have made from it.

I’m so proud and fortunate to be a part of this incredible initiative amplifying women’s voices and the stories we want to tell. People say that writing is lonely, and it can be – but Discoveries has turned this often solitary journey into a beautiful community.

Don’t hesitate – if you have your 10,000 words, go for it.’



Emma van Straaten’s debut novel *This Immaculate Body*.



► FIND OUT MORE

To hear more from Discoveries alumni, and be the first to know about Discoveries, sign up to our **Writers’ Room** newsletter:

[womensprize.com/
sign-up-to-our-writers-newsletter/](https://womensprize.com/sign-up-to-our-writers-newsletter/)



**WRITERS’
ROOM**
...



HOW TO ENTER DISCOVERIES 2026

WHO CAN ENTER?

Discoveries is open to all unpublished and unagented women writers aged 18+ living in the UK or Ireland and writing in English.

WHY ENTER?

Discoveries offers a range of development opportunities for successful entrants, supporting all writers that are longlisted and welcoming them into our Discoveries alumna community:

- All 16 longlisted authors receive a bespoke, two-week online Discoveries Writing Development Course designed by Curtis Brown Creative, alongside an annual Audible subscription
- All six shortlisted authors will be offered a mentoring session with a Curtis Brown literary agent, plus a free place on an online writing course (worth up to £250) with Curtis Brown Creative and a studio session focused on writing and recording for audio with Audible
- One promising writer, named the 'Discoveries Scholar' will also win a free scholarship to attend a three-month Writing Your Novel course with Curtis Brown Creative (worth up to £2,100)
- The winner receives £5,000 and an offer of representation from Curtis Brown literary agency

But with writing – it's the journey, not the destination. Importantly, Discoveries allows you to develop your writing skills, supported along the way by our Writers' Room events and Writers' Toolkit resources by bestselling authors and industry experts.

WHY
ENTER?

WHO CAN
ENTER?

HOW DO
I ENTER?

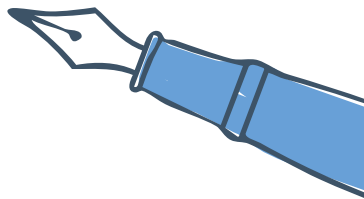
HOW TO ENTER

Discoveries is completely free to enter.

Submit up to 10,000 words of the opening of a novel of any genre of adult fiction by 12 January 2026 – via the online submissions form found via the QR code below or at womensprize.com/discoveries

While your opening 10,000 is the star of the show, you will also need to provide a synopsis detailing the outline of your story (up to 1,000 words) and complete a short entry form for us to learn more about you and your writing.

**Scan the QR code below
to find out more.**



womensprize.com/discoveries



**WOMEN'S PRIZE
DISCOVERIES 2026**

SUBMISSIONS DEADLINE
12 JANUARY 2026

LOGLIST ANNOUNCED
30 APRIL 2026

SHORTLIST ANNOUNCED
14 MAY 2026

WINNER ANNOUNCED
28 MAY 2026



IN PARTNERSHIP WITH

