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## **NEWS RELEASE**

# **'LOCKDOWN FICTION' SOUGHT FROM ISLE OF MAN WRITERS**

Manx Litfest has teamed up with sponsor the ManSat Group to provide an opportunity for short story writers in the Isle of Man to create tales inspired by life during the Covid-19 lockdown.

The Manx Lockdown Fiction competition has two categories, with the judges' favourite five entries in each category winning £100.

The first category is open to any genre, the second a special category for the modern retelling of a classic Manx Fairy Tale set during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Each writer can submit one story in each category, with all submissions judged by representatives of Manx Litfest and ManSat. Each piece must not exceed 2,500 words. The competition is open to writers living in the Isle of Man, of any age or nationality.

Manx Litfest Director John Quirk said: 'The ManSat Group has been a long-standing supporter of the festival and CEO Chris Stott approached us with the idea of short fiction inspired by life during lockdown.'

'The first category is wide open, with no restriction on genre, and offers writers the freedom to try whatever kind of story they want. The second category is purely for modern day Manx fairy tales – that could be an update or reimagining of an existing fairy tale, or a purely original tale.'

Chris added: 'During the eight years we have supported Manx Litfest, we have seen first-hand just how much excellent writing talent the Isle of Man has. We look forward to seeing the range of writing conjured up as a response to Covid-19 and the lockdown.'

The five winning entries in each category, along with a selection of other entries, will be available to read on the Manx Litfest website. We may also look at holding an event, possibly in connection with a future festival, which incorporates as many of the entries as possible. We may also look at options to publish the entries in a book, with proceeds going to charity.

Manx National Heritage is supporting Manx Lockdown Fiction, which it hopes will complement its own initiative, launched this week – Collecting Covid Isle of Man. This will document and record this extraordinary period in our history by collecting images, first-hand experiences and objects to reflect Island life during the Covid-19 pandemic. MNH will consider the Manx Lockdown Fiction entries for its Covid-19 archives.

Manx National Heritage Archivist Wendy Thirkettle commented: 'Manx National Heritage welcomes this joint initiative between Manx Litfest and ManSat. Hopefully, it will encourage many to have a go, even if not regular fiction writers. Lockdown may unlock hidden potential, but all submissions will be valued as a means of recording responses to this extraordinary time.'

'I am excited to see the variety of creative writing produced. For those with different tales to tell, we would be pleased to learn about your first-

hand recollections, family histories or other resources with a strong connection to the Isle of Man (via [library@mnh.im](mailto:library@mnh.im)) as part of Collecting Covid Isle of Man.'

To submit your entries for Lockdown Fiction, please email them to [manxlitfest@gmail.com](mailto:manxlitfest@gmail.com). If you do not have access to email, we will accept postal entries, but would prefer email entries where possible. The postal address is – Manx Litfest, 8 Milner Close, Port Erin, IM9 6BG.

The deadline for entries to be received is 5.00pm on Monday, 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2020.

It is anticipated the winners will be announced by 31<sup>st</sup> July 2020.

For full competition guidelines, visit [www.manxlitfest.com/about-us/competitions/](http://www.manxlitfest.com/about-us/competitions/)

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**About:**

Manx Litfest is an Isle of Man-registered charity, with the first festival held in 2012. Each September it brings visiting authors, illustrators, poets and storytellers together from around the British Isles.

ManSat carries out satellite filings for the Isle of Man under a contract with the Isle of Man Government's Communications Commission. Established in May 1998, ManSat Limited is a Manx-registered and Manx-owned private limited company headquartered in Douglas in the Isle of Man, with offices and representation in the United Kingdom and the United States.