2024 RESEARCH AWARDS: GUIDELINES

The University's Research Awards celebrate the work of both researchers and professional services staff that showcases research excellence. They give us an opportunity to celebrate research that addresses real-world problems and improves academic practice. Research engagement and impact take many forms and we encourage applications from all research themes and associated functions across the University. There are four categories – Public engagement with research; External collaborations and partnerships; Research impact; Interdisciplinary research.

Award categories

There are four Awards categories that together will showcase a diversity of research activities taking place across the University:

1. **Public engagement with research**

    This award recognises achievement in research-led public engagement including:

    - using creative, inspiring and engaging ways to communicate research activity with communities outside academia and that reach and enthuse new and/or different audiences;

    - public engagement that has enhanced understanding of and trust in research;

    - sustainable partnerships, collaborations and community connections that facilitate public engagement and mutual benefit;

    - innovative approaches and activities where the public can contribute their knowledge, expertise or time to research and teaching such as citizen science projects, public consultations and patient panels;

    - work that has pushed forward the public engagement agenda and developed those around them (peers, partners or audiences).

2. **External collaboration and innovation**

    This award celebrates external engagement and the development of lasting and successful non-academic collaborations in research and innovation regionally, nationally or globally, including:

- external partnerships that may lead to the successful practical application of research and/or new ways of working – leading to new or improved products, policies, services and community activities;
- approaches and activities that have opened up new relationships and that involve non-specialists in the design or co-development of research and innovation activities.

3. Research impact

This award recognises individuals or teams who have achieved impact from research to address real-world problems and change the world around us, locally, nationally or globally, including but not limited to:

- activity which has created economic, social and cultural impact from research;
- projects that have made a major contribution within a business sector or a specific industry or on a partner's processes, products or services.
- activity that has influenced local, national or international audiences to bring about positive change in policy or practice.

4. Interdisciplinary research

This award recognises individuals or teams who undertake original and innovative interdisciplinary or multidisciplinary research including but not limited to:

- research that has achieved notable outcomes (including new approaches) that could not be achieved within the framework of a single discipline;
- research that has resulted in significant interaction between two or more disciplines and/or moves beyond established disciplinary foundations in applying or integrating research approaches from other disciplines;
- research of outstanding influence, that has established new or advanced existing collaborations that draw on multiple disciplines involving multiple schools or departments or external institutions;
- research that has made a significant contribution to the University's research standing through successful interdisciplinary collaborations.

Assessment criteria

Entries will be assessed by a panel of judges that will include academics, impact and engagement experts and communications professionals from within the University. The judging panel will use the following assessment criteria to inform their decisions and will shortlist two entries in each category

and make one award per category. All entries will be assessed against the following criteria. Please ensure you address the criteria in your application.

1. **Clarity of purpose (25%):** The activity's purpose should be clear with defined aims and objectives. The audience/participants should be well defined and the chosen method of engagement appropriate to meet the aims.

2. **Creativity and innovation (25%):** Activities should show originality and use creative ways of engaging with others. This may be that creative use was made of resources (people, places, materials, budget), aspects of the project were innovative, risks were taken or that it was communicated in an innovative way.

3. **Outcomes (25%):** The entry should demonstrate how successful the activity has been in terms of short-term, immediate changes such as how it has benefited the audience/ participants, and whether it has led to new developments, ways of working or collaborations. This may include critical evaluation and reflection that will help build best practice for future projects. Please include reflections on the success of the project as part of your entry.

4. **Impact (25%):** The entry should demonstrate how the outcomes are being put into place in society or the academic world. This will include how the activity has achieved or demonstrated wider, tangible change in thinking, policy or practice. It should demonstrate reach or significance and should include examples and evidence of uptake beyond outcomes. If a project is not yet fully realised, entrants will need to show they are well on their way to achieving impact.

Eligibility

- The activity/ies must either be ongoing or have been completed within the last three years (i.e. since January 2021).

- Academics and professional staff supporting research (for example, technical staff, museums staff, research services staff) are eligible to enter.

- Entrants can be at any stage in their careers, and activities of any scale will be welcome.

- Entries may be nominated by another member of staff or staff can nominate themselves in all categories.

- Entries can only be submitted to one award category. If activity/ies potentially fit more than one category, please choose the most appropriate.

- Entrants can submit more than one project. More than one activity/ies can be submitted to the same category as long as the activity/ies are completely separate.

- The Awards are open to individuals or groups, but group entries must be submitted by one named individual who will be the lead contact for the entry.

- The lead contact must be a current staff member of the University, and still expected to be in post by 31 July 2024.

- Group entries can include staff (researchers, PhD students, academics, teaching staff, professional services staff) or individuals from outside the University.

- PhD-led projects will not be eligible for entry in any category, although PhD students may be part of a team. See the Graduate School web pages for details of competitions for research students, including the Doctoral Research for a Better World award. These will be celebrated at the Doctoral Research Conference on 12 June.

- Previous winners or shortlisted entrants of the Research Awards or Research Engagement and Impact Awards may not apply again with the same project for 3 years after having been selected, and if applying again once the 3 years has passed, must demonstrate a clear difference/improvement between the two submissions.

- At least one person per shortlisted application will be expected to attend the showcase/ awards event to present their work. Please note that the number of invitations to the showcase/awards event per winning entry may be limited.

- Shortlisted entries will be promoted via internal and external communication channels. Shortlisted entrants will be expected to participate in a short film which will be used to showcase their work/project internally and externally. All content will be sent for approval to the lead contact, prior to publication.

- Activities where the primary purpose is to increase student applications to the University are not eligible.

- Incomplete entries will not be taken forward.

- After submission, applications will be screened for eligibility by the Research Communications and Engagement team.

- All eligible entries will be shared with the judging panel who will score the applications based on the information provided in the application form and supporting documents and based on the assessment criteria (outlined in the entry guidelines above).

- The judging panel reserve the right to move applications to another award category if they think the application is better suited to a different category.

- The scores will inform the discussion of the panel but will not be used as a decision tool itself. This is in line with the responsible metrics statement: https://www.reading.ac.uk/discover/-/media/discover/files/pdfs/8a75584ea8e84c63a0d4c21a34958811.pdf
- The award decision is made through the judging panel's discussion. The judging panel is tasked with assessing the quality, effort and commitment of each entry and delivery of the activity to achieve its stated aims.
- Awards are at the judging panel's discretion.

Key dates

Application deadline: 5pm Friday 12 April 2024

All entrants informed of decision: week commencing Tuesday 7 May 2024

Awards showcase and ceremony: Tuesday 18 June 2024 2pm – 5pm

Enquiries welcome. Please contact:

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