The Vice-Chancellor’s Public Engagement with Research Awards Guidelines

Introduction

These awards recognise and reward those who undertake high-quality Public Engagement with Research (PER) and/or have contributed to building capacity in this area. Entrants can be at any level in their career and activities of any scale are welcome.

Public Engagement with Research describes the many ways that the public can be involved in the design, conduct or dissemination of the research process.

High-quality engagement involves interaction between researchers and the relevant public audiences or participants (who can be local, regional, national or international), with the aim that there is benefit to both parties and the ultimate goal of shaping or enhancing the quality or impact of the research.

The VC PER awards is co-ordinated by Research Services, with the support of colleagues from across the University, and overseen by the University’s Academic Champion for Public Engagement with Research.

The winning entries receive recognition for their achievements at the Vice-Chancellor’s Public Engagement with Research Awards Ceremony, which will take place on Wednesday 10 July 2019. The winner of the VC’s Choice Award will also be announced at the ceremony and will receive a prize of £1,500.
Categories

There are three categories of Award:

1. **Public Engagement with Research Award – Projects**
   For which there are three themes:
   - Public Engagement with Research Award for Communications: for projects that have informed and inspired the public about research.
   - Public Engagement with Research Award for Consultation: for projects that have engaged in two-way conversations about research and listened to public views.
   - Public Engagement with Research Award for Collaboration: for research projects that have involved collaborating with the public, including co-creation, co-production of knowledge and citizen science.
   Up to six winners will be selected for this category.

   For further information on the different types of Public Engagement with Research (communications; consultation and collaboration) go to: www.ox.ac.uk/research/public-engagement/why-engage

2. **Public Engagement with Research Award – Building Capacity**

   Recognises divisions, departments, faculties, research groups, museums, libraries, collections, colleges or platforms and programmes that have encouraged, facilitated and supported high-quality Public Engagement with Research to take place. This can be via positive changes to Public Engagement with Research practice, policy and/or procedure. Up to three winners will be selected for this category.

3. **Public Engagement with Research Award – Early Career Researcher**

   This award recognises researchers at the early stages of their career. Up to three winners will be selected for this category.

Selection Process and Criteria

There is a three-stage approval, review and selection process:

i) Approved by the relevant department via IRAMS
ii) Reviewed by a panel of public engagement and/or impact staff
iii) Winning entries are discussed and selected by the VC PER Awards Academic Panel, which consists of a cross-disciplinary panel of academics and researchers from the University of Oxford and chaired by Professor Alison Woollard, the University's Academic Champion for Public Engagement with Research.
The focus of the review and judging panel will be to identify activities of the highest quality utilising the following criteria:

1. **Purpose**: Demonstration that the purpose of the activity (i.e. what you set out to achieve) and the target public audiences or participants had been carefully thought through; and that the chosen method of engagement is/ was appropriate.

2. **Benefit**: Clear evidence provided of the benefits to both the researchers involved or their research and the engaged publics; and demonstration of other outcomes or impacts.

3. **Links to research**: How well the activities enabled researchers to engage the public with their own research.

4. **Evaluation**: Demonstration that the appropriate level of reflection/evaluation took place.

5. **Building capacity**: Contribution to creating a positive culture of embedded, engaged research. For example: by encouraging or facilitating others to become active in PER or sharing learning and expertise.

6. **Legacy**: The legacy or sustainability of the project/activities.

**Eligibility**

**Public Engagement with Research – Project Awards and Building Capacity Awards**

1. The Awards are open to individuals or teams, but team entries must have a named Lead Entrant, who will also act as the key contact. Other team members can be acknowledged in the relevant sections on IRAMS.

2. The Lead Entrant must be a current staff member employed by the University of Oxford and expected to still be in post on 31 September 2019. DPhil students may also apply with the approval of their supervisor.

3. Other individuals and organisations that were integral to the project/activities must also agree submission of the Entry and be acknowledged (in the relevant IRAMS section).

4. The Project Team can include staff (researchers, academics, teaching staff, and professional service staff such as public engagement officers and curators) or DPhil students at the University of Oxford or individuals from outside the University. Please note that the number of named individuals on the Awards communications and invitations to the Awards Ceremony per winning entry will be limited.

5. At least one academic or researcher from the University of Oxford must be named as the Lead Entrant or included within the Project Team.

6. All external partners that were integral to the project/activities should also agree submission of the entry and be acknowledged (in the Partner or co-applicants section from other organisations in IRAMS).

7. The Lead Entrant must inform, and if appropriate, seek approval, from relevant senior staff within their department or otherwise (such as the Head of Department) regarding submission of the Entry.

8. The activity/ies must either be on-going or have been completed within the last two years (i.e. since February 2017).
9. Projects/ activities that have previously received University of Oxford VC Awards are not eligible for entry to this year’s Awards unless significant additional progress has been made. Those projects that were ‘Highly Commended’ in the 2017 VC PER Awards are welcome to apply.

10. Projects/activities submitted previously that were not selected for a University of Oxford VC PER Award can send their entry this year, however the proposal must be recognisably different from the previous submission and provide stronger evidence against the selection criteria.

11. Where appropriate, entries must articulate the type of engaged public audience/s. Those that aimed to engage the 'general public' or where the primary purpose was to encourage student applications to the University of Oxford will not be taken forward.

12. Entrants must agree that information about the winning entries can be made public via internal and external communication channels. All content will be sent for approval to the Lead Entrant, prior to publication.

13. Only entries submitted through IRAMS will be considered.

14. Incomplete Entries will not be taken forward.

Public Engagement with Research – Early Career Researcher Awards

1. These Awards are open to Early Career Researchers employed at the University of Oxford and expected to still be in post on 31st September 2019.

2. Entrants require the support of a Referee and line manager approval.

3. Entrants must demonstrate development and delivery of a number of activities or a sustained programme of activity – a single intervention (such as taking part in a one-off event) will not be sufficient.

4. Where appropriate, Entrants must articulate the specific public audience/s engaged. Those that aimed to engage the 'general public' or where the primary purpose was to encourage student applications to the University of Oxford will not be taken forward.

5. Those who have previously received an Early Career Researcher Award are not eligible to enter for this Category again. Those researchers that were ‘Highly Commended’ in 2017 are welcome to apply.

6. Early Career Researchers who submitted an entry previously but were not selected can enter again this year, however the proposal must be recognisably different from the previous submission and provide stronger evidence in regard to the selection criteria.

7. Entrants must agree that the information about winning entries can be made public via internal and external communications channels. All content will be sent for approval prior to publication.

8. Only entries submitted through IRAMS will be considered.

9. Incomplete entries will not be taken forward.

---

1 The term ‘public’ refers to individuals (young people; adults or families), groups or communities who do not currently have a formal relationship with a Higher Education Institution (HEI) through teaching, research or knowledge transfer, but who may have a general or vested interests in these activities.
Key Dates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday 02 April at 1700 hrs</td>
<td>Closing date for entries.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early April</td>
<td>Entries sent for review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Late April/ Early May</td>
<td>Judging Panel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Late May / Early June</td>
<td>Entrants informed of the results</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday 10 July</td>
<td>Vice- Chancellor’s Public Engagement with Research Awards Ceremony</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Entry Process

1. Entries are submitted via the University’s Internal Research Award Management System (IRAMS).
2. This is a two-part process:
   i. Complete the online entry form.
   ii. Upload the Case for Support in PDF format (using the relevant Word template below; which should be saved to PDF before submitting). Download the Word template of the Entry Form to use as your working document and once complete, save as PDF and upload the document as your ‘case for support’ to IRAMS.

   **Public Engagement with Research Award – Projects**
   Word template: [Projects](#)

   **Public Engagement with Research Award – Building Capacity**
   Word template: [Building Capacity](#)

   **Public Engagement with Research Award – Early Career Researcher**
   Word template: [Early Career Researcher](#)

3. Entries are automatically submitted to your Department or Faculty for approval.
4. Applicants are advised to consult with their departmental approver prior to applying to ensure their entry will be approved, and once submitted that the entry is approved in a timely manner to avoid unnecessary delay.

Previous awards

The winning entries for 2017 received recognition for their achievements at the Awards Ceremony, which took place on 28 June 2017 at Museum of Natural History.

These awards are supported by HEIF to improve institutional support for Public Engagement with Research.
View the 2017 entry films

View the 2016 ceremony film

Contact us
For any queries please contact publicengagement@admin.ox.ac.uk

Coordinating Team
Professor Alison Woollard – University academic champion for PER
Dr Lesley Paterson – Head of PER
Annaleise Depper – PER Evaluation Officer
Joanne Fisher – Events Manager (PAD)
Luke Caunt – PER Administration and Communications Officer

FAQ
What do you mean by a high-quality PER ‘Project’?

This can either be a specific Public Engagement with Research project or a set of engagement activities related to a research theme/ topic.

Why can’t the target audience or participants be the ‘General Public’?

We’re asking all entrants to be as specific as they can about their target audiences or participants - this can of course include 'mixed audiences' but it will be important to break down who is included for example a festival audience could be: 'adults, young people and families from the Oxfordshire region'.

PER Projects Award for communications, consultation or collaboration - what if our Public Engagement with Research activities incorporate all three?

Many public engagement activities have elements of communications, consultation and collaboration with the public. Just select the one that you feel is the 'strongest' and state in the proposal that the activities/ project included aspects of all three.

Who can apply?

Open to all staff across the Collegiate University - established senior academics; mid and early career researchers; DPhil students; professional services and academic support staff; curators and other museum, libraries and collections staff; college staff.
Do the activities need to be completed or can ongoing activity be included?

Both are welcome; for activities that have ended – these need to have ended within the last two years to be eligible (but could have started at any time).

**How can smaller initiatives possibly compete with large high-profile activities?**

Activities of any scale are welcome and will be judged according to the outputs, outcomes and impacts in relation to the resource that is/ was available to make the activities happen.