Introduction

The Vice-Chancellor’s Innovation Awards recognise and celebrate high-quality research-led innovation at all levels. Research-led innovation may take many forms, including:

- the creation of new products or models
- entrepreneurial activity
- social enterprise
- influencing policy
- cultural engagement

Each form of research-led innovation shares a commitment to creative and lateral ways of thinking, connecting, problem-solving, and demonstrating real-world application of knowledge.

These awards will celebrate innovative activities and products that are related to research; they do not encompass innovations which are disconnected from the applicant’s research or innovations which have their impact solely in teaching. Further information about the University of Oxford’s strategy for supporting innovation can be found at http://bit.ly/OxfordUniInnovationStrategy and in the Engagement and Partnership section of the University’s Strategic Plan 2018-23.

The winning and highly commended entries for each of the award categories will receive recognition at the Vice-Chancellor’s Innovation Awards Ceremony on Thursday 9 July 2020 at Worcester College. Category winners will have a short video made about their innovation project. The Vice-Chancellor’s Choice Award will also be announced at the ceremony and will receive a prize of £2,000.
Award Categories

- **Team Work**: celebrating the strong collaborative work of a group of individuals who, together, have accomplished high-quality research-led innovation.
- **Building Capacity**: celebrating Oxford University and college staff who have – individually or in teams – encouraged, facilitated and/ or supported a specific instance of high-quality research-led innovation.
- **Inspiring Leader**: celebrating the achievements of an individual who has accomplished high-quality research-led innovation and, in doing so, has inspired others to do the same.
- **Policy Engagement**: celebrating individuals or teams whose expertise or research has informed public policy at a local, national or international level.
- **Early Career**: celebrating individuals in the early stages of their research career, as defined as those who have held a post that includes responsibility for developing their own research agenda for less than five years. This condition will be relaxed proportionately for applicants who have had a career break or who work part-time.

Selection Criteria

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

1. Sent for approval to the relevant department via IRAMS
2. Reviewed by a Divisional innovation-support staff
3. Discussed and winners selected by the Vice-Chancellor’s Innovation Awards panel chaired by Professor Chas Bountra, Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Innovation), and comprising academics from each of the four Divisions and professional services staff who support impact and innovation across the collegiate University.

From the entries, the Vice-Chancellor’s Innovation Awards panel will identify the activities and products of the highest quality using the following criteria:

- **Significance** – How transformational has your activity/product been to date? What positive changes has it made?
- **Impact** – How wide-reaching is the influence/effect of your activity/product on its beneficiaries?
- **Distinctiveness** – What makes your activity/product stand out? What is unusual about it?
- **Academic benefit** – How has the project benefited research and/or your department, faculty, division, or the University more broadly?
- **Legacy** – What is the legacy/projected legacy of your activity/product? How sustainable is it?
- **Links to research** – How clear is the link back to research? In what ways is the underlying research, and/or skills/expertise gained through research, integral to the innovative activity/product?

**Eligibility**

1. The Vice-Chancellor’s Innovation Awards competition is open to current employees of the University of Oxford, or one of its colleges, who will be in post on 31 July 2020.
2. With the exception of the ‘Early Career’ award category, the awards are open to Oxford staff at any career stage. The Early Career category is a ‘floating’ category: applicants need not apply for this award separately as submissions to the other categories, which fit the criteria, will be automatically considered by the panel.
3. Other individuals and organisations (internal and external) that were integral to the project/product must also agree to submission of the Entry and be acknowledged in the relevant IRAMS section.
4. Co-entrants can include staff (researchers, academics, teaching staff, and professional service staff such as research facilitators and curators), graduate students at the University of Oxford, or external individuals and partners from outside the University. Please note that the number of named individuals on the Award communication and invitations to the Awards Ceremony per winning entry will need to 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. The Lead Entrant must inform, and if appropriate seek approval, from relevant senior staff within their department (such as the Head of Department) regarding submission of the Entry.
7. Projects/products that have previously received University of Oxford Innovation Awards or were ‘Highly Commended’ are not eligible for entry to this year’s Awards unless significant additional progress has been made.
8. Projects/products submitted previously that were not selected for a Vice-Chancellor’s Innovation Award are welcome to apply this year and encouraged to demonstrate that additional progress has been made and to provide even stronger evidence against the selection criteria.
9. 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.
10. Only entries submitted through IRAMS will be considered.
11. Incomplete entries will not be taken forward.
Key Dates

6 January 2020 - IRAMS application portal opens

10 March 2020 at 1700 hrs - Closing date for all entries

April 2020 - Entries sent for review

Early May 2020 - Judging Panel make their decisions

Late May 2020 - Shortlisted applicants informed and category winner videos filmed

Thursday 9 July 2020 - Vice-Chancellor’s Innovation Awards Ceremony; winning and highly commended entrants will receive certificates, and the overall winner will receive £2000

How to Enter

Entrants may self-nominate or be nominated by someone else. The application process is the same in either case.

1. Ensure that you have read through the application guidance above.
2. Download and complete the Case for Support form
3. Apply via IRAMS: https://irams.ox.ac.uk (application portal opens 6 January 2020).
   The IRAMS online Entry Form has fixed sections that are typically used for grant applications.

For your Vice-Chancellor’s Innovation Awards Entry, please note:

i. Project title refers to the name of your Vice-Chancellor’s Innovation Awards Entry.

ii. Lead Department refers to the department, faculty, or division that the Lead Applicant is primarily affiliated with. If they are a college-only employee,
please select ‘other’ for the Lead Department and choose the college from the Sub-unit dropdown list.

iii. The Start and End date refer to the innovation project/activities.

iv. Please read the eligibility criteria in these guidance notes before ticking the ‘Eligibility’ box

v. Your Entry does not require ethical review (but it is required that, where appropriate, your research of innovation activities will have undergone ethical review.)

vi. The Principle Investigator refers to the Lead Entrant; Co-applicants refers to Co-Entrants.

vii. Please add anyone you would like to be able to edit the Entry on the Form Editors tab.

4. Upload your completed Case for Support form in PDF format as your ‘Case for Support’ to IRAMS.

5. Entries are automatically submitted to your Department or Faculty for approval.

6. Entrants are advised to inform their departmental approver that they are entering, and once submitted, encourage them to approve the Entry in a timely manner.

Previous awards

Vice-Chancellor’s Innovation Awards 2018

Contact Us

If you cannot find the answer to your query on http://www.ox.ac.uk/research/innovation-awards please contact collaboration@admin.ox.ac.uk

Acknowledgements

The Vice-Chancellor’s Innovation Awards is supported by the University’s Higher Education and Innovation Fund (HEIF) from Research England.