

# Vice-Chancellor's Awards Innovation & Engagement Awards 2022

## Application Guidance

### Introduction

The inaugural Vice-Chancellor's Innovation & Engagement Awards<sup>1</sup> will recognise and celebrate the wide range of ways in which research undertaken at the University of Oxford makes a positive difference to the economy, the environment, and society.

These Awards will highlight the contribution of teams or individuals who have developed and delivered high-quality innovation and engagement activities at all levels. These may include entrepreneurialism, the creation of new products or models, and engagement with businesses, charities, hospitals, industry, policymakers, publics, regional and community partners, or others.

All awarded entries will illustrate the value of the University of Oxford's research when connected with or applied in the wider world, including its capacity to create, inform and enact positive change. It is expected that a wide variety of approaches will be represented and activities described may be local, regional, national or international in scope and span disciplinary boundaries.

Further information about the University's commitment to innovation and engagement can be found in the Engagement and Partnership section of the [University's Strategic Plan 2018-24](#) and [Knowledge Exchange Strategy 2021-2025](#). There are also specific policies relating to [public engagement with research](#), [policy engagement](#), and [innovation](#) which include definitions of these activities<sup>2</sup>.

Winning and highly commended entries will be recognised at the Vice-Chancellor's Innovation & Engagement Awards Ceremony on **Tuesday 6 September 2022** and showcased in accompanying physical and digital exhibitions. A set of short films featuring the winning projects will be produced and support to develop material for the exhibitions will be provided.

Vice-Chancellor's Choice Award(s) will also be announced at the Ceremony and will receive a prize of £2,000.

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<sup>1</sup> These awards integrate the Vice-Chancellor's Public Engagement with Research Awards and the Vice-Chancellor's Innovation Awards which will not run separately in 2022.

<sup>2</sup> N.B. The distinction between Public Engagement with Research and outreach activities. Public Engagement with Research describes the many ways that members of the public can be involved in the design, conduct, and dissemination of research. PER activities either inform and inspire the public about research, consult and listen to their perspectives, or collaborate with them to help define future research. Outreach activities are not eligible for this award.

## Selection Criteria

Entries will undergo a three-stage process:

- Departmental approval via IRAMS
- An advisory panel comprising academics and innovation and engagement support staff from each of the four Divisions, GLAM and Research Services will provide an initial assessment of applications against the eligibility and assessment criteria to help inform the discussions of the awards panel.
- Decisions on the final winning and highly commended entries will be made by Vice-Chancellor's Innovation & Engagement Awards panel, chaired by Professor Chas Bountra, Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Innovation, and consisting of academic staff from each Division and Directors of services which support innovation and engagement activities across the University. They will identify the activities and projects of the highest quality using the following criteria:
  - **Purpose (Appropriateness):** The entry will demonstrate the underlying rationale of the activity/project and that the purpose, the objectives (i.e., what the individual/team set out to achieve) and the target audiences have been carefully thought through. It will also illustrate why the chosen method of project delivery or engagement is/was suitable. The entry will demonstrate that any substantive changes made to the purpose, project delivery or engagement were appropriate.
  - **Significance:** The entry will detail the influence/effect/impact of the activity/project on its partners/audiences/beneficiaries (potential partners/audience/beneficiaries for early-stage projects). Clear evidence will be provided of the impact/benefits of the research and the engaged audiences, and any other positive outcomes or impacts will also be set out clearly. Statements (of not more than 500 words each) from up to 2 partners and/or beneficiaries involved in the project on the significance may also be included if appropriate.

Entrants may wish to consider in relation to this criterion: *What was the added value of your project? What makes your activity/project stand out? What is unusual about it? How transformational or distinctive has your activity/project been to date? How do you know your project/activity was successful? If relevant, how has the significance/impact been evaluated and the results used?*

- **Links to research:** The link back from the activity/project to research should be made clear. The entry may refer to the ways that the underlying body of research, and/or skills/expertise gained through research, was integral to the innovative activity/project. Reference may also be made to the activities that have enabled researchers to engage

the target audience with their own research. Entries may also give consideration to the ways in which the research benefitted from the engagement/innovation process.

- **Culture of engaged research:** The entry should demonstrate a contribution to creating a positive culture of engaged research, for example, through building capacity, encouraging or facilitating others to become active in innovation and engagement activities, or sharing learning and expertise.

Entrants may therefore wish to consider in relation to this criterion: *How has the project benefited research and/or you as researchers, your department, division, or the University? What is the legacy/projected legacy of your activity/project? How sustainable is it? If relevant, has the project/activity/outputs/outcomes been evaluated and/or has the reflection/learning been shared more widely?*

- In addition to the above criteria, consideration will be given to the career level and delivery experience of the individual or team involved, and whether the project is complete or ongoing. Projects and activities undertaken since July 2019 are eligible.
- The scale of a project will not be a consideration insofar as entries based on projects involving all scales of activity are strongly encouraged to enter and will each be evaluated with reference only to the criteria above.
- The acknowledgement of all team members and contributors involved in the project or activity is **strongly** encouraged as part of all entries. This may include, for example, graduate students, professional services staff, technical support staff, gardens, libraries, museum and Estates Services staff, as appropriate. Additional team members can be added on IRAMS.
- Entrants should note that thematic tags (*Pathways to Impact, Geography, Partner/beneficiary type and University Strategic Priorities*) will be used to assist in the presentation and promotion of Award entries but are not part of the assessment criteria.

## Eligibility

- The Vice-Chancellor's Innovation & Engagement Awards competition is open to current employees of the University of Oxford, or one of its colleges, at any career stage who will be in post on 31 July 2022 for activities undertaken since July 2019.
- Other individuals and organisations, both internal and external, that were integral to the project/activities must also agree to submission of the entry and be acknowledged in the relevant IRAMS section.
- Co-entrants can include staff (researchers, academics, teaching staff, and professional services 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 may need to be limited due to space constraints.

- At least one academic or researcher from the University of Oxford must be named as the Lead Entrant or included within the Project Team.
- The Lead Entrant **must** inform and seek approval from relevant senior staff within their department, such as the Head of Department, regarding submission of the entry.
- Projects that have previously received a University of Oxford VC's Innovation Award or VC's Public Engagement with Research Award, or that were Highly Commended in either of these competitions, are ineligible for entry to this year's VC'S Innovation & Engagement Awards unless significant additional progress has been made since the award.
- Projects submitted previously for a University of Oxford VC's Innovation Award or University of Oxford VC's Public Engagement with Research Award which were not selected as winners or Highly Commended are welcome to enter the VC's Innovation & Engagement Awards this year and are encouraged to demonstrate that additional progress has been made and to provide stronger evidence against the selection criteria.
- Entrants must agree that information about the winning entries can be publicised via internal and external communication channels. All content will be sent for approval to the Lead Entrant prior to publication.
- Only entries submitted through IRAMS will be considered.
- Incomplete entries will not be taken forward.

## Key Dates

- **Monday 7 February 2022:** Call for entries launches
- **Monday 25 April 2022, 5 pm BST:** Closing date for all entries
- **June 2022:** Applicants informed of outcome; optional feedback sessions;
- **June – August 2022:** awarded projects' films produced; planning and production of related digital and physical exhibitions
- **Tuesday 6 September 2022:** Vice-Chancellor's Innovation & Engagement Awards Ceremony

## How to Enter

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

- Ensure that you have read through this Application Guidance document in its entirety.
- Download and complete the Entry Form from [www.ox.ac.uk/research/vice-chancellors-innovation-engagement-awards](http://www.ox.ac.uk/research/vice-chancellors-innovation-engagement-awards)
- Enter via [IRAMS](#) (entry portal opens Monday 7 February 2022). The IRAMS online Entry Form has fixed sections that are typically used for grant applications.

For your online Vice-Chancellor's Innovation & Engagement Awards entry, please note:

- Project title refers to the name of your Vice-Chancellor's Innovation & Engagement Awards entry.
- Lead Department refers to the department, faculty, or division that the Lead Entrant 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.
- The *Start* and *End date* refer to the related project/activities.
- Please read the eligibility criteria in this guidance notes before ticking the *Eligibility* box.
- Your entry does not require ethical review. However, it is required that, where appropriate, your research, innovation or engagement activities will have undergone ethical review.
- The Principal Investigator refers to the Lead Entrant; Co-applicants refers to Co-Entrants.
- Please add anyone you would like to be able to edit the entry on IRAMS on the *Form Editors* tab.
- Upload your completed *Case for Support* form in PDF format as your *Case for Support* to IRAMS.
- Entries are automatically submitted to your department or faculty for approval.
- Entrants are advised to inform the relevant departmental/divisional approver of the nomination/application at the earliest opportunity and make themselves aware of any departmental notice requirements for submission to allow timely approval.

## Previous awards

[Vice-Chancellor's Innovation Awards 2020](#)

[Vice-Chancellor's Public Engagement with Research Awards 2019](#)

## **Contact Us**

For any enquiries that are not addressed in the above Application Guidance, please contact the VC Innovation & Engagement Awards team [landEAwards@admin.ox.ac.uk](mailto:landEAwards@admin.ox.ac.uk)

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The Vice-Chancellor's Innovation & Engagement Awards is co-ordinated by Research Services, with the support of the academic divisions and other colleagues from across the University.