University of Leeds

Research Culture Awards 2021-22

Guidelines

# The aims of the Research Culture awards are to:

* Recognise and reward teams and individuals who are committed to embedding positive research culture across the University
* Inspire research teams by sharing challenges, solutions, and innovative approaches to improving research culture
* Empower prizewinning teams and the wider community to scale up their research culture activities and increase momentum
* Raise both the internal and external visibility of improvements to our research culture to drive sector-wide change.

# Overview

In 2021 we released our [Research Culture statement and themes](https://www.leeds.ac.uk/research-and-innovation/doc/research-culture-statement), outlining our position and intentions for moving towards a more positive research environment at the University of Leeds. The inaugural Research Culture awards recognise that improving our research culture is a complex, challenging, and lengthy process, and that there are many steps along the way to share and celebrate.

Engagement with research culture activities can take many forms and involve many different stakeholders. Initiatives for cultural change can be focused on the individual, group, school, faculty, institution, or sector level. As **collaboration** is key to this journey, the awards will recognise all those involved in contributing to research success, whatever their role, encompassing researchers, technicians, professional services staff, external partners, participants, and others.

Also key is **experimentation**, so the awards encompass initiatives of any size or scale, at any point of development. We value research culture in all its forms, whether introducing new ideas, changing how we do things, or contributing to lasting organisational change. We don’t expect nominees to go above and beyond their normal duties; our focus is on innovations, improvements, or sustained commitments that result in deep, genuine change.

# Research Culture Award Categories

Our five research culture themes do not sit in isolation from each other but interlink to achieve change. The themes form the award categories, with each category having equal importance. We have purposefully kept the categories broad and inclusive. Although your submission may be relevant to multiple categories, we ask you to choose the one most closely aligned to your work.

### **Personal Development, Reward and Recognition**

This award recognises the importance of developing and rewarding others. The focus is on the often-unrecognised contributions that people make in developing our culture, including those who support the development of others. We welcome examples of open, inclusive, or non-traditional ways of recognising and rewarding research activities, at local, national, or international scale.

### **Open Research and Impact**

This award recognises initiatives which increase the transparency, collaboration, inclusivity, reproducibility, or efficiency of research processes to build trust and accountability. It focuses on aspects such as open access and open data, and promoting the use of open platforms for sharing research data, activities, outputs, and impact.

### **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in Research**

This award recognises initiatives that make positive changes to embed a culture of equality, diversity and inclusion in research.  It may include examples of how diversity has been actively considered in the development and delivery of research activities, where patterns of inequality have been highlighted, or how diverse research teams or those with a non-traditional structure have been built. It may also include the recognition of individuals or teams that champion EDI for their research area or service.

### **Responsible Research and Innovation**

This award recognises the importance of responsible research practices, and rewards efforts to ensure that research integrity is at the core of our work, ensuring that it is trustworthy, ethical, honest, rigorous, respectful, and accountable. It may include examples of improving institutional practices, policy development, assessing the positive and negative consequences of our work, and improving monitoring and reporting procedures for upholding research integrity. It also includes how we consider the use of responsible or innovative research metrics, going beyond traditional measures of research excellence.

### **Collegiate and Supportive Environment**

### This award recognises contributions made to creating a collegiate research environment, within or beyond your immediate research group or service. It rewards efforts to support the wellbeing of others, creating inclusive teams, and examples of inspirational leadership. It may include examples of innovative mentoring schemes, supporting flexible working to promote a healthier work-life balance, or empowering others to voice their concerns and challenge behaviours.

## Eligibility criteria

Activities must be based on research culture examples from the University of Leeds.

All members of staff and PGRs at the University of Leeds are eligible to apply, and applications can be made by individuals or teams. External partners can be listed as members of the team.

Applications are open to all disciplines and professional services. We especially encourage applications from early- and mid-career stages, and those bringing researchers and research support together.

The lead applicant is the contact for the award application and must hold a contract that lasts until July 2023 so they can manage the prize money if awarded. If PGRs are the lead applicant, they will need a named staff member as co-lead to manage the Finance admin.

## Ceremony and prizes

Awards will be celebrated at an awards reception on Tuesday 19th July 2022, 3 - 5.30pm. Lead applicants and their teams are expected to join.

The first prize in each category is comprised of:

* a certificate and trophy
* £3,000 for future activities to enhance research culture (to be spent before July 31st 2023)
* £100 personal prize for each team member (up to 10 members per team)
* Promotional communications highlighting the activity and award

The second prize in each category is comprised of:

* a certificate
* £1,000 for future activities to enhance research culture (to be spent before July 31st 2023)
* £50 personal prize for each team member (up to 10 members per team)
* Promotional communications highlighting the activity and award

## Application and assessment processes

Applicants should enter the category most closely aligned with the nominated activity.

Applications are made via an application form, which puts forward a case for the award. [provide link]

Those eligible for awards may self-nominate or can be nominated by a third party. The application route has no bearing on subsequent processes, e.g. the reviewing panel will not be informed about whether an application was self-nominated or other-nominated.

**Please email nominations/self-nominations using this form to Holly Ingram** **H.L.Ingram@leeds.ac.uk** **by Wednesday June 1st, 5pm**

After submission, the application will be screened for eligibility by the Research Culture awards team.

Applications will be judged by an interdisciplinary external panel, comprising prominent individuals in research culture.

**Confirmed panel members:**

* Jason Arday, Associate Professor of Sociology and Deputy Executive Dean (People and Culture, University of Durham
* Frances Downey, Head of Research & Innovation Culture, UKRI
* Alexandra Freeman, Founder of the Octopus open publishing platform
* Simon Hettrick, Chair of the Hidden Ref group
* Janet Metcalfe, Head and Chair of Vitae
* Samantha Oakley, Research Careers and Culture Group, University of Glasgow
* Nik Ogryzko, UKRI postdoc and technician policy lead, and member of the Researcher Development Concordat writing group
* Sonya Towers, Research Culture and Communities Specialist, Wellcome Trust

All eligible entries will be shared with the external panel, who will score the applications according to how well they address our research culture aims as contained in the University’s [Research Culture statement](https://www.leeds.ac.uk/research-and-innovation/doc/research-culture-statement), and their fit with the assessment criteria below. The scores will inform the discussion of the panel but will not be used as a decision tool in themselves (in line with the University’s [responsible metrics statement](https://ris.leeds.ac.uk/research-excellence/responsible-metrics-in-the-assessment-of-research/)).

Reviewers may move applications to a different award category if they deem it more closely aligned. The award decision is made through panel discussion, and will be at the reviewer panels’ discretion.

## Assessment Criteria:

Strong applications should highlight some of the following:

1. A clear and persuasive articulation of the problem or challenge that the initiative addresses
2. A strong relationship between the activity and the underpinning research culture theme
3. Novel, creative, or ambitious approaches to transforming traditional or outdated processes to improve research culture
4. A focus on clearly justified target demographic/s, which may include seldom-heard/under-represented groups
5. Evidence of the added value to the activities through a diverse, seldom-heard, or or innovative research team structure
6. Evidence of significant benefits or changes of the activity on the research culture, staff, or target demographics (actual or potential depending on the stage of the initiative)
7. Sustainable collaborations or partnership-building with external bodies, e.g. other educational or research institutions, publishers, funders, or industry / policy stakeholders
8. Evidence of successfully adapting existing initiatives to enable their activity during COVID-19
9. Evidence of clear plans for the longevity or legacy of the initiative
10. Consideration of the impact of the initiative on research quality.

Thank you very much and best of luck,

The Research Culture Award working group:

* Cat Davies
* Emma Spary
* Holly Ingram
* Gaynor Miller
* Claire Knowles
* Helen Gleeson
* Luke Windsor

Enquiries should be directed to Holly Ingram, project manager: H.L.Ingram@leeds.ac.uk