Celebrating Excellence in Impact Awards 2020

In 2020 the University of Essex is holding an award event entitled ‘Celebrating Excellence in Research and Impact Awards’ that will jointly celebrate and showcase the excellent research and impact that has been generated by the University’s academic community.

The Impact Awards are designed to showcase the very best research impact that has been generated by the University’s academic community in all areas of research. We invite self-nominations from individuals, teams, or projects, and nominations of colleagues from Executive Deans, Deputy Deans, Heads of Departments, Directors of Research, and Directors of Impact.

There are five categories of awards that will be made in 2020. The focus of research impact is broadly defined so as to include impacts pertaining to all non-academic fields.

1. Best UK Public Policy Impact
2. Best International Research Impact
3. Best Research Impact in Enterprise and Innovation
4. Best Creative and Cultural Research Impact
5. Best Research Impact Award by an Early Career Researcher or Doctoral Student

Nominees must be a University of Essex individual academic or research staff, research teams led by a University of Essex researcher, or University of Essex doctoral students. Nominees do not require previous experience of generating research impact other than evidence of tangible impacts and benefits flowing from their work to external parties. We strongly encourage nominations for/from early-career and doctoral projects, and projects that have been supported by the University’s ESRC-funded Impact Acceleration Account. Those submitting nominations should read the guidance notes and complete the nomination pro forma.

The closing date for nominations is 4pm on Friday 28th February 2020.

Award Winners will be invited to the Celebrating Excellence in Research Awards event to be held on 28 April 2020 at the University of Essex Colchester Campus where they will be invited to give a short presentation of their work. Winners will also receive an inscribed award and a £1,000 prize to support their research.

Professor Christine Raines (PVC, Research)
Guidance Notes

This guidance document is for nominations for Impact Awards only – there is a separate Guidance document for the Research Awards.

1. Research Impact

For the purposes of the Awards we define research impact as the demonstrable contribution excellent research makes to all fields outside academia, including contributions to society, the economy, culture, health, wellbeing, the environment, technology, law, policy, and practice outside of academia.

Nominations must include impact that has occurred since 1 August 2014.

Projects nominated for University of Essex Celebrating Research Impact Awards in previous years may be nominated again. Where this applies, nominations must clearly explain impact additional to that included in previous nominations.

2. Categories

There are five categories for the University’s Celebrating Research Impact Award:

1. Best UK Public Policy Research Impact: This award will recognise University of Essex research that has contributed to the development of UK public policy at the local, regional, or national government level. This could include direct changes in policy, changes to how decision-makers view issues and the development of more effective and efficient practice by professionals or the users of public services. Entries should be supported by evidence that the research has been taken up and used by policymakers and public service practitioners.

2. Best International Research Impact: This award recognises impact at an international level across countries in business, policy or societal issues. Impact nominated for this category can be within a single country provided that country is not the UK, or can be in more than one country. Impact nominated for this category can include cases where impacts straddle the UK and other countries or impacts on the work of international agencies. The judges are particularly keen to encourage applications highlighting research impact for developing and transitioning societies.

3. Best Research Impact in Enterprise and Innovation: This category recognises a broad range of benefits to workers, freelancers, entrepreneurs, SMEs, businesses, and the economy. Projects nominated for this category could also include those that benefit social and community enterprises. Impact could also include benefit to a group of enterprises or a sector through innovation, change in practice or management structures, or utilisation of new skills and training. Impact in this category can be within any country or within multiple countries, and the
businesses that benefit from the nominated project can be national or international.

4. **Best Creative and Cultural Research Impact**: Projects nominated for this Award should use research which contributes to creative and cultural not-for-profit organisations, enterprises, and policy bodies, or to benefit society through culture and the arts. Impact can include change to policy and practice of museums, galleries, and other cultural institutions, and impact in the creative economy. Impact in this category can be within any country or within multiple countries.

5. **Best Research Impact Award by an Early Career Researcher or Doctoral Student**: As with the other awards, the judges are seeking evidence for the development of knowledge and know-how that is of tangible value to non-academic partners in a variety of sectors. An ECR is defined as a member of academic staff or research support staff who submitted their doctorate no earlier than 1 March 2015. Three awards will be granted in this category (one for each academic Faculty).

All entries should be supported by evidence that the research has been taken up and used by an identifiable external group or organisation.

3. The Awards

Each successful award will receive a £1,000 prize to further their research impact endeavours. In addition, the award winner/s will receive an inscribed award.

The awards and award winners will also feature in the University’s on-going promotion of its research impact strategy and funding including (but not limited to) future funding arrangements beyond the Impact Accelerator Account scheme. Award winners’ impact stories will also be used by the University in internal and external communications and in submissions for national awards to recognise and celebrate the impact of research taking place at the University. Consequently, the award winner/s will be asked to submit a brief update on their use of the financial award to the Research Planning Officer (Dr. Cathleen Cortis Mack) via ccorti@essex.ac.uk within 18 months of the award.

4. Eligibility

Nominated individuals or teams must be academic or research staff based at the University of Essex. Team nominations are encouraged and the lead nominee should be a member of academic or research staff at the University of Essex.

In the case of the Early Career Award, nominees must be PhD students or have submitted their PhD no earlier than 1 March 2015. Nominees should meet the eligibility criteria both at the time of nomination and when the research impact took (or is taking) place.
5. Application process

Nominees should read the guidance notes/assessment criteria and complete the nomination pro forma.

Nominations must be submitted to Dr. Cathleen Cortis Mack (Research Planning Officer, REO) at ccorti@essex.ac.uk by 4pm on Friday 28 February 2020.

Nominations will be assessed by a judging panel led by Professor Christine Raines (PVC - Research) and Dr. Rob Singh (Acting Director of the Research and Enterprise Office) and also involving the Deputy Deans for Research to identify the winners in each category. The judging panel will examine all the information provided in nominations, and will place appropriate weight on the degree to which tangible research impacts for external parties are described and also corroborated. (Corroborating evidence must be provided with the nomination by the deadline. See the nomination form).

Nominees may be contacted by the Research and Enterprise Office after the closing date if the judging panel require further clarification on any aspect of the application.

Individuals and projects may be nominated for more than one category, up to a maximum of three nominations.

6. Assessment criteria

All nominations should show how the individual or project meets the criteria for the relevant categories. Judges will place equal weight on each criterion with the exception of the final criteria which may not apply on all cases. Applications will be judged against the following core criteria:

- Demonstrable link between the research and impact identified
- A constructive role played by the researcher in making impact happen
- A clear and credible understanding of research impact from the beneficiaries’ point of view
- The research and impact creating new or enhanced relationships with research user and practitioners
- The potential for other researchers to learn and to be inspired

7. Contact

For further guidance please contact the Research Planning Officer (Dr. Cathleen Cortis Mack) at ccorti@essex.ac.uk