



Arts and  
Humanities  
Research Council



## Medical Humanities Awards 2020

The Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) and the Wellcome Trust are pleased to announce that submissions are now open for the 2020 Medical Humanities Awards.

The Awards champion the application of the arts and humanities within interdisciplinary research, and recognise education and social action informed by the arts and humanities, which transform our understanding of health and social care, health, and/or wellbeing in their social, cultural, and political contexts. They aim to:

- Recognise the viewpoints and contributions from within and beyond medicine, while valuing the experience, knowledge and participation of the public;
- Explore diverse approaches to achieving, maintaining or recovering quality of life;
- Demonstrate the distinctive value of arts and humanities research, not least in providing new evidence and insights for the education or practices of those planning, organising or working for the health of any population.

The Medical Humanities Awards recognise and showcase the very best research, impact, and leadership from this field of study. We hope it will encourage further valuable work at the interface between research in the arts and humanities and new insights into health, healthcare, and wellbeing.

Applications and nominations are invited under five categories, with the winner of each category being awarded a £5,000 prize at an award ceremony to be held in July 2020:

- Best Research
- Best Doctoral or Early Career Research
- Best International Research
- Best Community Led Project
- Leadership Award

Please note: any nominations must be submitted with the knowledge and permission of the nominee(s).

Awards in all five categories will be made and announced at a special awards ceremony in July 2020. All shortlisted entrants will be invited to the event in May 2020. There will be a winner for each of the listed award categories.

Applications and nominations must be submitted through Smart Survey (see Entry Requirements below) and applicants should read the eligibility and judging criteria for each category carefully before applying.

## **1. Best Research**

This category recognises the best research in the medical and health humanities from the past five years. It is open to all original arts and humanities research within the field of the medical and health humanities, as outlined above, that has taken place in the UK since 1<sup>st</sup> January 2015. Research projects which are ongoing can be submitted under this category but will be assessed against the same criteria. Full eligibility requirements are provided further below.

When considering applications/nominations under this category, judges will be looking for:

- Research excellence
- Research with clearly substantial and/or highly relevant findings related to healthcare, health or wellbeing
- Research that is demonstrably interdisciplinary
- Research that is likely to advance significantly:
  - Healthcare, health or wellbeing (at an individual, population or system level)
  - Theory related to healthcare, health or wellbeing
  - Methodology for applying arts and humanities in healthcare, health or wellbeing

All entrants must complete and submit the form in the Requirements section which asks for a 300-500 word summary explaining concisely the value of the research study. Please ensure that this is written in plain English.

## **2. Best Doctoral or Early Career Research**

This category recognises the best research undertaken by doctoral students and early career researchers. It is open to all original arts and humanities research within the field of medical and health humanities, as defined above, that has taken place in the UK since 1<sup>st</sup> January 2015. The research must have been conducted while the

applicant/nominee was registered as a doctoral student or while they met the eligibility criteria for an early career researcher described below (see Eligibility section for full requirements). Research projects which are ongoing can be submitted under this category but will be assessed against the same criteria.

When considering applications/nominations under this category, judges will look for the same qualities as listed for the Best Research category but will take into account both the experience and the career stage of the applicant/nominee.

All entrants must complete and submit the form in the Requirements section which asks for a 300-500 word summary explaining concisely the value of the research study. Please ensure that this is written in plain English.

### **3. Best International Research**

This category recognises the best research in the medical and health humanities, from the past five years (since 1<sup>st</sup> January 2015), which has an international outlook. It is open to all original arts and humanities research within the field of the medical and health humanities, as outlined above. The researchers must have been primarily based in the UK, but the research should include a significant international element. This could include, for example: global collaborators; a project with work taking place in multiple countries; or research which addresses the specific needs of a country or region outside of the UK. Research projects which are ongoing can be submitted under this category but will be assessed against the same criteria. Full eligibility requirements are provided further below.

When considering applications/nominations for Best International Research judges will be looking for the same qualities as listed for the Best Research category but will also take into account the following:

- The nature, strength and value of any international collaborations
- How the research has crossed any cultural, linguistic and national boundaries
- How the specific needs of a country or region outside of the UK have been identified, explored and addressed
- Whether the work brought arts and humanities research into an international context where it was previously unknown, and the benefits and/or learning that came from this.

We are keen to see research which helps those societies or groups which are most in need. This could include lower and middle income countries, or particularly vulnerable groups within these or other countries.

All entrants must complete and submit the form in the Requirements section which asks for a 300-500 word summary explaining concisely the value of the research study. Please ensure that this is written in plain English.

#### **4. Best Community-Led Project**

This category recognises the best research in the medical and health humanities over the past five years that has been led by groups or individuals working outside of academia. It is open to all original arts and humanities projects within the field of the medical and health humanities, as defined above, that has taken place in the UK since 1<sup>st</sup> January 2015. This could, for example, include: community-based or community-led projects; projects utilising museum, library or archive collections in connection with their local communities; widely accessible public activities or work with exceptional community engagement; projects led by healthcare professionals, or projects where arts interventions have produced a significant benefit in health or wellbeing. The research must have been led by a non-HEI organisation, and primarily undertaken by researchers or practitioners outside of academia, although there may have been academic partners contributing to the project in some capacity. Research projects which are ongoing can be submitted under this category but will be assessed against the same criteria. Full eligibility requirements are provided further below.

When considering applications/nominations under this category, judges will look for:

- Research excellence
- Research with clearly substantial and/or highly relevant findings related to healthcare, health or wellbeing
- Research that is likely to advance significantly:
  - Healthcare, health or wellbeing (at an individual, population or system level)
  - Theory related to healthcare, health or wellbeing
- The value and significance of any community collaborations to the research, as well as the value of the research to the community
- Whether the work brought arts and humanities research into a context where it was previously unknown, and the benefits and/or learning that came from this.

All entrants must complete and submit the form in the Requirements section which asks for a 300-500 word summary explaining concisely the value of the research study. Please ensure that this is written in plain English.

## 5. Leadership Award

This category recognises leadership within the field of medical and health humanities. Applications and nominations are for an individual, and are open to all for work that has taken place in the UK since 1<sup>st</sup> January 2015. Due to the nature of 'leadership', the category is deliberately broad but could include, for example: someone who has driven the subject within an institution, or across institutions, through the introduction of courses and training opportunities; someone, whether a community member, an academic or healthcare professional, who has driven engagement with community groups; someone who has driven engagement with policymakers at an organisational or political level; or someone who has driven the field of research through sustained, excellent research which has pushed the boundaries of knowledge and practice. We welcome other interpretations of 'leadership' beyond the examples given.

When considering applications/nominations under this category, judges will be looking for:

- The significance of the leadership presented
- The impact of the leadership, particularly in terms of making a measurable difference to the field and/or the research environment

The nature of these criteria will vary depending on the application/nomination presented. For example, a community member may facilitate access to a small, difficult to reach group and then lead their participation in research or activities, which has beneficial impacts to that group and beyond. Whilst small scale in nature, it could still be considered significant leadership if no one has previously been able to access that group.

### Entry Requirements

Nominations may be made by the entrant themselves, or by another individual. Entrants for all categories who wish to nominate their own work must complete and submit the [Smart Survey Application Form](#) by 4pm on Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> March 2020.

If you are nominating another person for an award, please complete and submit this shorter [Smart Survey Nomination Form](#) by 4pm on 18<sup>th</sup> March. We will be in touch with all nominees as soon as possible after the closing date and by 20<sup>th</sup> March at the latest. Nominees will then be required to send us information about their work in support of their nomination by Tuesday 31<sup>st</sup> March at 4pm if they wish to continue their involvements in the awards.

## Eligibility

Applications/nominations in all categories must have relevance to the remit supported by the [Arts and Humanities Research Council \(AHRC\)](#) or the [Wellcome Trust](#). It is up to each applicant to make a case for how the research they wish to nominate is aligned with that supported by the AHRC or Wellcome.

Applications and nominations can be made in multiple categories, so long as the eligibility criteria for each category is met. In such cases, the shortlisting process will consider how well the application/nomination meets each of the categories selected.

The AHRC and Wellcome have previously offered a similar award, the Health Humanities Medal, which ran in 2018. The category winners from that competition are not eligible to enter the 2020 Medical Humanities Awards competition in any category; they will become eligible to enter again in 2021. The shortlisted nominees from the 2018 competition may enter these awards with a different project or enter the same project in a different category if it meets that category's eligibility criteria. Shortlisted entries from the 2018 competition cannot be entered in the same category that they were shortlisted in for this competition.

Applicants/nominees for the **Best Doctoral or Early Career Research** category will also need to match either of the following criteria:

- Doctoral Researcher:
  - Be engaged in a current doctoral study.
  - OR**
  - Were registered as a doctoral student at the time the primary research was completed.
  
- Early Career Researcher:
  - Be postdoctoral (your doctoral degree has been awarded).
  - AND**
  - Have not yet been awarded a permanent academic contract, or had not been awarded a permanent academic contract at the point the research was completed. (An academic contract is considered one where the primary functions of the role are research and/or teaching).

Applicants who no longer meet these requirements may still be nominated providing they met the criteria at the point the research in question was carried out.

## **Judging**

Eligible submissions will go through a two-stage review process:

1. Shortlisting of applications
2. Final assessment panel

The submissions will be judged by a mix of academics, arts and humanities practitioners, representatives from the AHRC and from Wellcome, and other experts with knowledge and experience of the value of the arts to healthcare, health and wellbeing.

Judges will consider each eligible application against the criteria set out under the relevant category. Each submission will be assessed solely against these criteria and from the information provided in the application form. The accompanying text (300-500 words) will provide vital information about the research, the contribution to understandings of health and its social and cultural contexts, and the broader achievements of the research. Careful consideration should, therefore, be given to the writing of these submissions. Please avoid jargon and try to make your application as succinct and easy to understand as possible.

All entrants will be told whether they have been shortlisted by early May.

Shortlisted applicants may be asked to provide a short summary of their research for public consumption.

## **Awards ceremony**

Awards in all five categories will be made and announced at an awards ceremony in July 2020 (further details to be announced shortly). All shortlisted entrants will be invited to the event by early May 2020.

## **Schedule**

10<sup>th</sup> January 2020: Medical Humanities Awards nominations open  
4pm on 18<sup>th</sup> March 2020: Deadline for all submissions and nominations  
4pm on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020: Deadline for nominees to submit supporting information  
April 2020: Shortlisting of applications  
May 2020: Shortlisted applicants invited to awards ceremony  
July 2020: Awards ceremony in London

**Further information**

For enquiries about these awards, please email the Health and Environmental Humanities Team at AHRC on [HEH@ahrc.ukri.org](mailto:HEH@ahrc.ukri.org) or phone 01793 416060.