

Research in Film Awards 2019 application guidance

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Document history

Version	Date	Changes
1.2	18 June 2019	Extension of closing date
1.1	3 June 2019	Corrected typos and clarified eligibility details
1.0	24 April 2019	First published

2. Introduction

Organised by the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) and now in its fifth year, the Research in Film Awards (RIFA) showcases new and emerging talent in filmmaking linked to the arts and humanities. The Awards celebrate the best of a growing number of high-quality short films (defined as no more than 30 minutes in length) that bring the arts and humanities to a wider public audience.

These awards are designed to encourage and recognise the considerable body of work created at the interface between research and film while showcasing the world-leading work of researchers, practitioners and filmmakers in the arts and humanities research community. The awards bring the world of research into film – but also bring the world of film into research, in the process expanding the horizons of academics, filmmakers, and the general public.

Films are produced in many ways, both through and as a result of research. They may be primary outputs, by-products, records of research undertaken, dissemination tools or practice-based research itself. They may include reconstructions and enactments, animations, installations and gallery pieces, games, interactive storytelling or co-produced work including collaborations with community groups. Submissions may take the form of documentaries, visual essays, experimental films or broadcast programmes; they may entail any of these, and much more besides.

The Research in Film Awards have five categories. Two of these categories are open to the public, including a special themed category marking research which links the arts and humanities to mental health and wellbeing, and a special category where members of the public can enter or nominate a short film which has been inspired by the arts and humanities. Each winner receives a trophy and £2,000 to put towards future filmmaking activities.

Films entered for the Doctoral or Early Career Film Award must have been produced as a result of AHRC funding. The Best Research Film of the Year (3.1) and Social Media Short Award (3.4) are open to all those eligible for AHRC funding. The Mental Health and Wellbeing Award (3.3) and the Inspiration Award (3.5) are open to all, but the films entered must be inspired by arts and humanities research.

The winners will be announced at an awards ceremony at BFI Southbank on Tuesday 12 November 2019.

3. Award categories

The Research in Film Awards have five categories:

- Best Research Film of the Year
- Doctoral or Early Career Film Award
- Mental Health and Wellbeing Award (public category)
- Social Media Short Award
- Inspiration Award (public category)

You can enter a film in more than one category, provided you meet the eligibility criteria for each category. However, you must complete a [separate Smart Survey form](#) for each category entered.

3.1 Best Research Film of the Year

This category is for all films produced as outputs or by-products of arts and humanities research in the UK and is open to all those employed by AHRC-recognised Research Organisations in the UK (see section 5, Eligibility) at the time the film was completed, launched or made publicly available.

Your film must have been completed or made available during the last year since 1 April 2018. Films entered for this category do not have to be produced as a result of AHRC funding.

Judges are looking for films which:

- Bring new research to wider attention
- Showcase excellent practice in the dissemination of research findings
- Highlight the value and importance of research in the arts and humanities
- Illustrate the value and importance of subjects or questions within the arts and humanities.

3.2 Doctoral or Early Career Film Award

This category is for all films produced as outputs or by-products of arts and humanities research by doctoral students and early career researchers funded by the AHRC (see Eligibility section for details).

You don't need to be registered as a doctoral student or as part of our Early Career Researchers scheme at the point of submission or on the release date of the film, but the primary research for the film must have been conducted while the applicant was still registered.

Your film must have been completed or made available during the last year since 1 April 2018.

Judges are looking for films which:

- Portray or represent excellent research
- Have brought new research to wider attention
- Showcase excellent practice in the dissemination of research findings
- Bring arts and humanities research to new audiences
- Highlight the value and importance of research in the arts and humanities
- Highlight the value and importance of subjects or questions within the arts and humanities.

3.3 Mental Health and Wellbeing Award (public category)

The arts and humanities are fundamentally about understanding ourselves, and as a result have many applications for our mental health and wellbeing, from arts-based interventions, to better access to historic places, to participation in sport and dance. The arts and humanities offer a range of perspectives, skills and techniques that can reveal a deeper understanding of the causes and experiences of mental health and ill health.

The Mental Health and Wellbeing Award is open to films that explore the ways that the arts and humanities have implications for our mental health and wellbeing. Films might be based on research that explores diverse approaches to achieving, maintaining or recovering quality of life, or showcase new evidence or insights for the education or practices of those planning, organising or working for the health of individuals, groups, or society as a whole.

This category is open to the public and recognises films produced in the UK which have been inspired by the arts and humanities. Entrants can be individuals, community groups, teams or collaborative groups who have been stimulated by arts and humanities research.

All films must have been completed or made available during the last five years (since 1 April 2014).

Judges are looking for films which:

- Are imaginative and showcase the stories and impact of the arts and humanities on mental health and wellbeing, particularly in terms of uncovering new narratives and demonstrating co-production or collaborations with individuals, communities or organisations
- Have the arts and humanities at their core

- Are effective in translating stories and voices across disciplines.

3.4 Social Media Short Award

This category is open to films which have been produced specifically for social media channels such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram or YouTube. With the increasing use of social media, this award recognises the importance and value of film used in this context, particularly in terms of its ability to engage and reach new audiences, and as a key mechanism for disseminating information.

We are looking for videos which help to capture the imagination in a space which is teeming with content. Entries will also be evaluated in terms of how they fulfil the requirements of social media, for example, the video should ideally be no longer than five minutes, and in some instances, no longer than two minutes (the maximum video length for Twitter is 2 minutes and 20 seconds for example). Entrants should keep in mind the fundamentals of storytelling and innovation, as well as the needs of their chosen medium in terms of format, keywords, captioning and style. Submissions could include live broadcasts, and other creative formats. There must be a clear and demonstrable link to arts and humanities research.

Additional consideration will also be given to videos which have received a high volume of engagement. When submitting your entry for this category, please send a link to the video on social media.

This category is for all videos produced as outputs or by-products of arts and humanities research in the UK and is open to all those employed by AHRC-recognised Research Organisations in the UK at the time the video was completed, launched or made publicly available (see section 5, Eligibility for more details).

Judges are looking for films which:

- Show technical innovation and a clear understanding of the medium
- Have been created and optimised for social media channels
- Demonstrate how to distribute and position the video to engage a wider, public-facing audience
- Display creativity in terms of storytelling and disseminating information effectively in a short amount of time
- Showcase research in the arts and humanities in an accessible way.

3.5 Inspiration Award (public category)

This category is open to the public and recognises films produced in the UK which have been inspired by the arts and humanities. This could be as a result of attending an arts festival, visiting a museum exhibition, or through books, plays or performances which have helped to fire the imagination. Entrants can be individuals, community groups, teams or collaborative groups who have been stimulated by the arts and humanities. All films submitted must have been completed or made available during the last year (since 1 April 2018).

The arts and humanities touch all areas of our lives and this award aims to recognise their value and importance to us all.

Judges are looking for films which:

- Have been inspired by the arts and humanities and which have creative – either real or imagined – representations in film.
- Convey a sense of the importance of the arts and humanities to our lives.

We also accept nominations for films in this category.

These nominations should include a 300-word summary of how the film has been inspired by the arts and humanities, together with contact details to enable the AHRC to access the nominated film for judging purposes.

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

4. How to apply

To enter the competition, you must [complete our online Smart Survey form](#) by 9am on Monday 24 June, 2019. If you want to enter more than one category, you will need to complete the form again, once for each category.

To complete the form, you will need:

- Your name, the names of any collaborators, and details of your research organisation, if applicable
- A contact email address and telephone number
- A link to your film on the free online video service, Vimeo (with a password, if your video is password-protected)
- A 300-word summary explaining your film's links with arts and humanities research, written in plain English
- A 150-word summary of how you would use the prize money to fund future filmmaking
- Any other information you think is relevant.

Your film must be:

- No longer than 30 minutes, including titles and credits
- In English, or with English subtitles
- Uploaded to Vimeo and playable in a standard web browser
- Created, completed or made public since 1 April 2018, or by 1 April 2014 if you are entering your film in the Mental Health and Wellbeing category
- Produced without direct input from the AHRC communications team.

Entries that don't meet these criteria, or that are submitted after the deadline, will be disqualified.

We define 'film' broadly as a series of moving images, but we do not specify the nature of the images.

If your film is shortlisted:

- Your film must be made viewable to the public; in exceptional cases it is acceptable that a short 60 second clip or trailer is created which can be made available on the AHRC website
- Your film will be screened at the RIFA ceremony in November
- An excerpt from your film must be made available on the AHRC website after the shortlist is available and on the AHRC's social media channels
- All winning films will be made publicly available on the AHRC website and on the AHRC's social media channels shortly after the awards ceremony, unless an exception has been agreed as above

- You must be available for media and communications opportunities, typically from September to December 2019
- The AHRC will issue a press release announcing the shortlist and winners and require all those who have been nominated to share this press release with their academic institution or any relevant organisations that have been involved with the film.

The AHRC may disqualify any entries which it deems offensive or unsuitable, for any reason and at any time.

5. Eligibility

All categories

To enter a film into **any category** of the Research in Film Awards, you must be:

- a UK resident, and
- Over the age of 18, and
- Not employed directly by the AHRC or UK Research and Innovation.

You **can** apply if you have entered before, but **not** with the same film unless it is substantially different to what you entered before.

There are **no further restrictions on who may enter the two public categories**.

Categories other than the public categories

To enter a film into **any category other than the two public categories**, you must be currently working or studying at a UK research organisation that is eligible to receive funding from UK Research and Innovation. Your organisation is eligible if it is either:

- A UK higher education institution that receives grant funding from a UK funding body, such as Research England, the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales, the Scottish Funding Council or the Department for Employment and Learning Northern Ireland, or
- A [research institute](#) which UKRI has established a long-term involvement with as a major funder, or
- An independent research organisation (IRO) which has been [awarded IRO status by UKRI](#).

You **do not** need to have a permanent contract of employment to be eligible.

We recognise that films often involve collaboration with broadcasters, community groups, cultural bodies and so on, and as such awards can be made to teams as well as individuals. However, to enter a category other than the public category there must be an identified research lead who meets the eligibility criteria above.

You can find out more about your organisation's eligibility in the [AHRC Research Funding Guide](#).

Doctoral and Early Career Award category

To enter a film into the **'Doctoral and Early Career Award' category**, you must be either:

- A doctoral researcher engaged in PhD research through an AHRC funded position, and registered as an AHRC funded doctoral student at the time the primary research for the film was completed, or
- Within eight years of the award of your PhD, excluding any period of career break such as parental leave, caring responsibilities or health reasons, or

- Within six years of your first academic appointment, excluding any period of career break such as parental leave, caring responsibilities or health reasons. This must be a paid contract of employment, either full-time or part-time, which lists research and/or teaching as the primary function, including research assistantships.

As with the other academic categories, you **do not** need to have a permanent contract of employment to be eligible, as long as you meet the conditions above.

6. Judging and assessment process

The films will be judged by a panel consisting of academics, media and film industry experts. The judges will view films on a single 16:9 screen.

Judges will primarily be interested in the quality of the films submitted as considered against the requirements outlined for each category, but the accompanying text (300 words) will provide vital information about the film's links with arts and humanities research and therefore careful consideration should be given to the writing of these submissions. Please avoid jargon and make your application succinct and easy to understand.

All entrants will be told the outcome of their submission by the end of August 2019.

Timeline

Activity	Date
Launch of call	Wednesday 24 April 2019
Deadline for entries	Monday 24 June 2019, 9am
All entrants notified	End of August 2019
Awards ceremony in London	Tuesday 12 November 2019

7. Awards

Winners in each category will win £2,000 and a trophy. The cash awards should be invested in future filmmaking work and all entrants are required to state in their applications how this money will be used.

Awards ceremony

Awards in all five categories will be made and announced at an awards ceremony in London at BFI Southbank, Belvedere Road, South Bank, London SE1 8XT, on Tuesday 12 November 2019. All shortlisted entrants will be invited, along with the judges, industry dignitaries, and others.

8. Contact information

For enquiries about this competition, please [email the AHRC Communications team](#) or telephone 01793 416060 (available Monday to Friday 08:30-16:30).