

Society Awards 2024

| Awards Criteria

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Introduction

The purpose of this document is to clearly outline the process and criteria for Society Awards nominations. This document will be reviewed annually to ensure that all criteria are fair and up to date.

Society Awards are a major part of the Students' Union calendar, designed to recognise the commitment and excellence of individual and group contributions to Student Opportunities over the course of a year.

Nominations Process

- Any student is able to nominate a student group or an individual for an award.
- Groups can nominate themselves for as many awards as they feel necessary.
- All nominations should be submitted using the online form.
- Only registered students of the University will be eligible for nomination.

Selection Process

All nominations will be decided by a panel comprising of:

- Vice President Societies and Sport
- Societies Coordinator
- Student Opportunities Manager
- SSO Executive Representative

For the following award a further representative will join the panel:

- Fundraising and Impact Award: Representative from Royal Holloway Volunteering
- Sarah Parker Remond Inclusion and Accessibility Award: Vice President Wellbeing and Diversity

Any group is eligible to nominate themselves and it is useful to include supportive data in the form of figures where possible and relevant. Groups should note that it is not necessary to have achieved across every area of the criteria in order to nominate themselves or indeed to win an award. This is your chance to celebrate what you've done during the year, so don't sell yourselves short by not nominating your group for certain awards, you may have achieved more than you think.

In addition to meeting the criteria of the specific award, nominated individuals must be current Royal Holloway students or associate members of the Students' Union.

All nominations will be application-based via the online form linked on our website and must be completed by the deadline given. Any nominations submitted after that point will not be considered.

Extraordinary Nominations

The panel cannot submit nominations prior to the selection meeting, with the exception of the SSO representative who may submit nominations as part of their involvement with their student group(s).

However, in the case where a panel member identifies a group/individual who has not been nominated, but whose actions are worthy of nomination, they may make a case for that group/individual to be considered alongside other nominations. The remaining members of the panel must deliberate and vote on whether to accept the nomination. If all panel members are in agreement then the nomination will be included for consideration.

Similarly, the panel may decide, by unanimous vote, to move a nomination into a separate category if they consider the nomination to be more applicable to an award other than the one that the nomination was originally submitted for.

Group Awards Criteria

Fundraising and Impact Award

Awarded to a group that has made a significant impact through fundraising, campaigning or volunteering. This should include work with national or local charities, work on improving the lives of their members and students around them, tackling issues that impact students, or working towards making a difference within the community.

Things to consider:

- Total amount raised by the group overall and for specific events.
- How the group coordinated with charities and other organisations and why they undertook the activities.
- How the group raises awareness about a specific charity or cause.
- Any work/activity that the group has taken on in the local community. This could be through fundraising, running an event where the community were invited or volunteering in the local community.
- Any volunteering or community projects the group has been involved in, including how many members were involved and the total hours they've done.
- Any involvement with Royal Holloway Volunteering schemes and campaigns.

Sarah Parker Remond Inclusion and Accessibility Award

Sarah Parker Remond was an African American activist, an anti-slavery lecturer and the first black student at Bedford College. Throughout her life, she promoted inclusivity, and equality and worked tirelessly to support the rights of minority groups. The Inclusion and Accessibility award is therefore awarded to a group that has demonstrated an outstanding effort to ensure that their activities are as accessible as possible and have made a significant effort to promote an inclusive attitude within their membership and in the wider campus community.

Things to consider:

- Involvement in any workshops/liberation campaigns run by the Students' Union e.g. Black History Month, Disability History Month, LGBT+ History Month etc.
- Fundraising for causes relevant to improving the lives of marginalised people.
- Campaigns that you have run in order to raise awareness or show support for the relevant causes.
- The positive impact of inclusivity on your membership.
- Any changes that you have made from previous years in an effort to make your activities more accessible/inclusive.
- Events or initiatives in which a group has been involved to talk about taboo issues and inclusivity.
- How the group has made a continuous effort to improve the wellbeing of members.

Best Event

Awarded to a group that has organised and delivered an outstanding event this year that was innovative, exciting, and has left a lasting impression on those who attended. This could include anything from charitable or cultural events, annual celebrations, performances, shows, socials or guest speaker events

Things to consider:

- Any outstanding events you have run this year.
- How many students attended the event?
- How the event was innovative and stood out from other events.
- What steps were taken to make the event more inclusive/widen participation?
- If the event has been run before, how it was improved from previous years.
- If the event raised funds for charity and/or the group and how the management of the budget impacted the success of the event.

Best New Society

Awarded to a group that has gone above and beyond the expected growth of a new society. Through this, they will have successfully established themselves as a group with a significant impact on student life at Royal Holloway, and on the Students' Union.

Things to consider:

- Any events that the group has run this year.
- How the group has impacted student life at Royal Holloway, i.e. through regular meetings/socials, and by engaging students from a wide range of demographics.
- Any ways that the group has contributed to their members' employability or our relationship with the community.
- What steps were taken to ensure that the group is inclusive?
- What steps the group has taken in order to establish itself within the Royal Holloway community.
- Any ways in which the current committee has created the foundations for success and growth in future years.

Sustainability Award

This award will be to recognise a student group that have actively worked towards becoming more environmentally sustainable, going above and beyond to leave a lasting positive impact on the environment. This can be through specific events, initiatives or projects, sourcing more sustainable products, engaging in schemes or spreading awareness on campus that highlights sustainability or a specific environmental issue or concern.

Things to consider:

- Campaigning to raise awareness on a specific environmental issue.
- Fundraising activity specific to an environmental cause.
- Utilising the Student Group Sustainability Guide to become a more sustainable student group.
- Running activities or events that are aimed to engage and/or educate students in action around the climate emergency.
- Sourcing more sustainable products for events or activities.
- Ensuring events or activities are delivered in the most sustainable way possible.
- Engaging in initiatives that educate others through events or activities around sustainability and the environment.
- Introducing a Sustainability Officer on the committee whose focus is to improve the sustainability of your student group.

Most Improved Society

Awarded to a group that has made a significant effort to develop the group this year, including membership recruitment, range and success of events, maintaining good finances, committee development etc.

Things to consider:

- How the committee worked together to improve its group.
- Any events that have been run this year, especially those that have been improved from previous years.
- How the committee communicated with their members to gain feedback and consider its members' opinions in order to develop.
- How the group has increased membership/student engagement.
- How the activity has been more innovative, inclusive, and diverse than in previous years.
- What steps have been taken to ensure that development continues beyond this year?

Society of the Year

Awarded to a group that has made a significant contribution to Royal Holloway, student life, and the Students' Union. The group should have worked in order to significantly grow as a group, attaining a wider range of members, holding innovative events, fundraising and supporting the community, and developing their group.

Things to consider:

- Any ways that the group has contributed to its members' employability or relationship with the community.
- Any events that have been run this year and their impact.
- How the committee communicated with its members to gain feedback and consider its members' opinions in order to develop.
- How the committee has worked to ensure that they take into consideration their members' wellbeing when putting on events.
- How the committee has worked with the Student Opportunities team and wider Students' Union activities.
- Any careers or skills development focussed events. This can include workshops and/or talks conducted by guests from relevant industry professions, as well as external training organised/attended by the group.
- How the committee has managed and maintained good finances, including clearing any debt.
- Any outstanding work by specific members of the committee.
- Any positive media coverage the group has received, including our own student media.
- What steps were taken to ensure that the group is accessible, inclusive and diverse?
- Any new or adapted events/activities that have contributed to the particular success of the group this year.

Individual Awards Criteria

Freshman of the Year

Awarded to individuals who are new to the group and have shown outstanding dedication alongside a significant contribution to the success of activities this year.

Nominees for this award must be in their first year of membership within their respective groups.

Things to consider:

- How the individual contributed to or participated in a range of group events.
- How the individual has contributed to the success of the group.
- Any ways the individual has improved the wellbeing/enjoyment of other society members.

Society Crests

Awarded to individuals who have gone above and beyond the call of duty of any member/committee member throughout their years of participation, showing outstanding dedication and commitment to their group in the process.

Things to consider:

- How this individual has promoted a welcoming/inclusive atmosphere for new and existing members of the group.
- Any ways in which this individual has contributed to the success of the group.
- How this individual has participated in a wide range of group activities.
- Any ways in which this individual has represented and promoted the values/ideals of the group to the wider campus community throughout their time in the group.
- Any lasting impact/change that this individual has promoted or been responsible for that has contributed/will contribute to the success of the group.

Vice President's Cup

Awarded to someone who has shown outstanding dedication to Student Opportunities, going above and beyond to make a difference to societies/media and wider student engagement, and dedicating their time to a number of different areas with the Students' Union and student groups.

Please note, the panel reserves the right not to award the cup if no suitable nominations are received in any given year.

Things to consider:

- How this individual has promoted a welcoming and engaging environment within student groups.
- How this individual has engaged in multiple different opportunities within the Students' Union.
- Any ways in which this individual has endeavoured to improve the lives and enjoyment of other individuals within Student Opportunities.
- Any ways in which this individual has engaged in wider Union work e.g. campaign weeks, elections etc.

Contacts

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