The Scottish Knowledge Exchange Awards celebrates the partnerships between business, third sector, and public sector organisations and academia. Now in its 11th year, this flagship event recognises and rewards exceptional collaborations that deliver economic, environmental and social benefits for Scotland.

**Making a Social Difference Award 2026**

This award celebrates knowledge exchange projects that have made a significant positive social impact.

**Criteria:**

* Applications should demonstrate how the business-academic partnership has been essential in developing a product, process or service, with clear evidence of the social benefits achieved
* To be considered eligible, collaborations must meet one of the following conditions within the period from **August 2023 to August 2025**:
  + **Active Engagement**: Demonstrated joint activity such as co-delivered project objectives, shared research or development work, or sustained partnership operations
  + **Impact and Outcomes**: Evidenced measurable outcomes or clear impacts resulting from collaborative efforts, including but not limited to innovation, economic, environmental or societal impact, or strategic advancement for the academic and/or business partner
* The judging panel’s decision is final. The panel reserves the right not to make an award in a specific category if the standard is deemed to be of insufficient quality
* Previous award winners are not eligible to apply to a category that they have won in the past
* If shortlisted, you will be required to complete a 60 second video overview of the project

**Please email your completed application to** [**marketing@interface-online.org.uk**](mailto:marketing@interface-online.org.uk) **by 5pm on Thursday 11th December 2024**

**Key Dates:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Submission Deadline: | 5pm, Thursday 11th December 2025 |
| Shortlist Announced: | Wednesday, 11th February 2026 |
| Awards Ceremony: | Thursday, 19th March 2026  MacRobert Arts Centre, University of Stirling |

If you have any questions regarding the completion of the application form, please contact Marketing [**marketing@interface-online.org.uk**](mailto:marketing@interface-online.org.uk)

**Collaboration Partners**

**Lead applicant** (main point of contact that the Interface team will liaise with)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Name** |  |
| **Job Title** |  |
| **Business name** |  |
| **Email** |  |
| **Contact number** |  |
| **What date did the collaboration commence?** |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Tick the check box to indicate which eligibility criteria this application meets.** To be considered eligible, collaborations must meet one of the following conditions within the period from **August 2023 to August 2025.** If applicable tick both. | |
| **Active Engagement**:  *Demonstrated ongoing joint activity such as co-delivered project objectives, shared research or development work, or sustained partnership operations.* |  |
| **Impact and Outcomes**:  *Evidenced measurable outcomes or clear impacts resulting from collaborative efforts, including but not limited to innovation, economic, environmental or societal impact, or strategic advancement for the academic and/or business partner.* |  |

**Business Partner(s)** (if more than one partner please duplicate the box)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Name** |  |
| **Job Title** |  |
| **Business name** |  |
| **Business address** |  |
| **Email** |  |
| **Contact number** |  |

**Academic Partner(s)** (if more than one partner please duplicate the box)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Name** |  |
| **Job Title** |  |
| **Name of university, research institute or college** |  |
| **Email** |  |
| **Contact number** |  |

**Application Form**

**To ensure that applications can be considered on equal terms, please ensure that you follow the word limits specified below. Exceeding the word count may lead to your application being discounted by the judging panel.**

However, if you would like to add any assets in support of your application (such as images, diagrams or video links), please include these as an appendix.

|  |
| --- |
| **Section 1 - Please provide a summary on the background to the business.**  *(150 words)* |
|  |
| **Section 2 - Please provide a summary on the objectives that you aimed to achieve through partnering with the academic team.** *How did this fit with the business strategy? (300 words)* |
|  |
| **Section 3 - When did the collaboration with the academic team commence, what activity (if any) has taken place in the last 2 years (Aug 23 - Aug 25) and what support did the academic team provide that you could not source elsewhere/in-house?** *(300 words)* |
|  |
| **Section 4 - Describe the main features of the new product, process or service developed.** *Things to consider: what change / improvement will it offer, who are the key customers, what’s the current stage of development? (400 words)* |
|  |
| **Section 5 - What are the societal impacts?** *Outline tangible and intangible benefits e.g. research or stats that show improvements to health, wellbeing, cost savings etc.* |
| Benefits achieved to date with timelines (300 words) |
| Future benefits predicted (300 words) |
| **Section 6 - Outline the top 3 impacts of the collaboration to each partner** *e.g. impacts on staff, new products, cost saving, teaching & learning, student employability, curriculum, research income, public engagement, environmental etc. Please be concise with your answers and include timescales.* |
| Business |
| Academic |
| **Section 7 – Has the project led onto further research or collaborations with the same academic or new academic partners? If so, please give details (200 words)** |
|  |

**Pre and Post Award Promotion:**

The Interface Marketing and Communications team will endeavour to raise the profile of your organisation, the Scottish Knowledge Exchange Awards and the Interface service through pre and post Award promotion. By submitting this application / nomination form, you are agreeing for the details to be used in any related press and marketing materials. We recommend, therefore, that there should be no IP or confidentiality issues which would restrict publishing details of your application.

|  |
| --- |
| **To assist with the application promotion that will be used for the shortlist announcements, please provide a brief summary of the collaborative project below** *(Maximum 60 words).*  For examples see the 2025 project summaries [here](https://interface-online.org.uk/news/scottish-knowledge-exchange-award-winners-showcase-collaboration-at-its-finest/). |
|  |

**Data Protection:**

By completing this application/nomination form, you accept and consent to the use of your data by Interface and any individuals, i.e. judges, involved with the delivery, audit, review and evaluation of this application/nomination form. It is the lead applicant’s role to ensure that all parties, whose details are included in this application form, are aware of and agree to this submission.

Interface’s full privacy statement can be read [here](https://interface-online.org.uk/privacy-and-cookies).

**Please email your completed entry forms to:**

[**marketing@interface-online.org.uk**](mailto:marketing@interface-online.org.uk)

**by 5pm on Thursday 11th December 2025**