



**The Scottish
Knowledge Exchange
Awards 2026**

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THE SCOTTISH KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE AWARDS 2026

The Scottish Knowledge Exchange Awards celebrate 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.

“These awards are a fantastic way to recognise the hard work of Knowledge Exchange professionals being undertaken in individual institutions. They are most importantly a chance to build relationships with colleagues across the sector and make connections with businesses and organisations. It is such a positive event and I would encourage giving it a go.”

**Knowledge Exchange Hero winner 2025
Susan Armstrong, Glasgow Caledonian University**



“Winning the Scottish Knowledge Exchange Award gave me the chance to share not just the innovation, but the story behind it. People got to know me, our project, and the real impact of our work. My advice to anyone applying is: don’t just list achievements, tell a great story. Good storytelling helps your project and yourself stand out and opens doors long after the awards are over.”

Innovator of the Future winner 2025

Dr. Dayi Zhang, University of Strathclyde and Inspectahire Instrument Co. Ltd

10 REASONS TO ENTER THE SCOTTISH KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE AWARDS:

Previous award winners have reported the following benefits:

- Independent endorsement of your business, research, products, or services
- Recognition of excellence
- Skill development & professional growth
- Acknowledge and celebrate your hard work and accomplishments
- Raise your profile and visibility within the innovation community
- Inspiration for new projects, innovation and creativity
- Expand your network and connections
- Share your success story
- Media exposure
- Showcase your achievements

The awards are free to enter!



CATEGORIES

Innovation of the Year: Sponsored by Marks & Clerk

Innovator of the Future: Sponsored by Business Gateway

Inward Investment Impact

Knowledge Exchange Champion

Knowledge Exchange Heroes - team & individual awards

Making a Social Difference

Making an Environmental Difference

Multiparty Collaboration

Place-based Impact: Sponsored by Highlands & Islands Enterprise

Research & Innovation in Digital Health and Social Care: in partnership with DHI

Trailblazing AI Collaboration: in partnership with The Data Lab



Don't forget, you can apply
for more than one category!



HEAR FROM A SCOTTISH KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE AWARDS JUDGE



Being a judge for the Scottish Knowledge Exchange Awards is such a privilege, and presents an opportunity to learn about the stellar knowledge exchange activities the higher and further education sector in Scotland is delivering. The awards are competitive due to the number of high-quality projects so make sure your application is as strong as it can be.

Answer every question and use the word count you're provided to ensure you're giving the judges all the information required to understand your project and its impacts. While it's challenging, try to distil the complexities of your project into easily understandable language with technical jargon kept to a minimum. Make sure you cover the successes of the project to date as well as the potential future impact. Include metrics and specific case studies where you can demonstrate your project's impact or projected impact, across relevant areas which could include economic, social, technological, and environmental factors. If you're applying to more than one category, ensure you tailor your applications to the specific criteria for each award category.

All the best with your applications!

Rachel Treglown, Senior Policy Officer (Research, Innovation and Health), Universities Scotland
and Judge for the Scottish Knowledge Exchange Awards 2025

HOW TO CREATE A WINNING ENTRY

We've pulled together a collection of top tips directly from previous judging panels. These insights aim to support you in creating an application that stands out from the crowd.

CHECK THE ELIGIBILITY

Before starting your application form, please review the eligibility criteria to ensure your collaboration or nominee qualifies. A change to this year's eligibility criteria focuses on active engagement and impact and outcomes between August 2023 – August 2025.



READ THE QUESTION CAREFULLY

When crafting your responses, start by identifying the key terms and phrases in each question. Think about what's being asked and how it relates to your project. Remember, the judges are looking for relevant details specific to each award category, so be sure to address the question directly.



CONSIDER YOUR AUDIENCE

Keep in mind that the judges may not be experts in your specific field. Ensure your entry is simple, concise, and easy to understand. Use project-specific examples, avoid jargon, spell out acronyms, and clarify any technical terms to make your submission accessible to a broader audience.



MAKE IT A TEAM EFFORT

These awards celebrate collaboration and partnership, so involve all parties who contributed to the project in the application process. Highlight the role each partner played and showcase the strength of your collective efforts.



START EARLY

Don't wait until the last minute! Start your application early to ensure a stronger, more polished submission. By giving yourself ample time, you can involve all collaborators, allowing them to review and contribute effectively.



ATTENTION TO DETAIL

Proofreading is a critical step in the application process. It ensures that your application is free from errors, polished, and presents your project in the best possible light. Double-check all facts, figures, and dates in your application to ensure accuracy. Please also adhere to all word counts.



SHOWCASE YOUR STRENGTHS

Demonstrating genuine passion in your application can set you apart and make a compelling case for why you deserve the award. Share what drives you and why you're deeply committed to your work. Be authentic and sincere in telling your story. This is your opportunity to highlight your achievements and prove that you're the best—don't hold back!



WHAT'S NEXT

Apply here: Visit our website to learn more about the categories and download the application forms.

Return completed applications by 5pm on Thursday 11th December 2025.

The shortlist will be announced on the 11th February 2026 and the awards ceremony will be held on the 19th March 2026 at the University of Stirling.



The Scottish Knowledge Exchange Awards are brought to you by Interface, who are funded by the Scottish Funding Council and hosted by Edinburgh Innovations Ltd.