

Researchers of the Year 2014

The criteria against which nominations are judged state that:

“The nominee should be someone whose most recent research has successfully challenged dogma, created a new field of research, elucidated a new paradigm, made a fundamental change in thinking or impacted significantly on society.”

Professor Dame Tina Lavender, School of Nursing, Midwifery and Social Work, FMHS

Professor Dame Tina Lavender is Professor of Midwifery and Director of the Centre for Global Women’s Health in the Faculty of Medical and Human Sciences. Tina has a national and international reputation for the generation of high quality evidence with direct application to clinical practice within reproductive health and has made a significant and sustained contribution to the area of maternal and new born health. She has published over 100 papers and generated substantial grant income. She is Editor of the Pregnancy and Childbirth Group of the Cochrane Collaboration and Co-Editor in Chief of the British Journal of Midwifery. She is also an expert panel member for the World Health Organization’s Global Research Priority Setting forum for both maternal and new-born health.

Tina was appointed a Dame Commander of the Order of the British Empire in 2012 for services to midwifery. More specifically Tina received the prestigious award for her demonstration of outstanding commitment to, and determination and leadership in, raising the profile of midwifery, women’s health and lives through education and research, both in the UK and in Africa.

Professor Jill Rubery, Manchester Business School, FHUMS

Jill Rubery, Professor of Comparative Employment Systems in the Manchester Business School, is described as having a wonderful enthusiasm for interrogating, systematising and illuminating the many complex and contradictory ways in which contemporary society organises employment. She brings a unique approach to an issue – whether it is examining how employers often hold back a worker’s life chances (starting from her ground-breaking 1970s work on low pay through to her 2013 media work on zero-hours contracts), detailing the stalled progress towards gender equality in European labour markets (through her longstanding high profile work with the European Commission) or theorising the employment relationship in a context of fragmented organisations and a dysfunctional capitalist model.

Jill’s work is considered a must-read for academics and students.

Indeed, her advice is sought by many international policy bodies, especially the International Labour Organisation and at European level.

Professor David Leys, Faculty of Life Sciences

Professor David Leys, from the Faculty of Life Sciences, has made exceptional contributions to the field of structural biology in his ground-breaking work on enzyme structures and mechanisms. Over the last few years he has had a succession of major publications in *Nature* and *Nature* sister journals documenting important protein crystal structures. These structures offer key insights into enzyme function, allowing greater mechanistic understanding of key processes including DNA repair and chromatin structure with the potential for the development of new therapies. David has established highly effective collaborations with colleagues within and outside Manchester in which David's expertise in structural biology is being successfully applied to unravel the complexities of biofuel enzymology.

David is described as a fantastic mentor of junior colleagues who thoroughly deserves the recognition of Researcher of the Year.

Professor Lin Li, School of Mechanical, Aerospace and Civil Engineering, FEPS

Professor Lin Li is Director of the Laser Processing Research Centre in the School of Mechanical, Aerospace and Civil Engineering. Lin has a record of outstanding and sustained research achievements in advancing laser and photonic sciences and manufacturing engineering that have led to wide commercial applications in the aerospace, automotive, medical and security industries.

In 2013, he received the prestigious Royal Academy of Engineering Sir Frank Whittle medal, a top accolade of the academy, and was elected as a Fellow of Royal Academy of Engineering. His research team's recent invention of a microsphere optical nanoscope breaks the optical diffraction limit achieving 50 nanometre direct optical imaging resolution; the results of which were published in: *Nature Communications*, and *Light: Science and Applications*; and reported by the BBC, the New York Times and the Research Council UK publication: *Big Ideas for the Future*.

And just last month, Lin received an esteemed Wolfson Research Merit Award from the Royal Society for his research in laser nano-fabrication and nano-imaging.