

**2021 Distinguished Achievement Awards
Researchers of the Year**

Professor David Brough, Faculty of Biology, Medicine and Health

Professor David Brough is a leader in the field of inflammasome biology and has made key contributions to the field of neuroinflammation over many years. 2020 was a particularly spectacular year for David. He was awarded a prestigious MRC Programme Grant, published 18 papers and received invitations to speak at several international meetings.

David is highly regarded by his colleagues and peers and he has established a number of important collaborations with top groups internationally.

David's work provides the example to which many aspire: an ability to translate from lab bench to clinic. His pioneering work on understanding the fundamental biology of inflammation and how it contributes to disease has the potential to lead to new treatments that can transform the lives of patients.

David has been central to immunology and neuroscience across Greater Manchester through his leadership of the Neuroimmunology branch in the Lydia Becker Institute of Immunology and Inflammation. He is also a founding member of the newly-created Geoffrey Jefferson Brain Research Centre, where he leads the Brain Inflammation theme.

David is described as having an incredible enthusiasm for making discoveries and amazing commitment to supporting his students and research staff.

Dr Lorenzo Pellis, Faculty of Science and Engineering

Dr Lorenzo Pellis is a world leader in infectious disease epidemiology.

The Epidemic Modelling group at The University of Manchester has been central to the UK's response to the COVID-19 pandemic, engaging through SAGE and its subgroups, particularly the Scientific Pandemic Influenza group on Modelling (SPI-M).

The analytical work produced by Lorenzo has been enormously influential on the regional and national policy for the management of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Lorenzo's high impact work includes his analyses of the international situation in February 2020 that formed a keystone piece of evidence to the UK's Chief Medical Officer in March 2020 comparing the dynamics of the epidemic directly to NHS capacity. His work led to a fundamental shift in understanding and helped produce a compelling case for immediate action.

Additional substantial and sustained contributions by Lorenzo include the analysis of the impact of schools on transmission guiding SAGE's advice towards a staggered re-opening and working on modelling Test, Trace and Isolation. Additionally, Lorenzo generated weekly estimates of the reproduction number and future projections/scenarios, thus informing government decision making.

Lorenzo's advice is insightful, accurate, highly trusted and valued both by Public Health England and across Government. He has demonstrated tireless efforts to understand COVID-19 and has made a crucial contribution to the UK's pandemic response.

Professor Cecilia Wong, Faculty of Humanities

Professor Cecilia Wong is a leading international expert in spatial planning. Her research has major policy impact and has provided research advice to the UK and International government and bodies.

Cecilia has authored over 130 publications including 60 refereed journal papers; four books and 17 edited book chapters; 30 official published research reports and 25 other commissioned research reports. She has carried out 70 research projects, involving an associated research income of over £4 million for the UK ESRC, Medical Research Council, central government departments, Joseph Rowntree Foundation, Royal Town Planning Institute, and regional and local bodies.

Cecilia's role as Commissioner of the UK2070 Commission on Regional Inequalities demonstrates her influential role guiding policy and practice. Cecilia's research has been foundational for helping to shape the

Commission's roadmap toward introducing a national spatial plan and supports the Government's pledge to 'level up' the country. In February 2020 Cecilia launched the Report of the Findings of the UK2070 Commission Inquiry and in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, in October 2020, she published Go Big-Go Local: The UK2070 Report on a New Deal for Levelling Up the United Kingdom.

Cecilia is praised for her ability to successfully marry research excellence with a prominent set of roles in business engagement and impact.