

Guidance for the PS and Cultural Institutions' Awards 2023 Distinguished Achievement Awards

For both the individual and team awards judges will be looking for outstanding performance. This can be in any role within the University and potential nominators should note that the teams don't need to have undertaken new or special projects to be considered.

We are looking for individuals or teams in Professional Services, the Museum, Gallery or at the Jodrell Bank Discovery Centre who always provides an excellent service or goes out of their way to help someone or to solve a problem. In other words, we're looking to recognise and celebrate those special people who work tirelessly to do their jobs well.

We would particularly welcome nominations for those working in first point of contact roles or frontline services whose operational and maintenance work is vital to the day-to-day running of the University but which can often go unnoticed and unrewarded.

We would also very much welcome nominations for colleagues who do their best to deliver an excellent service even in difficult circumstances.

We are keen for these awards to recognise and reflect the contributions of all our diverse staff. We particularly welcome nominations for colleagues from under-represented groups (individuals or teams) including Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic staff, Disabled and LGBTQ+ colleagues.

When completing a [nomination form for an individual](#) or [a team](#) you are asked to reflect on the questions below which have been devised to try to tease out your candidate's/team's contributions. These are grouped around the University's value: **Our Values**

Please note there is no expectation that a nominator will answer all of the questions nor group responses around the values. Instead we would encourage you to address just those that are relevant to the job the person or team does. You are also strongly encouraged to include anything else you think is relevant to the case to make it as strong as possible.

Under each value below, we have provided some questions to act as prompts to assist you in thinking about relevant examples.

Knowledge: We are ambitious in our pursuit of new ideas, greater understanding and discovery.

How has the team embraced new challenges or service improvements or solved a problem which has contributed to better campus experiences for our students, colleagues or external partners?

Has the team suggested ways of working that have benefitted those colleagues/teams they work with and for?

Wisdom: We share and apply our knowledge and experience to guide balanced and evidence decisions for ourselves and for society.

Has your team undertaken training or professional development that has been used to improve the way they do things?

Has the experience and/or expertise of the team been shared with other parts of the University, the sector or the wider community? (Please mention the feedback or impact, if applicable)

Humanity: We embrace and celebrate difference, respect and support each other, and act with integrity to benefit society and the environment by transforming and enriching lives.

How have they gone out of their way to assist colleagues, students or external partners?

Are they able to motivate and empower people they work with to achieve their best and deliver individual and team goals in an inclusive and mutually supportive way?

Has your team contributed to creating an inclusive, diverse and accessible environment where people are treated with dignity and respect and have a sense of belonging? Examples could relate to welcome activity, provision of accessibility support, awareness and accommodation of differing cultural needs, open days, community festivals or during public health outbreaks, etc.

How has your team inspired others to reach their full potential by developing capabilities/capacity, and/or helped the University towards achieving its goals as set out in its Strategic Plan? Examples may include informal leadership, mentoring or coaching or formal engagement with university initiatives such as Manchester Gold, staff networks, etc.

Academic freedom: We support with enthusiasm and vigour the principles of freedom of thought and speech.

Does the team create an environment where challenging questions and constructive criticism are expected whilst being respectful and inclusive at all times?

Courage: We think and speak freely, and act boldly to challenge assumptions and shape our future for the greater good.

Has your team been willing to challenge when they see that things could be improved or when they appear unfair?

Has your team challenged a situation or alerted you to potential microaggressions or discriminatory practices which may have made other colleagues, students or partners feel uncomfortable? In doing so, did they raise awareness of the need to speak up and to help address systematic barriers and nurture an inclusive community? Examples could relate to the use of pronouns, improving accessibility, etc.

Pioneering spirit: In the radical Manchester spirit, and inspired by our people, history and scale, we are the exceptional.

Has there been anything that the team has achieved this year that you believe has gone over and above the requirements of the role?

Has the team done or suggested something which has not been tried before – what was it and what impact has it had?

Has your team considered the wider benefit of their approach to work, not only focusing on their immediate area or responsibilities but thinking Institution-wide and beyond, which has contributed positively to raising our profile and reputation?

The winners will be selected by a judging panel which will be made up of both academic and Professional Services staff. The panel will, when considering the nominations, be mindful of the category of staff to which the teams belong, and will try to ensure, where possible, that the various types of roles and contributions are reflected in the eventual winners.

If you would like advice on any aspects of the PS&Cs Distinguished Achievement Awards, including the criteria and how to complete the nomination form, please contact Deborah Black (deborah.black@manchester.ac.uk) who co-ordinates the awards centrally.