

Vivensa Academy Excellence Awards

Now open – deadline for nominations 5pm 30 October 2026

Introduction

The 2027 Vivensa Academy Excellence Awards are now open. Once you have read the [guidelines for the awards](#), you can start your nomination on our online Grants Management Portal. **The deadline for nominations is 5pm on 30 October 2026.**

Join our webinar on **24 September 2026** (2–3pm), to learn more about the 2027 round of the Vivensa Academy Excellence Awards. Register [here](#).

Through our [2025-2030 strategic framework](#), we are working with the community to help drive the changes needed for people in the UK to age well. This includes promoting equity, diversity and inclusion, building capacity, fostering connections and expanding opportunities for people from different disciplines, professions, sectors and organisations to work together.

The Vivensa Academy Excellence Awards recognise individuals and teams whose work demonstrates these values and contributes to helping people in the UK to age well. The awards comprise three categories: Rising Star, Senior Leader and Team Achievement. Together, these awards recognise achievement, leadership and collaboration across the ageing-related field.

What are we looking for?

[Members of the Vivensa Academy](#) may self-nominate or nominate another member, and explain in the nomination form how they have:

- Demonstrated excellence in their ageing-related field.
- Influenced ageing-related policy and/or practice at a local, regional, national and/or international level. In line with the Foundation's other awards, no hierarchy is applied based on the geographic and/or systemic scale of the policy and/or activity.
- Demonstrated a commitment to capacity building and/or mentoring in ageing-related field, and contributed to a positive working culture.
- Promoted the meaningful involvement / engagement of older people.
- Promoted equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) in ageing-related work.

- Demonstrated an understanding of the environmental impact of their work and ways in which this could be reduced.
- Worked in multidisciplinary and/or multi-professional teams from academia, health and care settings and/or the VCSE sector to address the needs of older adults. This can include developing and nurturing working relationships, built on openness and shared learning between different disciplines, professions, sectors and/or organisations.

We recognise that some of the above criteria may be more challenging for some depending on the context and/or research area. What matters most is how nominations acknowledge and address any challenges, and how progress has been made by leveraging available resources and opportunities.

According to the [Vivensa Foundation's resubmission policy](#), an unsuccessful nominee from a previous award round can re-apply **once** to the same award, but **must** entirely amend any previously submitted unsuccessful nomination prior to submission (i.e. duplicate submissions, sections of the form and/or letters will **not** be eligible). Previous and current award-holders are **not** eligible to hold multiple Excellence Awards concurrently.

Past 'Rising Star' or 'Senior Leader' award-holders are **not** eligible to be nominated for the same award again. However, past 'Rising Star' award-holders may be nominated for the 'Senior Leader' award, and past Team Achievement lead representatives may be nominated for the 'Rising Star' or 'Senior Leader' award, provided their previous award is no longer active and they meet all other eligibility criteria for the relevant award.

Past Team Achievement award-holders, including the team lead / representative and/or a substantially similar team, are **not** eligible to be nominated for the same or a substantially similar achievement again. Current 'Rising Star' and 'Senior Leader' award-holders are **not** eligible to be nominated as the team lead / representative. However, they may be included as members of the wider team, provided their subsidiary role and/or contribution are clearly articulated in the nomination form. Past recipients of the 'Rising Star' or 'Senior Leader' awards are eligible to be nominated as a team lead / representative, provided their awards are no longer active and they meet all other eligibility criteria for the award.

For guidance on what makes a good nomination, please refer to last year's feedback for the [Rising Star and Senior Leader awards](#), and the [Team Achievement award](#).

Past award-winners

Following each round of the Excellence Awards, the awardees are announced at the Foundation's Annual Symposium. Learn more about our past award-winners by reading their spotlight stories linked below:

- **Rising Star Award:**
 - [2024 winner](#) – Dr Jenni Burton (University of Glasgow)
 - [2025 winner](#) – Dr Toby Ellmers (Imperial College London)
 - [2026 winner](#) – Dr Claire McDonald (Newcastle University)
 - [2026 winner](#) – Dr Mahmoud Bukar Maina (University of Sussex)
- **Senior Leader Award:**
 - [2024 winner](#) – Professor Ilaria Bellantuono (University of Sheffield)
 - [2025 winner](#) – Professor Vicki Goodwin (University of Exeter)
 - [2026 winner](#) – Professor Nathan Davies (Queen Mary University of London)
- **Team Achievement Award:**
 - [2026 winner](#) – Manchester Urban Ageing Research Group (University of Manchester)

How much is available?

Three awards of £40k per year for three years (£120k in total per award) will be made to recognise:

- An early to mid-career 'Rising Star' in ageing-related research.
- A 'Senior Leader' in ageing-related research.
- A significant ageing-related 'Team Achievement' accomplished for the first time within the last five years.

The awards are intended to be flexible and can be used to support ageing-related research activities and/or career development – some examples of how the funds can be used are provided in Section 2.3 of the [award guidelines](#).

Nomination process and timeline

The deadline for nominations is 5pm on 30 October 2026.

Following panel review and shortlisting, shortlisted nominees will be invited to attend an interview on either, 12, 13 or 14 January 2027 (depending on the award category). See Section 3 of the [award guidelines](#) for full details of the nomination process and timeline.

If successful, award-holders will be invited to attend and speak at the formal announcement of the award at the Foundation's 2027 Annual Symposium. Award-holders will also be expected to participate, from time to time, in Academy training or other activities, for example panel review within their areas of expertise. Full details of the nomination process and timeline are provided in Section 3 of the [award guidelines](#).

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Award documentation

You can download the correct PDF template nomination form from our website:

- **If you are nominating yourself or your own team's achievement:**
 - For the Rising Star award, please [use this version of the nomination form](#).
 - For the Senior Leader award, please [use this version of the nomination form](#).
 - For the Team Achievement award, please [use this version of the nomination form](#).
- **If you are nominating somebody else or another team's achievement:**
 - For the Rising Star award, please [use this version of the nomination form](#).
 - For the Senior Leader award, please [use this version of the nomination form](#).
 - For the Team Achievement award, please [use this version of the nomination form](#).

Please note, however that these PDF versions are only provided for planning purposes – only nominations made before the deadline via the online Grants Management Portal will be accepted.



How to apply?

These awards are open exclusively to members of the Vivensa Academy and once you have read the [guidelines for the awards](#), you can start your nomination on our online Grants Management Portal:

- For the Rising Star/Senior Leader Award [apply here](#).
- For the Team Achievement Award [apply here](#).

The deadline for nominations is 5pm on 30 October 2026.

If you wish to join the Vivensa Academy, you can [apply here](#).