



## Frequently Asked Questions: Award Lecture Application

### Award Lecture Application

This document provides guidance about the selection criteria for the Award Lectures, answers to frequently asked questions about putting yourself forward as an Award Lecture and will help you to write a successful application.

If you have any other questions, or if you would like to discuss your proposal, please contact [Hannah Lawrence](#).

### About the Award Lectures

The British Science Association (BSA) has been rewarding promising early career scientists for over 30 years, many of whom are now successful science communicators. Previous Award Lecturers include Brian Cox, Richard Wiseman and Maggie Aderin-Pocock.

The Award Lectures aim to promote open and informed discussion on issues involving science and actively encourage early career scientists to explore the social aspects of their research. The applicants should be active, early career researchers who are skilled at communicating their research to the wider public. They should be available to present their Award Lecture during the British Science Festival which will be held in Leicester from Tuesday 13 – Saturday 17 September 2022, hosted by De Montfort University.

The selected Award Lecturers will receive a £250 honorarium, public engagement training, as well as travel to and accommodation for the duration of the Festival. There may also be opportunities to present the Award Lecture at other festivals in the UK.

## FAQ

### About you

#### ***What do you mean by 'early career researcher'?***

The BSA understands that researchers take different career paths, so the term 'early career researcher' is deliberately vague. Generally, we define 'early career researchers' as having less than 5 years' unbroken / continuous post-doctoral research experience or equivalent; however, there is space in the form to explain how applicants with more than five years' experience qualify as early career researchers. We do not automatically exclude applicants with more experience. We have also rewarded exceptional PhD students in previous years.

#### ***Are you looking for experienced communicators?***



It is important to us that our Award Lecturers are passionate about communicating their work to public audiences. We are not looking for extensive experience speaking to large audiences; however, applicants should provide examples of their involvement in public engagement activities. We offer training to all our Award Lecturers and support them to develop their event.

***What academic qualifications and experience are you looking for?***

We are looking for early career researchers (see our definition above) that have a track record of high-quality research. Applicants must be undertaking original research in their field. We do not specifically grade applications based on numbers of papers published, however significant publications and other evidence of professional competence are viewed favourably.

**About the application process**

***I am interested in being an Award Lecturer, can I put myself forward?***

As you are the person who ultimately knows your work best, you should complete the application yourself. However, we do request a supporting statement written by another person as part of the application process.

***Who should write my supporting statement?***

We do not have strict restrictions on who is eligible to write this supporting statement; however, you should choose someone who knows your work well such as an academic supervisor or a public engagement officer at your institution.



## About the lecture

### ***I'm unsure which Award Lecture category my work fits into?***

We view interdisciplinary work favourably and understand that many researchers are working in areas that may fit into more than one of the Award Lecture categories. If you are unsure, please get in touch with [Hannah Lawrence](#). The same panel reviews all Award Lecture applications, so if we feel that your work fits better in another category it will automatically be considered.

### ***What kind of content are you looking for?***

We encourage applicants to propose a lecture based on their own research, with consideration to the wider social content. The Award Lectures aim to promote open and informed discussion on issues involving science and actively encourage early career scientists to explore the social aspects of their research. We are looking for evidence that the researcher has considered the audience (see below) and how best to engage them with the topic. We do not want a potted history of your area of research to the present day but more about how your work is contributing to an area of science.

### ***When and where will my event take place?***

The Award Lectures will take place in a time slot likely between 11:00 and 20:00 from 13-17 September 2022 in Leicester.

### ***What kind of audience should my event be aimed at?***

The Festival is free and open to all.

The target audience for the programme is:

- non-specialist adults (primarily aged 16+)
- those with a broad interest in science;
- and those who may not have an existing interest specifically in science, but might have an interest in the particular topic of an event.

Please note that the British Science Festival does not provide content for children or families.

### ***What length should my event be?***

Award Lectures should be a maximum of one-hour long including any Q&A.



## General

Below this FAQ section is a list of the questions you will be asked in the application form. Please read through these before completing the form to help you prepare your answers.

### ***What are the benefits of being an Award Lecturer?***

As well as presenting a prestigious Award Lecture at the British Science Festival, winners will receive a £250 honorarium and public engagement training. There may also be opportunities to present the Award Lecture at other festivals in the UK.

### ***When is the deadline for applications?***

The deadline for Award Lecture applications is 17.00 on 6 December 2021.

### ***What is the date and location of the Festival?***

The Festival will take place from 13-17 September 2022 and will be hosted by De Montfort University in Leicester.

### ***Will you support the development of my event?***

All Award Lecturers will be offered public engagement training during summer 2021 and we can advise on content and format. Please get in touch with [Hannah Lawrence](#) for any queries regarding this.

### ***When will I find out if my event has been accepted?***

We will be letting applicants know early in the New Year.

### ***Will journalists be invited to my event?***

There is a strong media presence at the Festival. If accepted, we will ask for more detailed information about you that will be provided to the media.



## Questions in the application form

This is a summary of the questions you will be asked in the proposal form. Please read through these before completing the form to help you prepare your answers.

### Your details

This section helps us understand you.

The questions include basic information such as name, organisation, contact details and the following questions:

- If you have more than five years post-doctoral research experience, please explain how you fit the description of an early career researcher. *Max. 150 words.*
- Do you have public liability insurance or are you covered by your institution/organisation? *We need confirmation that all speakers are covered.*

### About you

This section provides more detailed information about your career, prior public engagement experience and your reasons for putting yourself forward for the Award.

- Please briefly list your academic and professional qualifications. *Max 150 words.*
- Please briefly describe your career path so far. Include details of any significant publications and other evidence of professional competence. *Max. 200 words.*
- Do you have public engagement experience? Please include links to any examples e.g. video, website, blogs. *Max. 150 words.*
- Why are you nominating yourself for this Award? *Max 250 words.*

### Supporting statement

This section helps us understand the person supporting your application. The questions include basic information such as name, organisation, contact details as well as the following question:

- Why are you supporting this application? *Max. 250 words.*

### About the lecture

This section provides more detailed information on the proposed lecture.

Please use this section to develop the proposed talk. This should be about cutting-edge research the applicant is involved with and not an overview of a topic. Think about how to demonstrate the



societal impact (or possible future impact) of the research, and possible audience interaction or simple illustrative demos.

- Which Award Lecture category does your lecture fit into?
- Please suggest a draft title. *Max. 10 words*
- Please describe the content of the lecture. Please include a description of the research, what elements will be particularly highlighted during the talk and the impact the research has/may have on society. *Max. 250 words.*
- What format will the lecture take? Please describe how you will engage the audience with their presentation (including interactive activities or simple demos)? *Max. 150 words.*

The remaining questions are to confirm the following points:

- That you understand the event should be a maximum of 60 minutes, including time for questions from the audience.
- If your event is accepted, you will need to fill out a risk assessment and provide us with detailed logistics information, including confirmation of public liability insurance, in advance of the Festival.
- What days of the Festival you are available?