

Study UK Alumni Awards 2026

Marketing guide



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Thank you for joining the [#StudyUKAlumniAwards](#) 2026 campaign

- This guide is for UK Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), partners and British Council in-country offices.
- It contains everything you need to know about the Study UK Alumni Awards.
- You will find relevant information, tools and resources to support the effective marketing of the awards.
- As we prepare to launch the twelfth edition of the Study UK Alumni Awards, our objective is to build on the successful reach and engagement of the Alumni Awards in previous years.

If you require further information or guidance, please contact studyuk.alumni@britishcouncil.org





What are the Alumni Awards?

Now in its twelfth year, the Study UK Alumni Awards find and celebrate the significant impact outstanding international UK alumni have made on their professions, societies, and countries where they now live.

The national and global awards celebrate carefully selected alumni from professionals and entrepreneurs, to artists and community leaders across four broad categories:

1. Business and Innovation
2. Culture, Creativity and Sport (name change - 2026)
3. Science and Sustainability
4. Social Action

You can find out more about the differences between the national and global awards, and more detail on each of the award categories within this presentation.

What's our objective?

- 1. Raise the profile** of receiving a UK education globally and promote the UK as a study destination for international students by identifying the success stories of international UK alumni, and the impact they are having outside the UK.
- 2. Recognise** successful international UK alumni who have made outstanding achievements and contributions to their professions, societies and countries because of the skills and qualifications obtained through their UK education.
- 3. Support** international UK HEIs alumni through opportunities to develop their relationships with the UK and their former UK university and build their professional networks, contributing to the overall development of their country.





Who benefits from the awards?

The Alumni Awards feed into the wider Study UK campaign which promotes the UK as a top-choice study destination for international students.

In addition, the two main groups who benefit are:

UK alumni

- Finalists and winners will attract attention nationally, regionally and/or globally for the significant impact they've been having in their professions, societies and countries where they live.
- National and global finalists and winners will be celebrated at in-person events and all finalists and winners will have opportunities to network with other inspirational alumni.
- All global finalists will have their individual success stories profiled on the Study UK website, across our social media channels and beyond through our promotional campaign.
- Four global winners will be invited to visit the UK in 2027 to re-connect with their former UK universities and build their professional networks.



Who benefits from the awards?

UK HEIs

- UK HEIs have the opportunity to re-connect with alumni they may have not been in contact with for a while and build a sustainable relationship with them.
- They can access new, inspirational alumni stories that they can promote which will reflect well on them and the education they provided.
- Additionally, it's a chance to raise the profile of specific HEIs in key markets through online, press and media coverage of finalists and winners.

Who can apply?

The Alumni Awards 2026 are open to international UK alumni who are currently resident in any country outside of the UK.

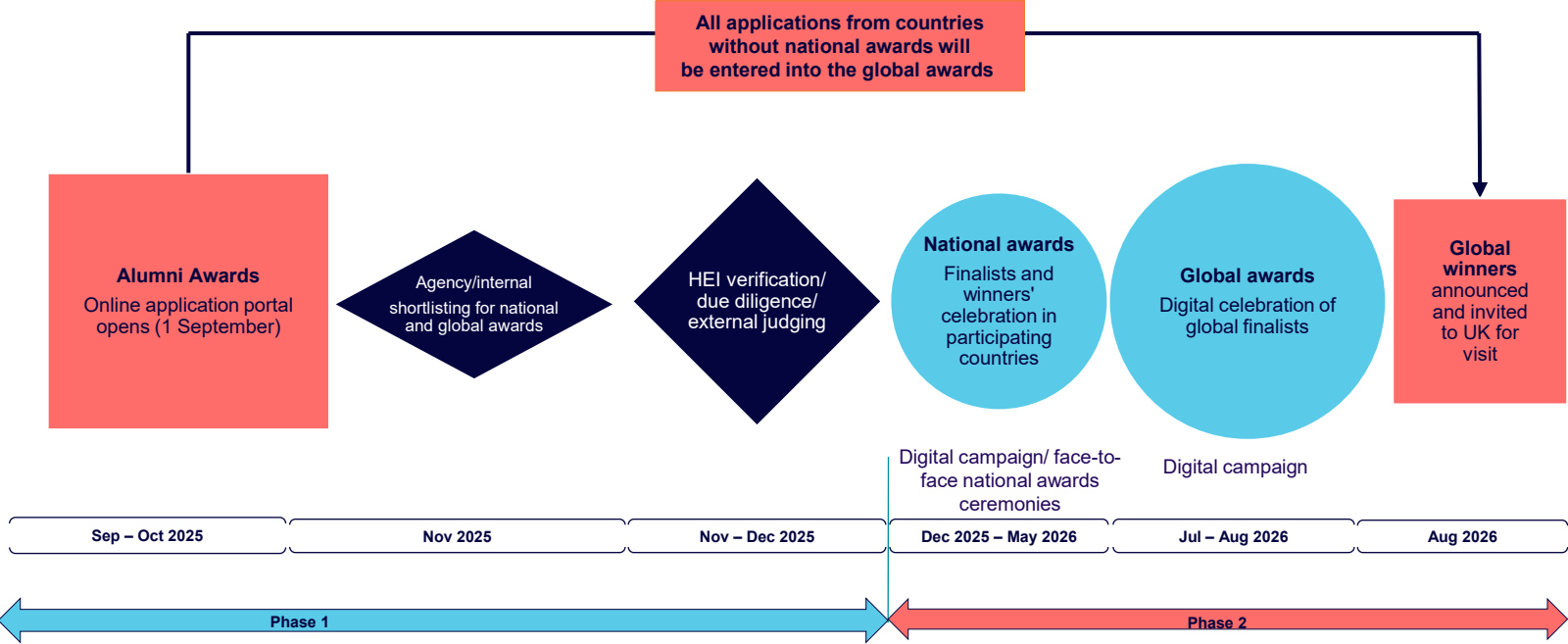
They must have studied:

- within the last 15 years (2010 – 2025)
- while enrolled at an officially [recognised body](#) or received a [recognised award](#) from a **UK higher education institution**
- **at degree level or above** (defined as band 9 and above on the [UK ENIC band framework](#))
- either at a UK university in the UK for a minimum of one term or semester, OR been awarded a full UK degree level qualification (or higher) by a recognised HEI in their home country (Transnational Education – TNE/long distance)

- alumni who have studied professional short courses are only eligible if the course they studied was at degree level (or above), offered by a recognised UK institution in the UK (and they fulfil the rest of the criteria)
- all applicants from previous Alumni Awards, **except global award winners**, may re-apply if they meet this year's eligibility criteria. Winners from previous national level awards will be considered for global awards only
- Post-doc researchers are ineligible

Please see our [FAQs](#) for details

So, what's the process*?



*For a detailed break-down of the campaign timeline see slide #22



How does it work?

National awards

- Alumni in countries with national awards* submit their applications via an online platform (live between 1 September and 16 October on the [Study UK Alumni Awards page](#)).
- External scoring agency evaluates and scores applications.
- Internal judging panel (British Council country team) shortlists 20 applications (five from each of the four award categories).
- UK team completes HEI verification of shortlisted alumni.
- A second, external judging panel (the national judging panel) – based in countries with national awards – will then select the eight finalists and four national winners (one from each award category).**
- Country team completes due diligence for all finalists and winners.
- Finalists and winners are then celebrated digitally through in-country campaigns sharing their individual stories across their website and social media channels and at a face-to-face event.

*Countries/territories hosting 2026 awards: Bangladesh, Chinese mainland, Cyprus, Egypt, France, Ghana, Greece, Hong Kong SAR China, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Nigeria, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, UAE, USA, Vietnam

**Note: HEI verification and external judging panels take place at the same time.

How does it work?

Global awards

- All eligible alumni applicants from countries not hosting awards and winners and finalists from host countries are entered into the global Alumni Awards.
- An external scoring agency shortlists 40 applications per region (10 from each of the four award categories, across seven global regions).
- A second round of shortlisting by the Study UK Alumni Awards team produces 20 applications per region.
- A third judging panel (the regional judging panel) then selects the 28 global finalists (four from each region).
- A fourth judging panel (the global judging panel) then selects the four global winners (one from each award category).
- Global finalists and winners are celebrated digitally through a global campaign sharing their individual stories on the Study UK website and social media channels.
- Global winners will be invited to visit the UK to re-connect with their universities and meet with Study UK stakeholders to support the ongoing development of their careers.



About the award categories

The national and global awards celebrate carefully selected alumni from professionals and entrepreneurs, to artists and community leaders across four broad categories:

- 1. Business and Innovation**
- 2. Culture, Creativity and Sport (name change – 2026)**
- 3. Science and Sustainability**
- 4. Social Action**

Please note: alumni can only submit an application to ONE of the four award categories and multiple applications for different award categories will not be considered. In the case of multiple applications, only one application (the one submitted closest to the deadline) will be reviewed and scored. Applicants are encouraged to consider which category feels most relevant to their profile and career to date.

Additionally, if applicants are selected as finalists, the judging panel may allocate their application to a different award category, if they feel it better demonstrates the qualities in that category.

Award categories

Business and Innovation

Recognising alumni who are active in initiating and contributing to innovative or creative new ideas, solutions or business opportunities, that have the potential for growth.

- Areas of work could include, but are not limited to: entrepreneurship, business, technology and finance.

Culture, Creativity and Sport

- Recognising alumni who have carved a career for themselves in arts, culture and sport. We are looking for individuals who can demonstrate their artistic ingenuity, influence and creativity.
- Areas of work could include, but are not limited to: arts, design, humanities, traditional media, music, video, TV, sports and online content and audiovisual media creation (e.g. blogging, vlogging, including for YouTube and social media).



Study UK
Alumni Awards



Award categories

Science and Sustainability

- Recognising alumni who have distinguished themselves through their career and achievements in the world of science and sustainability, and who can demonstrate the impact and scale of their achievements in their profession, and beyond.
- Areas of work could include, but are not limited to: climate action, clean energy, medicine, sustainable cities and communities, engineering, industry and construction.

Social Action

Recognising alumni who have made an exceptional contribution and commitment to creating positive social change and improving the lives of others.

- Areas of work could include, but are not limited to: education, peace and justice and reducing inequality, poverty and hunger and broader humanitarian work or work for social good.

Alumni can select the category they wish to apply for, however judging panels may re-assign to a different category during the judging process if more appropriate

How to apply

- Before applying, applicants must ensure they meet the eligibility criteria for the awards, these will be published on our website before 1 September.
- Remember, applicants can only submit application to ONE of the four awards categories and are advised to submit to the one that is most relevant to their profile and career to date.
- All eligible alumni are invited to submit through the application portal, which will be live **between 1 September and 16 October** on the [Study UK Alumni Awards page](#).
- The online application form has a 'save' and 'return' option so it can be completed across multiple sessions.
- We will be running 'How to apply' webinars to help applicants with the quality of their applications.
- Contact the Study UK Alumni Awards team at the British Council, if you need any assistance: studyuk.alumni@britishcouncil.org



Shortlisting and judging criteria

All applications will be assessed on the extent to which they meet the following criteria:

1. **Impact** (by category): evidence of tangible impact made upon their profession/community/society.
2. **UK influence:** evidence of how their UK education has played a key influence in their success and impact.
3. **Media traction:** extent to which the alum's story is likely to resonate with local/regional/national media in their country of entry or beyond.
4. **Potential to influence and inspire:** extent to which the alum is likely to influence and inspire the next generation of internationally mobile students in their country of entry to choose the UK as their top-choice study destination.
5. **Quality of the application.**

Applicants are encouraged to:

- Tell their unique stories in a narrative/storytelling form, based on the assessment criteria.
- Mention relevant and specific details and experiences to help tell their individual story.

Applicants should avoid:

- Lists of achievements without context or storytelling element.
- Using web links, as judges will not consider these when assessing applications.

Note: ethical use of AI

Promotional materials

A range of useful documents including [FAQs](#), [press release](#), [social media planner with example posts](#) and [letter of recommendation template](#) are available on our [campaign toolkit page](#).

A range of assets, including images, banners and flyers are available to download from our [alumni awards collection on Brand Hub](#).

To register on the [British Council Brand Hub](#), follow the steps below:

1. Visit <https://brandhub.britishcouncil.org/login/>
2. Select 'Register a new account'
3. Complete the registration details
4. Add 'partner' as account type
5. Add dorota.drajewicz@britishcouncil.org as the contact
6. You will receive a notification once your account has been created
7. When you access your account for the first time, you will be asked to set up MFA
8. Open the authenticator on your phone (such as Google or other which you can download from Google Play or the Apple App Store) and click to create a new account by scanning a QR code
9. Scan the QR code on your screen
10. The app will generate a six-digit number, which is valid for 30 seconds (if it lapses, another one will follow which - again - will be valid for 30 seconds)
11. Type this code on the Brand Hub to complete your log in



How to promote the Alumni Awards...

... in less than two minutes:

- **Follow, share, like, re-post** our content on/from our Study UK platform, mentioning **#StudyUKAlumniAwards**, **#StudyUK** and our correct handles (see per platform below)

[Study UK Facebook](#) **@StudyUK.BritishCouncil**

[Study UK Instagram](#) **@StudyUK_BritishCouncil**

[Study UK LinkedIn](#) **@showcase/study-uk-british-council**

- See who's sharing what for inspiration and create your own messaging with our hashtag: **#StudyUKAlumniAwards**

...in five minutes:

- Use the copy provided in the [social media content planner](#) from our [campaign toolkit page](#) downloads to create your own posts on your institution's social media platforms.
- You can also see what we are posting so you know when to look out for opportunities to share content from our [live Alumni Awards content calendar](#).

...with a few more minutes:

- Email alumni who you think should win an award (or be recognised) and encourage them to enter. All materials to support your promotion of the awards are available on our [campaign toolkit](#) page.

Partners

In addition to promoting the Study UK Alumni Awards directly to UK HEIs' Alumni Offices via email, to International Offices and via our in-country teams, the British Council also works with the following organisations to promote the awards:

- Chevening and Commonwealth
- Universities UK
- UUKi
- Universities Scotland and Universities Wales
- British Council Scotland, British Council Wales, British Council Northern Ireland
- UK government departments
- GREAT Campaign partners e.g. Visit Britain
- BUILA
- UKCISA
- London & Partners

British Council country offices have developed their own marketing plans to promote the awards, including but not limited to the following channels:

- Study UK in-country web pages, newsletters and exhibitions
- British Council in-country website pages, Facebook etc.
- Media partners
- Local press, radio, TV
- Partners (UK government e.g. Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO), the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS), UK Trade & Investment (UK, the British Chamber of Commerce) and local HEIs' study abroad offices
- Local ambassadors and key influencers
- Engagement of previous / 2017-25 finalists and winners
- Face-to-face events

For details on sponsorship opportunities, please contact studyuk.alumni@britishcouncil.org

In-country promotion

Alumni Awards Ambassadors

In-country

Where possible, countries engage a locally well-known (household name) celebrity as their Alumni Awards local ambassador.

If you have a suggestion for an alum who could be an ambassador to promote the programme, please [let us know](#).

Events

In-country teams promote the Alumni Awards at a range of events including launch events, press briefings, Study UK exhibitions, local education events and exhibitions to drive marketing and promotion of the awards.

Campaign timeline

Timeline	Activity
1 Sep – 16 Oct 2025	Applications open - Promotion of Alumni Awards 2026 centrally and globally encouraging alumni to apply
23 Sep and 8 Oct	'How to apply' webinars for applicants
By 30 Oct 2025	Shortlisting of candidates by country/region (Gradcore – external scoring agency)
By 13 Nov 2025	Country level shortlisting of top 20 finalists' applications are sent to UK HEIs for verification
13 Nov – 12 Dec 2025	External country judging panels / verification by HEIs
12 Dec 2025 – 31 Jan 2026	UK HEIs informed of national finalists and winners (and video requests) due diligence by country teams
Dec 2025 – Mar 2026	Alumni Awards ceremonies and digital celebrations in countries hosting national level awards
Feb – Apr 2026	Regional judges select 28 global finalists, alumni verification and due diligence
May – Jun 2026	Global judges select four overall winners
Jul – Aug 2026	28 Global finalists are celebrated through digital campaign on Study UK's social media platforms
Aug 2026	Four global winners announced and celebrated in digital media campaign and invited to UK

Countries/regions hosting ceremonies December 2025 – May 2026*

Please note: the ceremony dates and locations will be confirmed by early October 2025. We will notify you once they are confirmed, and of any changes thereafter.

Americas	East Asia	Europe	Middle East and North Africa	Wider Europe	South Asia	Sub-Saharan Africa
USA, Los Angeles (May)	Chinese mainland, Beijing (6 Dec 2025)	Cyprus (TBC)	Egypt, Cairo (TBC)	Turkey, Istanbul (TBC)	Bangladesh, Dhaka (11 Dec 2025)	Ghana, Accra (27 Feb)
	Hong Kong SAR, China (TBC)	Greece, Athens (TBC)	Saudi Arabia, Riyadh (TBC)		India, Bangalore (28 Feb)	Nigeria, Lagos (28 Feb)
	Indonesia, Jakarta (6 Feb)	France, Paris (January)	UAE, Abu Dhabi (TBC)		Pakistan, Lahore (7 Feb)	
	Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur (27 Jan)					
	Vietnam, Hanoi (28 Feb)					

*Please see [live list of ceremonies](#) for updates

Ceremony attendees

National ceremonies are a global showcase of international collaboration, leadership and academic excellence, uniting voices of diverse stakeholders across the nations.

In 2025 our national ceremonies were joined by over 2,500 attendees across the 23 nations, including:

- **Eight** representatives from FCDO / UK government
- **18** representatives from Embassies / High Commissions
- **30** national government / ministerial representatives
- **65** VIP representatives from public and private sector including national universities, strategic partners and media personalities
- **81** UK HEIs representatives, either based in country or from the UK for the event.

If you are interested in joining us at a national ceremony, please [contact us](#).



Thank you

Thank you for your support.

We hope you will join us in finding and celebrating the outstanding stories of UK alumni around the world.

Please get in touch if you have any questions or require additional support to promote the Alumni Awards:
studyuk.alumni@britishcouncil.org

