

UCC Research Awards 2021 – Guidelines for Nominations

1. Background and Scope of the Programme

University College Cork (UCC) is an internationally recognised, research-led institution, one of Ireland’s oldest institutes of higher education.

The quality and recognition of research success across the University, including outputs from individuals and our Research Institutes and Centres, is measured by key research metrics such as publications, citations, collaborative interactions, patents and spin-out companies.

Held annually, the UCC Research Awards, which are awards for excellence in research and innovation, recognise the extensive contributions made by UCC research and researchers¹ to our University and to wider society. They recognise and celebrate those UCC researchers who have made exceptional and influential research and/or innovation contributions, pushing boundaries, enhancing knowledge and raising the national and international research profile of our institution.

The UCC Research Awards embrace excellence in research, innovation and entrepreneurial activity, across the entire university research community and from all disciplines.

2. Award Categories

There are fifteen (15) research award and five (5) innovation award categories recognising achievements of researchers and entrepreneurs.

Only one of the following awards can be presented to an individual in a given year²:

<u>Cat. 1 – Researcher of the Year</u>	<u>Cat.11 – Research Team of the Year</u>
<u>Cat. 2 – Early-Stage Researcher of the Year</u>	<u>Cat. 12 – Research Career Achievement Award</u>
<u>Cat. 3 – Research Support Person of the Year</u>	<u>Cat. 13 – Research Image of the Year</u>
<u>Cat. 4 – Research Supervisor of the Year</u>	<u>Cat. 14 – Licence of the Year</u>
<u>Cat. 5 – Research Communicator of the Year</u>	<u>Cat. 15 – Engaged Research of the Year</u>
<u>Cat. 6 – Innovator of the Year</u>	<u>Cat. 16 – Vice President for Research & Innovation Award for Interdisciplinary Research</u>
<u>Cat. 7 – Research Award for Open Research</u>	<u>Cat. 17 – Research Collaboration of the Year</u>
<u>Cat. 8 – Consultancy Project of the Year</u>	<u>Cat. 18 – Spin-out Company of the Year</u>
<u>Cat. 9– Creating a Culture for Responsible Conduct of Research</u>	<u>Cat. 19 – Start-up of the Year</u>
<u>Cat.10 – Best Publication of the Year [Undergraduate Author]</u>	<u>Cat. 20 – The President’s Award for Research Impacting the Sustainable Development Goals</u>

¹ Researcher is defined as any member of the University research community, regardless of discipline or contract type.

² Calendar year is considered.

Cat. 1 – Researcher of the Year

This award recognises the most outstanding contribution by a UCC researcher in their research field.

Key indicators such as number of publications; number of PhD and/or Master students supervised; funding grants/ patents; etc. will be considered when assessing nominations to this category.

Nominations can be made by any UCC staff member. See [section 4 Nomination forms](#) for mandatory annex. See evaluation criteria in [section 7](#).

Cat. 2 – Early-Stage Researcher of the Year

This award recognises early career excellence and the potential for future outstanding performance.

Are considered early-stage researchers those with **no more than ten-year** research experience since their PhD. Evidence of eligible interruptions (e.g. maternity leave, parental leave) can be used to extend the eligibility window.

For those who have not been awarded a doctoral degree, **four years of full-time equivalent** research experience may be considered as relevant.

Nominations can be made by any UCC staff member. See [section 4 Nomination forms](#) for mandatory annex and evaluation criteria in [section 7](#).

Cat. 3 – Research Support Person of the Year

This award recognises that person (research coordinators, managers, administrators, etc.) who most contributed to the successful execution of research carried out by an individual, project, department, institute or centre.

Nominations can be made by any UCC staff member. See [section 4 Nomination forms](#) for mandatory annex and evaluation criteria in [section 7](#).

Cat. 4 – Research Supervisor of the Year

This award recognises, encourages and rewards those who have shown sustained excellence in the supervision and development of exceptional and influential researchers.

This award:

- is student-led and requires two nominators – two current postgraduate research students or one current postgraduate student and a graduate who has completed their research within the last 5 years

See [section 4 Nomination forms](#) for mandatory annex and evaluation criteria in [section 7](#).

Cat. 5 – Research Communicator of the Year

This award recognises researchers who have taken a proactive approach to sharing their research with the general public, thereby raising UCC profile.

Submission formats include:

- **Op-Ed in News Outlet** (entries must be self-authored and published in a news outlet)
- **New Media** (entries may include videos, radio segments, podcast, and other works of new media)

- **Faculty cited in Media** (entries must include quotes or references to UCC research from more than one news article. Entrants must be evaluated based on number of articles in which the faculty member was cited. Faculty affiliation with UCC must be identified)

Submissions must be accessible to and intended for a broad, general public audience. They must be relevant to topics, events and issues of societal impact.

Nominations can be made by any UCC staff member. See evaluation criteria in [section 7](#).

Cat. 6 - Innovator of the Year

UCC wants to recognise ingenuity and hard work of innovators so this award will be to an academic, researcher or team whose innovative research has led to the creation of intellectual property (IP) that has the best potential to be commercialised via a new service or product.

This award will be for an invention disclosed to UCC Innovation (via an Invention Disclosure Form, IDF) or a patent filed in 2021. Inventions should have the potential to make major technological progress and show a high degree of inventiveness. The invention should also display a recognisable benefit to society or the environment, enhance the reputation of UCC innovation and demonstrate potential economic success.

Nominations will be submitted by UCC Innovation as per the [eligibility criteria](#). See also the evaluation criteria for this category in [section 7](#).

Cat.7 – Research Award for Open Science

[Open Science](#) is the practice of research in such a way that others can collaborate and contribute, where research data, lab notes and other research processes are freely available, under terms that enable reuse, redistribution and reproduction of the research and its underlying data and methods.

The [Open Science Monitor](#) framework provides some indicators of openness which include but are not limited to:

- Posting to pre-print archives
- Publishing in open access journals
- Archiving publications in repositories
- Developing open access journal policies as part of an editorial board
- Participating in open peer review
- Applying the FAIR Data Guidelines to ensure optimal availability of research data
- Development of policies, workshops or infrastructures in support of open science
- Establishing citizen science activities to encourage wider engagement with research
- Advocating for openness in data and publication sharing
- Taking steps to ensure reproducibility and transparency in research methodologies and in the generation and analysis of data

This award recognises researchers who have embraced the principles of open science in the research process and in the dissemination of their research outputs.

Nominations can be made by any UCC staff member. See evaluation criteria in [section 7](#).

Cat. 8 – Consultancy Project of the Year

The Consultancy project of the Year Award recognises and celebrates UCC consultants who share their knowledge and expertise to help solve real-world problems and create social, cultural or

economic impact. Judging criteria will be based on consultancy undertakings that have tangibly delivered on the key pillars set out in the UCC 2022 Strategic plan including Impact & engagement, Research & Innovation, Teaching & Learning, Personal & Professional Development.

Nominations will be submitted by UCC Innovation staff as per the [eligibility criteria](#). See also the evaluation criteria for this category in [section 7](#)

Cat. 9 – Creating a Culture for Responsible Conduct of Research

UCC is committed to ensuring the highest standards of integrity in all aspects of our research.

Good research practices are based on fundamental principles of **Research Integrity** such as:

- **Reliability** in ensuring the quality of research, reflected in the design, the methodology, the analysis and the use of resources
- **Honesty** in developing, undertaking, reviewing, reporting and communicating research in a transparent, fair, full and unbiased way
- **Respect** for colleagues, research participants, society, ecosystems, cultural heritage and the environment
- **Accountability** for the research from idea to publication, for its management and organisation, for training, supervision and mentoring, and for its wider impacts.

This award recognises exceptional efforts made by researchers to foster a culture of responsible conduct of research at UCC. Such efforts can be focused broadly or more specifically in the areas of:

- Good research practices and ethics
- Data management
- Publications and authorships
- Mentoring and Supervision

Nominations can be made by any UCC staff member. See evaluation criteria in [section 7](#)

Cat. 10 – Best Publication of the Year [Undergraduate Author]

This award recognises the best publication with a UCC undergraduate student as an author or co-author based on work undertaken prior to graduation. Both the student and the senior author / project supervisor will be recognised as recipients of the award.

Publications include, but are not limited to, research article(s), book chapter(s) and conference proceedings.

Publications involving UCC undergraduate students who have already graduated are eligible for consideration if the research was undertaken while the author was an undergraduate student.

Nominations can be made by any UCC staff member. See [section 4 Nomination forms](#) for mandatory annex.

Cat. 11 – Research Team of the Year

This award recognises the most outstanding contribution by a research team. It is open to research teams in a single discipline, department, project, centre or institution or across two or more disciplines, departments, centres or institutions. A Research Team can include one or more Principal Investigators, as appropriate.

Nomination to and/or acceptance of any of the individual awards does not preclude the individual from being part of a team nominated for this category.

Nominations can be made by any UCC staff member. See [section 4 Nomination forms](#) for mandatory annex. See evaluation criteria in [section 7](#)

Cat. 12 – Research Career Achievement Award

This award may be presented on occasional basis to recognise the most outstanding overall performance, achieved over a career, by a UCC researcher.

Nominations can be made by any UCC staff member. See [section 4 Nomination forms](#) for mandatory annex.

Cat. 13 – Research Image of the Year

This award recognises the exceptional representation of research through the medium of photography, art or graphic design.

Nominations can be made by any UCC staff member. See [section 4 Nomination forms](#) for mandatory annex. See evaluation criteria in [section 5](#)

Cat. 14 – Licence of the Year

This award will be to an academic, researcher or team whose intellectual property (IP) or know-how was licensed to industry or a spin-out company in 2021 and has the greatest potential to result in commercial and socio-economic impact for UCC and Ireland.

Nominations will be submitted by UCC Innovation team as per the [eligibility criteria](#). See also the evaluation criteria for this category in [section 7](#)

Cat. 15 – Engaged Research of the Year

Engaged Research is an umbrella term for a wide range of rigorous research approaches and methodologies that share a common interest in collaborative engagement with society for impact. Engaged Research aims to improve, understand, or investigate an issue of public interest or concern, including societal challenges where community partners are active collaborative participants in the research process. In this context, community partners refer to a range of public research stakeholders, including public service, policy makers, civil society organisations (NGO's / CSOs, citizens) and other actors.

This award recognises achievement by UCC researchers and/or research teams through the employment of an engaged research approach to address issues of societal interest. Nominations can be made by any UCC staff member and the seconder needs to be an external partner

See [section 4 Nomination forms](#) for mandatory annex. See evaluation criteria in [section 7](#).

Cat. 16 – Vice President for Research & Innovation Award for Interdisciplinary Research

UCC values research that crosses disciplinary boundaries and operates at the interface between the University and society. Taking an interdisciplinary approach to research is critical to solving problems, including many problems with societal impact, and whose solutions are beyond the scope of a single disciplinary area.

Celebrated by the Vice President for Research & Innovation (VPRI), this award recognises and honours UCC researchers and/or research teams that undertake exceptional interdisciplinary research at the frontiers of curiosity and inquiry.

Nominations can be made by any UCC staff member. See [section 4](#) Nomination forms for mandatory annex. See evaluation criteria in [section 7](#).

Cat. 17 – Research Collaboration of the Year

This award recognises UCC researchers and research teams who have advanced their research through the development of a synergistic and mutually beneficial collaborative partnership, either nationally or internationally.

Nominations can be made by any UCC staff member. See [section 4](#) Nomination forms for mandatory annex. See evaluation criteria in [section 7](#).

Cat. 18 – Spin-out Company of the Year

The Spin-out Company Award recognises the UCC founder(s) of the spin-out company that is judged to have best accomplished a successful or significant achievement during 2021. The winning company will be an investable and high-potential spin-out, that was developed based on UCC IP or know-how and which has potential to create employment.

Nominations will be submitted by UCC Innovation staff, based on inventions, licences, spin-outs or consultancy projects that were supported by UCC Innovation in the calendar year.

Nominations will be submitted by the UCC Innovation team as per the [eligibility criteria](#). See also the evaluation criteria for this category in [section 7](#).

Cat. 19 – Start-up of the Year

The UCC Start-Up of the Year Award is awarded to an enterprise that best demonstrates the potential for significant economic, social or environmental impact through innovative thinking and entrepreneurial endeavour.

At least one of the founders or promoters must be a UCC student, graduate, staff member and/or have been supported by a UCC start-up programme. The start-up can be a sole trader or incorporated entity that is not exploiting intellectual property rights developed at UCC or any other third level institution. The start-up does not yet need to be incorporated/trading, but will have first validated the potential for impact in 2021.

Nominations can be made by any UCC staff member. See evaluation criteria in [section 7](#).

Cat. 20 – The President’s Award for Research Impacting the Sustainable Development Goals

Through the hard work and dedication of our students and staff, UCC is ranked the 8th most sustainable university in the world and is proud to be Ireland’s greenest University. In 2018, UCC was the first University outside of North America to be awarded a Gold Star from the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education.

Through this award, the President honours UCC researchers and/or research teams whose research drives the sustainability agenda and progresses UCC’s leadership in this space. Sustainability should be explicitly embedded in the research and its outcomes, including relevance to the advancement of one or more UN SDGs.

Nominations can be made by any UCC staff member. See [section 4 Nomination forms](#) for mandatory annex. See evaluation criteria in [section 7](#)

3. Eligibility Criteria

Nominee(s)

- All UCC employees are eligible for nomination.
- Self-nominations and nominations by UCC peers are accepted.
- Self-nominations are not accepted for Cat. 4, which is student-led.
- As UCC Innovation oversees inventions, licences, spin-out formation and consultancy, nominations for categories 5 ,8, 14 & 18 will be submitted by the UCC Innovation team.
- Nominees may be involved in individual or multi –partners’ research in any discipline.
- Nominees **MUST NOT** have been the recipient of a research award in the **last 3 years**. The three-year ban does not apply to recipients of the Research Team of the Year Award (Cat. 11).

Nominator(s)

- Nominator(s) and Seconder(s) **must be**: UCC Staff members; Current and/or past postgraduate students. For Engaged Researcher Award (Cat 15) the seconder should be external.
- An individual can nominate at most one researcher/team per category.
- Nominations **must be** made using the forms provided on the [webpage](#).
- Failure to complete or comply with the requirement of the nomination procedure will result in the nomination being withdrawn without review.

Scope

- With the exception of the *Research Career Achievement Award*, nominees’ assessment will be based on their research and innovation achievements over the **calendar year 2021**.

4. Nomination Forms

Nomination forms and guidelines document are available to download from the webpage ([link](#)).

Mandatory annexes for relevant award categories are provided below:

Award Category	Annex	Submit as pdfs
Cat. 1: Researcher of the Year	Annex (i)	CV (max 2 pages) – Nominee’s CV with links to IRIS for full publication and professional information. The document should include: 1. Name and contact details 2. Career profile (education and employment) & research profile 3. Mentoring and supervision profile (including numbers of current and completed MSc/PhD students directly under the nominee’s supervision) 4. Key achievements in the calendar year 2021* (including measures of peer esteem, accomplishments, awards, etc.). with a particular focus achievement relevant to applicable award category
Cat. 2: Early-Stage Researcher of the Year		
Cat. 3: Research Support Person of the Year		
Cat. 4: Research Supervisor of the Year		
Cat. 12: Research Career Achievement		

		*For Cat. 12, focus should be on career achievements
Cat. 10: Best Publication	Annex (ii)	Letter from the relevant project supervisor/Head of School certifying that the relevant research was undertaken while the author was an undergraduate student
Cat. 11: Research Team of the Year	Annex (iii)	Summary of research team activity (max 2 pages) with links to IRIS for full publication and professional information. The document should include: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Research profile 2. Mentoring and supervision profile (including numbers of current and completed MSc/PhD students directly under the nominee's supervision) 3. Key achievements in the 12 months prior to the call deadline (including measures of peer esteem, accomplishments, awards, etc.).
Cat. 13: Research Image of the Year	Annex (iv)	Image file should be high resolution to allow for printing - the file should be as close to 300 dpi at A3 size as possible. Images should be submitted in either jpeg or tiff format A title and accompanying narrative should also be provided on the nomination form – maximum 500 words Your image narrative must give a description of your image and place it in the context of your research. Your narrative should be accessible to a non-specialist audience.
Cat. 15: Engaged Research of the Year	Annex (v)	Letter from a seconder (it is recommended this is a relevant engaged research external partner) offering detail and testimony on the research engagement process, research impact or future impact.

<p>Cat. 16: Vice President for Research & Innovation Award for Interdisciplinary Research</p> <p>Cat. 17: Research Collaboration of the Year</p>	<p>Annex (vi)</p>	<p>Profiles of partners with relevant links, on a word document and saved to PDF</p>
<p>Cat. 20: The President’s Award for Research Impacting the Sustainable Development Goals</p>	<p>Annex (vii)</p>	<p>Case study, saved on a word document to pdf outlining how the nominated research contributes to the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Please include the below:</p> <p>Name of research project Affiliation Purpose of research (max 100 words) What UN SDGs are impacted? <i>(Please ensure that the research contributes to the specific SDG targets/indicators as detailed here:</i> https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/metadata/ Description of SDG impact (Please include mention of whether the impact is at community, national and/or international level) (max 300 words)</p> <p>All case studies submitted will be considered for inclusion in UCC’s report highlighting how UCC Research maps onto the SDGs, as well as a dedicated website showcasing UCC Research’s contribution to achieving the SDGs (Action 2.1.2. – UCC 2022: Delivering a Connected University).</p> <p>Email researchawards@ucc.ie for a template of the above.</p>

5. Nomination Procedure and Deadlines

Applicants should submit their nomination to researchawards@ucc.ie.

Deadline for Submission: Wednesday 30 March 2022 @ 5pm

6. Evaluation Process

The UCC Research and Innovation Awards Evaluation Committee, chaired by the Vice President for Research and Innovation will evaluate the nominations. Members of the Evaluation Committee include:

- Chairs of the College Research Committees
- Director of Research Support & Policy
- Director of Research Strategy & Projects
- Director of Innovation
- Chair of the Academic Council for Research and Innovation Committee (ACRIC)
- Representative from Tyndall National Institute
- Head of UCC Civic and Community Engagement
- UCC Research organising point of contact

7. General Evaluation Criteria

Categories 1,2,3,5,7,9,10, 11,16,17, 20

Relevant Achievements*	Attainment and consistency of high-level achievements for a period appropriate to career stage and award category *for the calendar year 2021
Research Excellence	Innovative Thinking National and International recognition of excellence (peer esteem indicators) Evidence of collaborative engagement with external stakeholders and the community Published outputs
Impact	Encouragement and promotion of young researchers, including postgraduates Cultural, economic and societal impact of research Research communication Interdisciplinary impact

Cat. 4 – Research Supervisor of the Year

Mentoring and Supervision	Effective support of research and research students towards timely completion of their thesis Effective feedback and critical advising on publishing and presentation of supervisee’s work Development of research training / supervision methods
Research Environment	Integration of postgraduate researchers into the research community Support for supervisee’s training (e.g. research skills training, conference presentation, teaching experience, other professional experience)

Cat. 13 – Research Image of the Year

Overall impact of image:	To what extent does the image engage the viewer and make them want to know more about the research?
Relevance of the image to the supporting text	How effective is the supporting narrative in communicating the story behind the image to a non-specialist audience?
Effectiveness in engaging viewer with research	To what extent does the submission as a whole (image and narrative) engage you with the research?

Cat. 15 – Engaged Research of the Year

Engagement	<p>Evidence of collaborative engagement with external societal / community stakeholders</p> <p>Evidence of stakeholder involvement throughout the research process, and co-creation / co-production processes (see Campus Engage Methods and Approaches)</p> <p>Societal / community feedback on the research engagement process.</p>
Societal Benefit	<p>Demonstrates achieved, or potential to achieve societal benefit according to Campus Engage Engaged Research Planning for Impact categories.</p> <p>Clearly identifies research significance and who has benefited from the research – agencies/organisations/groups/ people</p> <p>Includes sources to corroborate benefit, e.g. publications, reports, policy documents, case studies, news articles, videos, emails, testimonials.</p>

All Innovation Categories, Cat 6,8,14,18,19

Innovation	<p>Innovative or creative thinking</p> <p>Potential to make major technological progress and show a high degree of inventiveness</p> <p>Demonstration of technology application with strong commercial potential, rather than purely scientific or technological achievement</p> <p>Priorities are focussed on innovations that deliver commercial outcomes</p> <p>Active engagement with business and/or private investment to see research applied and taken to market</p>
Impact	<p>Demonstrate achieved, or potential to achieve, economic, social or environmental impact of the innovation</p> <p>National and/or International recognition of excellence</p>