



The Vice-Chancellor's Medal Winners 2025

Staff Medal Winners:

Linda Allsop and Katherine Whittingham

Linda Allsop and Katherine Whittingham are receiving individual staff medals, but for a joint series of projects they delivered.

Linda and Katherine have shown ongoing commitment and community engagement supporting the work of the Women's Staff Network for International Women's Day. Their work has created ongoing opportunities for working on successive projects addressing women's health and wellbeing with civic partners and local communities to benefit vulnerable women in Nottingham.

To name just a few examples, for IWD 2019, Linda and Katherine have collected over 150 bags with additional donations of sanitary products which the team gave to the Hygiene Bank. The impact of this initiative was evident from the positive responses to the high-quality products donated. They had further success in 2021 in a bid for funding for a Choose to Challenge Bench. The bench is sited on the Medical School campus and formed part of the celebrations of 30 years of Nursing and 50 years of Medicine at the Queens Medical Centre.

The IWD innovations indicate Linda and Katherine's commitment to supporting vulnerable women in local communities in a respectful and inclusive manner.



Professor David Grant

David has made substantial contributions to staff and students at the University of Nottingham for 34 years, providing leadership in collaboration, integration, and support for multidisciplinary research. His research, focused on Energy and Biomaterials, has led to collaborations across five faculties within the university.

His ability to bring researchers together with a collegiate spirit resulted in his appointment as Head of the Biomaterials Group in 1994, and later as Head of Advanced Materials from 2012 to 2024. He was also the Director of the successful Propulsion Futures Beacon from 2017 to 2023, supporting 70 researchers and staff. He is currently the Director of the University of Nottingham's Energy Institute.

Professor Michael J Holdsworth

Professor Michael Holdsworth's exceptional research achievements, commitment to diversity and inclusion, and dedication to mentoring the next generation of scientists make him a truly deserving candidate for this nomination. His work exemplifies the highest standards of academic excellence and aligns with the University of Nottingham's core values.

His mentorship of these and many other scientists has played a vital role in their professional development, contributing to major scientific advancements and strengthening the global scientific research community. By fostering collaboration and supporting researchers at various stages of their careers, he has demonstrated an unwavering commitment to the next generation of scientific leaders.

Matthew Nicholson

Matt has worked tirelessly in a range of ways to enhance the experience of nearly 9,000 sports club members across the university each year. This has included designing and delivering a new approach



to training over 450 club committee members, plus bespoke education workshops on helping presidents recognize and develop the transferable skills needed for success in their role.

Matt has also been a key source of support to club members and coaches who have been impacted by the tragic loss of their fellow students, including Grace and Barney, and more recently last year the loss of Sophie Goode in the women's cricket club.

Dr Gary Priestnall

Gary has been instrumental in developing a unique 3D physical map that has catalysed research, knowledge exchange and public engagement over a 15-year period. At the heart of his work and contribution to the University is a curiosity-inspiring innovation tool called the Projection Augmented Relief Model (PARM).

Enabling diverse organisations and researchers to visualise place-based data onto physical models, PARM has galvanized collaboration with an array of local, regional and national partners for over a decade.

Gary's work and approach with PARM embodies the University's values in a tangible way. One of the remarkable things to observe in people's reaction to PARM - whether school children or the new East Midlands mayor – is the sense of wonder it generates.

Student Medal Winners:

Madeleine Axford

This nomination is to recognise Madeleine Axford's outstanding contribution to University of Nottingham as player and captain for the Ladies Hockey Club and her recent centralised contract offer by Great Britain and England Hockey.



During Madeleine's time in her leadership role the hockey club has gone from strength to strength, growing in numbers to more than 150 members. Tragically, Maddie's leadership was needed in the darkest of times that the Ladies Hockey Club and university has known, with the loss of Grace and Barney in 2023. Madeleine took an integral role navigating this exceptionally difficult period and subsequently honouring Grace's memory with the commemorative event that has now been established annually.

Zack Devaney

Zack Devaney has demonstrated outstanding leadership and dedication to the University of Nottingham Men's Hockey Club. Having navigated a difficult first year in his Presidency, with many cultural challenges within the club he has transformed the club to be an inclusive, open, fair and ambitious club that is well respected across the hockey landscape. Under Zack's guidance the club has continued to be the leading Nottingham University fund raising club for the Movember charity. Additionally, Zack has grown the club to 8 teams and in 2023 2nd team were the first ever 2nd team to win an England Hockey National League.

Ed Dickinson

This nomination recognises Ed's outstanding contribution to University of Nottingham. Canoeing is in a unique position at the university as Performance Canoeing does not directly have a club infrastructure to support it.

Effectively performance canoeing is a coming together of lots of outstanding athletes. This takes an incredible amount of organisation and logistical planning to pull together over 30 individual athletes with varying schedules to deliver the success we have seen in canoeing year in, year out. Ed has given his time freely to do this over



the course of the last four years purely for the good of the sport and his fellow peers. The staff within UoN Sport would not have been able to facilitate the success in canoeing without Ed's contribution.

Nishadi Gamage

Nishadi, a joint PhD candidate, has demonstrated outstanding academic and research achievements, along with impactful contributions to the University and wider community during her tenure attached to the University of Nottingham since 2020. She was awarded the first prize for the International Students Award in Academic Excellence in the postgraduate research category, and first prize in the 3-minute thesis competition held among joint PhD students.

Georgia Meachem

Georgia has been a participation sport ambassador for the past 2 years and has worked across multiple participation programmes, including Just Play, Girls Night In, and Empower. Within her role as an ambassador, Georgia has gone above and beyond to create opportunities and experiences for students to participate in sport and physical activity. With Just Play, Georgia has engaged over 1,700 students in the 2023-24 academic year and over 1980 students in the 2024-25 academic year.

Additionally, Georgia's delivery of 7 Girls Night In events and 3 Empower Weeks in 2 years, has seen 475 unique girls attend Girls Night In and 230 unique girls attend Empower.

Nuriat Oluwa

Nuriat has been a driving force in advancing reparative justice within the university community. Not only have they created and facilitated reparative justice workshops, but they have also been at the forefront of championing conversations about reparative justice with our students.



This includes engaging with those from impacted communities, acknowledging the emotional weight of these discussions, and ensuring the complexity of the topic is understood by all. These conversations are critical, and the nominee has played a key role in creating a safe and supportive space where challenging topics can be discussed openly and respectfully.

Team Medal Winners

Assessments Managers, Social Science Faculty Team - Gerrard Wilcoxson, Katie Fraser & Rosie Edwards

Prior to April 2023, two separate teams managed assessments for 7 different schools across a faculty, leading to poor communication, an uneven workload, and inconsistent student experiences. In response to this challenge, Gerrard Wilcoxson and Katie Fraser and Rosie Edwards formed a management alliance with an ambition to unite the two teams to surface differing practices, uniting schools in more standardised practice, creating opportunity for their teams to expand their knowledge base and confidence in their roles. As a result of their work, student enquiries reduced as response rates improved, and work-sharing became more of a common practice which had a positive effect on school colleagues as they saw a more consistent, seamless service.

Consent Training Working Group - Laura Mynett and Kevin Clifford

Laura and Kevin are two of the core members of a small group who have provided in person consent workshops to incoming students. The work included recruiting and training student volunteers, reviewing and updating the workshop material, organising a more efficient way of providing the training which significantly increased student engagement and co-ordinating the delivery of the workshops.



Respect and promoting the rights of others is at the heart of this project. The project aims to ensure students coming into the university community fully understand and recognise the importance of respect. The team are incredibly committed to this work and have given their own time to ensure the project has been delivered successfully.

Enactus Nottingham – Project Suit-up - Matthew Thompson, David Easton, Raya Sharma, Archie Widdison, Charles Walker and Polly Campbell

These students led Project Suit-up, forming a partnership to support inclusive employment impact with local organisations and across the university, to deliver positive impact through their reverse careers fair, charter for inclusive employment and toolkit for employers to engage with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) schools and students.

The impact of the students presenting their charter at the Houses of Parliament event was witnessed by over 150 attendees consisting of MPs, Peers, Alumni, Employers and university staff . Over 150 SEND students visited a university and experienced a reverse careers fair talking to an employer for the first time.

Flow Cytometry Team – David Onion and Nicola Croxall

This team runs and manages the University of Nottingham's Flow Cytometry facility which is a multi-school used facility comprising of complex specialist equipment and technologies. The team are required to conceptualise the varied and often complex biological research requirements and questions of internal and external users, advising them appropriately on the technological and or methodological approaches they should follow.

This nomination is to recognize the work, dedication and support



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provided by these two technical roles in developing the facility to grow significantly in terms of the advanced equipment housed and the research it supports, which includes immunology, cancer genetics, drug delivery, virology and more.