



**RTPI**

mediation of space · making of place



## Application Guidance 2017

The RTPI Awards for Research Excellence are supported by



**Routledge**  
Taylor & Francis Group

**Idox Information Service** 

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## 1. Introduction

The RTPI Awards for Research Excellence recognise and promote high quality, impactful spatial planning research from RTPI accredited planning schools, and planning consultancies, in the UK, the Republic of Ireland and internationally.

The Awards are intended to:

- recognise the best spatial planning research from RTPI accredited planning schools;
- highlight the implications of academic research for policy and practice;
- recognise the valuable contribution of planning consultancies to planning research; and
- promote planning research generally.

## 2. Eligibility

### 2.1 Staff and students at accredited planning schools

The **Academic Award**, **Early Career Research Award** and **Wider Engagement Award** are aimed at academic staff employed by RTPI accredited planning schools.

The **Student Award** is for students who are currently undertaking or who have completed an accredited course at an RTPI accredited planning school.

Individual entrants do not have to be members of the RTPI. All RTPI accredited planning schools, including those outside the UK and the Republic of Ireland, are encouraged to submit entries. The submitted research and its potential implications for planning policy and practice can relate to anywhere in the world (not just the UK and Ireland). We interpret 'planning research' broadly, for example research could primarily have implications for planning education or professional development.

Research based on collaborations with researchers from other academic departments and organisations is welcome, but at least one of the authors should be from an accredited planning school. Where an entry has multiple authors from different planning schools, the entry only needs to be submitted by one accredited planning school to be eligible. All of the authors, whether from accredited planning schools or not, will be recognised in the event that these entries win or are commended by the judges.

One publication represents one entry. If the publication is part of a larger programme of research, applicants are welcome to refer to this wider programme in their abstract, or to submit other related publication(s) as separate entries.

### 2.2 Planning consultancies

The **Planning Consultancy Award** is aimed at non-academic organisations conducting valuable research with the potential to inform planning policy and/or practice. This includes, but is not restricted, to planning consultancies, charities, social enterprises etc, based in the UK, Ireland or internationally. However, eligible organisations need to include at least one RTPI member (though this person does not need to have participated in the submitted research). As with the academic awards, entries based on collaborations with researchers from other organisations (including academic researchers) are welcome.

### 3. Award categories

The Awards comprise five categories:

- Academic Award;
- Early Career Researcher Award;
- Student Award;
- Sir Peter Hall Award for Wider Engagement;
- Planning Consultancy Award.

Information on each category can be found below.

Although the Awards focus on recognising the best spatial planning research, we recognise the value of interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary research. Such entries are welcomed, as long as there is a strong and discernable spatial planning element to the submitted entry.

Previous winners and commended entries can be found on the RTPI website at: [www.rtpi.org.uk/researchawards](http://www.rtpi.org.uk/researchawards)

#### 3.1 Academic Award

The Academic Award is aimed at established researchers at accredited planning schools.

To be eligible for the 2017 Awards, **the research must have been published (in any form) between 1<sup>st</sup> April 2016 and 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017.**

##### Judging criteria:

1. An original approach to issues and themes of current concern and relevance to spatial planning, which shows depth and breadth of understanding, and which contributes to improving understanding and/or developing new fields of enquiry.
2. Evidence of an appropriate review of relevant knowledge and strong understanding of the current state of knowledge, setting out what is known, what is not known and what can and should be further researched regarding the issue(s).
3. An awareness and use of methodological approaches appropriate to the chosen research question(s).
4. Research and analysis conducted with intellectual rigour, showing a depth of analytical and critical abilities in handling theory and empirical results.
5. Well-developed conclusions and implications from the research for planning policy and/or practice.

The Academic Award is supported by Routledge, part of the Taylor & Francis Group.

### 3.2 Early Career Researcher Award

The Early Career Researcher Award is aimed at researchers in the beginning phase of their academic career. 'Early career researchers' are defined as being **within eight years of the award of their PhD** at the time that the submitted research was published.

To be eligible for the 2017 Awards, **the research must have been published (in any form) between 1<sup>st</sup> April 2016 and 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017.**

#### Judging criteria:

1. An original approach to issues and themes of current concern and relevance to spatial planning, which shows depth and breadth of understanding, and which contributes to improving understanding and/or developing new fields of enquiry.
2. Evidence of an appropriate review of relevant knowledge and strong understanding of the current state of knowledge, setting out what is known, what is not known and what can and should be further researched regarding the issue(s).
3. An awareness and use of methodological approaches appropriate to the chosen research question(s).
4. Research and analysis conducted with intellectual rigour, showing a depth of analytical and critical abilities in handling theory and empirical results.
5. Well-developed conclusions and implications from the research for planning policy and/or practice.

The Early Career Researcher Award is supported by Routledge, part of the Taylor & Francis Group.

### 3.3 Student Award

For the 2017 Awards, undergraduate or postgraduate (including PhD) work must have been submitted to an accredited planning school in the 2015/2016 academic year. This can be an individual student dissertation or a group work project.

As noted, **entrants do not have to be currently enrolled in RTPI accredited planning school**, but need to have been at the time of the submission was produced.

#### Judging criteria:

1. Addresses issues and themes of current concern to spatial planning, and potential applicability and relevance to planning policy and/or practice.
2. Includes a literature review showing a developed understanding of the chosen issue(s) and identifies appropriate research questions arising from the review.
3. Rigorous use of appropriate methodological approaches in the light of the chosen issue and review of existing research.
4. Evidence of the ability to draw conclusions and implications from the research which are relevant to the chosen planning issues.

5. High-quality presentation and written communication skills.

The Student Award is supported by the Idox Information Service.

### 3.4 Sir Peter Hall Award for Wider Engagement

'Wider engagement' is defined as conducting and/or communicating high-quality planning research to audiences beyond academia. This engagement could be with a wide range of public, private and third-sector organisations, and/or directly with the public. Such activity should contribute to a stronger policy and/or public understanding of planning.

This activity could take many forms, for example knowledge exchange between academic researchers and research users (through meetings, seminars, workshops and collaborative research activities etc), briefing materials aimed at policy-makers or practitioners, media activity, public outreach, working with community groups and civil society organisations, etc.

The Award is named after Sir Peter Hall, to reflect his life's work to promote the wider understanding of planning and to apply academic research to policy and practice.

Given this, entrants should consider the best way in which to communicate to the judges the nature and impact of the activity for consideration. In some cases this may be a published article (in an academic journal or report) that describes this activity. In other cases, it might be a selection of media articles, blogs, the report of a meeting or event, and so on.

Entries that are part of a long-term programme of research can be entered, however, to be eligible for the 2017 Awards (part of) the engagement activity and/or the reporting **must have taken place between 1<sup>st</sup> April 2016 and 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017.**

#### Judging criteria:

1. Addresses issues and themes of current concern to spatial planning, and with a demonstrable applicability and relevance to planning policy and/or practice.
2. Draws on high-quality planning research conducted with intellectual rigour, in particular conclusions and implications from this research that are relevant to the chosen planning issues and audiences.
3. Strong engagement with audiences beyond academia, contributing to a stronger policy and/or public understanding of planning.
4. Effective and creative use of engagement methods appropriate to the intended audiences, in order to inform and influence policy and professional practice and/or the public understanding of planning.
5. High-quality communication, dissemination, engagement and/or presentation skills.

The Sir Peter Hall Award for Wider Engagement is supported by the Idox Information Service.

### 3.5 Planning Consultancy Award

The Planning Consultancy Award is aimed at non-academic organisations conducting valuable research with the potential to inform planning policy and/or practice. This includes,

but is not restricted, to planning consultancies, charities, social enterprises etc. However, eligible organisations need to include at least one RTPI member (though this person does not necessarily need to have participated in the submitted research).

The RTPI's vision for planning is as an inclusive activity encompassing much more than traditional statutory land-use planning. Submitted research could for example address issues such as public health, economic growth, environmental sustainability, social cohesion etc, as long as it also includes a significant planning dimension.

#### **Judging criteria:**

1. Addresses issues and themes of current concern and relevance to planning policy and/or practice.
2. Evidence of an appropriate review of knowledge and strong understanding of the current state of knowledge in the relevant areas/issues.
3. An awareness and use of methodological approaches appropriate to the chosen research question(s).
4. Research and analysis conducted with intellectual rigour, showing a depth of analytical and critical abilities in handling the qualitative/quantitative results.
5. Well-developed conclusions and implications from the research and analysis for planning policy and/or practice.

To be eligible for the 2017 Awards, the research **must have been published between 1<sup>st</sup> April 2016 and 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017.**

The Planning Consultancy Award is supported by the Idox Information Service.

## **4. Submitting entries and deadline for entries**

Planning schools staff and students and consultancies etc can submit as many entries as they wish.

We are unable to accept material that cannot be submitted and distributed electronically.

Each entry should comprise **one completed entry form and an electronic copy of the full entry** (for example, journal article, report, dissertation, book, media articles etc) that can be easily distributed to judges. Submissions that are too large to send via email/zip file can be made via Dropbox and similar services. The RTPI will test whether entries are easily accessible for judges and reserve the right to refuse entries on that basis.

The entry forms for each category can be downloaded from the RTPI website at: [www.rtpi.org.uk/researchawards](http://www.rtpi.org.uk/researchawards)

Entry forms will also be sent via email to planning schools and other organisations.

Entries must be sent electronically to [research@rtpi.org.uk](mailto:research@rtpi.org.uk) by **midnight on Friday 19<sup>th</sup> May 2017.**

Each planning school or consultancy etc may wish to appoint one person to coordinate their entries. This could be the Head of Department/Head of Planning, Research

Director/Research Co-ordinator, School Administrator etc. However, researchers and students are also welcome to submit their entries individually.

All entrants should be aware that the RTPPI may need to check the eligibility of their entry with their department or organisation.

## 5. Judging process

The RTPPI will **invite accredited planning schools to nominate one judge each for the Awards**. Other judges will include RTPPI officers and other invitees, for example practitioners. Depending on the number of nominated judges and entries, in order to ensure that the workload in evaluating entries is manageable, judges may be allocated to one of a number of panels.

The panels will not meet in person, rather the entries will be sent to judges electronically.

Judges will not be able to vote for entries from planning schools or organisations which with they are associated and may have a conflict of interest (either as employed staff, visiting professors/lecturers, or with whom they have recent or ongoing research collaborations). In these cases, the remaining judges' marks will be averaged to ensure that such entries are not discriminated against. Potential judges will be asked to indicate any possible conflicts of interest during the nomination process.

Further guidance will be provided for judges.

## 6. Shortlisting

The entries in each category which are scored highest by the judges will be presented as a shortlist during July 2017.

## 7. Award ceremony and prizes

The Awards will be presented at the annual UK-Ireland Planning Research Conference, this year to be held at Queen's University Belfast on 11-13 September 2017. Non-attendance at the Conference will not affect the selection of winners or commended entries.

The RTPPI will promote and disseminate the winning and commended entries through its various communication channels.

Ownership and intellectual property of the entries will remain with the entrants/publishers.

## 8. Further information and enquiries

This guidance is available on the RTPPI website at: [www.rtpi.org.uk/researchawards](http://www.rtpi.org.uk/researchawards)

Enquiries regarding the Awards should be sent to: [research@rtpi.org.uk](mailto:research@rtpi.org.uk)

The RTPPI will update this guidance as appropriate depending on enquiries received.



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## About the RTPI

The Royal Town Planning Institute holds a unique position in relation to planning as a professional membership body, a charity and a learned institute. We have a responsibility to promote the research needs of spatial planning in the UK, Ireland and internationally.

More information on our research programmes and projects can be found on the RTPI website at: [www.rtpi.org.uk/knowledge/research/](http://www.rtpi.org.uk/knowledge/research/)

You are also welcome to email us at: [research@rtpi.org.uk](mailto:research@rtpi.org.uk)

## About the Idox Information Service

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