

# University of Leeds

## Research Culture Awards 2021-22

### Application Form

Please email nominations/self-nominations using this form to Holly Ingram  
[H.L.Ingram@leeds.ac.uk](mailto:H.L.Ingram@leeds.ac.uk) by Wednesday June 1<sup>st</sup>, 5pm

#### Information section

This section covers information about the lead applicant and the team as well as the chosen category of award. Expand the sections as necessary. The maximum number of people in a team is set to 10 for event planning and personal prize budgeting purposes.

##### 1. Select the nomination type

- Third-party nomination (you will need to secure the nominees' agreement for submission)
  - Nominator name: Cat Davies
  - Nominator School: LCS/RIS
  - Nominator role/post: Dean for Research Culture

##### 2. Lead applicant and team

Provide details about the applicant and the team (including external partners if applicable), and their contribution to the initiative. The lead applicant will be the contact person for the management of the award application.

Lead applicant name: Alan Haywood

Lead applicant contributor role: Chair, Responsible Metrics Group

Lead applicant Service or School / Faculty: ENV

Lead applicant role/post: Professor

Lead applicant career stage: Professor

<b>Team member name (include lead applicant)</b>	<b>Contributor role</b>	<b>School/Service/external organisation + role/post</b>	<b>If member deserves special mention, state reason (optional)</b>
Claire Knowles	Co-Chair	Library	
Liz Neilly	Member	Library	
Alistair Knock	Member	Strategy and Planning	
Simon Ball	Member	School of History	
Sally Dalton	Member	Library	
Rebecca Fleming	Member	Strategy and Planning	
Barbara Lancho-Barrantes	Member	Library	
Yingqi (Annie) Wei	Member	LUBS	
Tina Egan	Member	Strategy and Planning	
Jo Squires	Member	HR	

3. Select the award category that best fits the research culture activity:

- **Responsible research and innovation**

## Case for Award

The Application form from this point on (= Case for Award) should not be longer than two pages in total (11pt Calibri). **Please write clearly, free from jargon, for a non-specialist reader.**

### 1. Title

Give your application a title that reflects the research culture activity you are submitting. This may be used later for promotional purposes.

**Leading change in the responsible use of research metrics.**

### 2. Summary

Outline the initiatives that seek to improve our research culture, and explain how the application fits within your stated award category (100 words max)

**The Responsible Research Metrics Group (RRMG) provides exemplary leadership and championship of the responsible use of research metrics. In its short existence, the committee has collected and analysed survey data on responsible metrics from the University community, developed and published a position statement, and provided training for recruitment, assessment, and reward processes. It has successfully lobbied senior leadership for support, informed institutional KPIs, and provided expert advice for REF processes.**

**The group has made a significant impact on one of the most problematic and tenacious aspects of research culture: the reliance on misleading quantitative metrics. It demonstrates several further aspects of research culture, e.g. EDI (recognition of biases in publication), open research, and the value of collaboration between academic and professional services staff.**

### 3. Why?

What problem, issue, or challenge in research culture does your initiative or activity seek to address?

**Traditional metrics such as H-indices or journal Impact Factors are subject to limitations and biases and can result in inequitable recruitment, promotion, and review processes. The RRMG successfully communicates these issues to the community, and provides clear guidance and tools for a fairer use of quantitative metrics in research assessment.**

### 4. What?

Please describe your research culture initiative or activity. How is it organised, who was involved, and what did they do? What is the timescale?

**The RRMG (which functions as both a strategy and an operations group) is led by the nominated Chair and Co-Chair, and consists of 16 expert members from academic units, OD&PL, the Library,**

**Strategy and Planning, and HR. The group has met monthly since in inception in February 2021 and will continue to work as a group throughout the University's research culture implementation and monitoring phases.**

#### 5. How?

How does it / will it improve this problem? What are its specific objectives? What do you hope will be the impact?

**The RRMG creates new structural and institutional norms and practices to reduce bias in research assessment.**

#### **Objectives:**

- a. **To provide leadership in responsible metrics at the University of Leeds.**
- b. **To review and update the University's Responsible Metrics Statement.**
- c. **To develop, review, and monitor the implementation of responsible metrics in accordance with the University's Responsible Research Metrics Statement.**
- d. **To co-ordinate support and guidance on how to use research metrics responsibly when recruiting and rewarding staff.**
- e. **To promote discussion and best practice in the use of metrics.**
- f. **To establish a process for the ongoing monitoring of responsible metrics implementation.**

**Its impact will be a fairer, more equitable use of research metrics, and a reduction in the reliance on traditional metrics that can be misused (e.g. e.g. using an article level metric to assess an individual researcher).**

#### 6. So what?

What have been / will be the outcomes? How have you / will you evaluate your initiative against your objectives? Please include evidence or indicators of change, success, and impact described in Q5. This might include changes to others, to processes, to policy, etc. but also for yourself, your research, your relationship with colleagues or in relation to your set objectives.

**The work of the RRMG will achieve a significant change in the way that our researchers and assessors view the value of research. It will allow traditionally marginalised researchers to be correctly recognised and rewarded. It will provide a deeper, more nuanced understanding of research assessment by the community. Success will be measured by changes to policy (e.g. promotional criteria; uptake and implementation of responsible metrics training by recruitment panels). The ultimate outcome will be a fairer research community.**

#### 7. What next?

What are your plans for future activity? How could you extend this initiative to other areas? What do you need to achieve these future plans?

**The group's next steps are to review and revise the materials used to recruit, assess performance and promote staff. To embed Responsible Research Metrics in existing guidance and processes in-line with the approach taken with the Doctoral College where additional information has been added to existing guidance. They will also work with internal peer-review panels to review**

**responsible metrics in these processes. They will continue with their successful communication plan.**

8. What challenges did you have in planning/organising/running/evaluating your initiative and how did you overcome these?

Please share challenges and solutions here. The reason for the question is to highlight the efforts and perhaps creative solutions that are necessary to create meaningful engagement that leads to culture change, and could include the importance of working as a team.

**The breadth of work in the implementation plan across professional services and the faculties meant that the RRMG had to prioritise efforts. This has been possible through engaged members and distribution of tasks, enabling meetings to focus on feedback and next steps. The frequency of meetings, a clear implementation plan, and honest conversations about expectations and timescales have enabled progress, although this group has no dedicated staffing or resources.**

9. Was there something particularly innovative/creative about your initiative?

This might be something you did to pre-empt an anticipated challenge, or you changed your practice based on experience, being inspired by someone else, etc.

**The RRMG has been from its outset a collaborative group focusing on delivering positive outcomes and working through the implementation plan incrementally. The groups communications and guidance have recognised that:**

- awareness of responsible research metrics needs to be increased across the institution;
- understanding needs to be based around roles (leading to the development of scenarios);
- information needs to be embedded in existing guidance and processes;
- senior stakeholders need to be aware of the University's statement and commitment (the Chairs have scheduled visits to all FECs).

**The third point has been supported by HR's work to include guidance and links in their guidance; the Secretariat including support for staff to raise concerns through existing whistle-blowing processes; piloting of research metrics support by the Library in the Faculty of Environment's IPE submission; discussions at the RRMG meetings on the institutional KPIs.**

10. What makes your activity a notable example of culture change?

Please tell us why you think your initiative is of high quality and what is it that makes you particularly proud of it.

**The work of this committee may appear narrow at first sight, but on reflection reaches far into a multitude of institutional research and HR practices. The RRMG are quite simply one of the most effective committees I [as nominator] have ever encountered. They have clear aims, activities, and outcomes, and are a model of effective collaborative working.**