

SPANC

2026

National Awards Guide

Awards guide

Welcome to The SPA National Awards 2026! The last 12 months have been another great year for student journalism, and now is your chance to get recognised for all your hard work and dedication.

We've put together this guide to help you get your nominations ready and showcase the best work you've done this year. We can't wait to celebrate with you in Norwich.

The basics

The SPA National Awards 2026 are open to student journalists and member publications from across the UK and Republic of Ireland, and cover 26 categories from news and photography, to design and the coveted Best Publication Award.

Whatever your role or area at your publication, we have a category to suit you, so read the guide carefully, get your entry into perfect shape and get your submission in.

All entries must be submitted via our [online entry form](#). Entries close at 11.59pm on Sunday 15 February 2026 and shortlists will be announced soon after, with winners revealed on 28 March at #SPANC26.

For more information about the awards head to [our website](#).



Get ready to
buy your
tickets and
celebrate with
us in Norwich!

Rules

- (1) The deadline for entries is 11.59pm on Sunday 15 February, 2026. Any work submitted after this will not be accepted.
- (2) Entries will only be accepted from entrants who are students in the current academic year (2025/2026), or those who graduated in the previous academic year (2024/2025).
- (3) All work entered must have been published between Monday 17 February 2025 and Sunday 15 February 2026.
- (4) We cannot accept submissions published in publications which are not SPA members, as we cannot ensure this work is fully student-led. You can see if your publication is a member [here](#) and if it isn't, you can apply for it to become a member [here](#).
- (5) The maximum number of entries per category is as follows:
 - (a) For Best News Story, Best Feature, Best Interview, Best Investigation, Best Comment Piece, Best Lifestyle Piece, Best Arts and Culture Piece, Best Creative Piece, and Best Science or Tech Piece you may nominate yourself a maximum of two times.
 - (b) For Best Reporter, Best Student Photographer, Rising Star, Best Sports Reporter, and Best Culture Writer you may nominate yourself a maximum of one time.
 - (c) For categories under (a) and (b) you may also nominate people other than yourself. There is no limit for on the number of other people you can nominate. In the event they nominate themselves for the same category, only their entry/entries will be taken forward. In the event they are nominated more than once/twice - category dependent - by another person the entries taken forward will be at the discretion of the shortlisters.
 - (d) Once per publication for: Best Publication, Best Specialist Publication, Best Newcomer Publication, Best Website, Best Newspaper Design, Best Magazine Design, Best Overall Digital Media, Best Science Publication or Section, Best Sports Section, and Best Culture Publication or Section.

- (e) There is no limit on nominations for the Billy Dowling-Reid Award for Outstanding Commitment.
- (6) In the event that more than the maximum number of entries is received, the SPA will endeavour to ask the publication's editor (for publication entries) or the individual journalist (for individual entries) for clarity but reserves the right to accept only the most recent entry or entries received.
- (7) In general, work may not be entered into more than one category.

The following exemptions apply:

- (a) Entries for the following categories may be formed in part of entries also submitted in other categories: Best Publication, Best Specialist Publication, Best Newcomer Publication, Best Website, Best Overall Digital Media, Best Science Publication or Section, Best Culture Publication or Section.
- (b) Entries for Best Reporter, Best Sports Reporter, Best Culture Writer and Rising Star may feature one article that has been submitted for another award. If this limit is exceeded, the entry for Best Reporter/Writer will be disregarded.
- (c) Entries for the following categories may be similar but may not be identical to each other: Best Publication, Best Specialist Publication, Best Newcomer Publication, Best Website, Best Overall Digital Media, Best Science Publication or Section, Best Culture Publication or Section.

- (8) Any work that is entered may be used by the SPA for promotional purposes.
- (9) The decisions of shortlisters and judges are final.

- (10) Work can be submitted in English, Welsh or Gaelic.

Ensure you read the eligibility criteria for each category before submitting. Should you need to amend a submission, we ask that you email us on admin@spajournalism.com with "CORRECTION: National Awards" in the subject line before the nominations closing date.

Submissions

Each nomination should be submitted in a single document, saved as a standard PDF format.

Please ensure that your fonts and pictures are embedded properly and that the file size is not greater than 10MB.

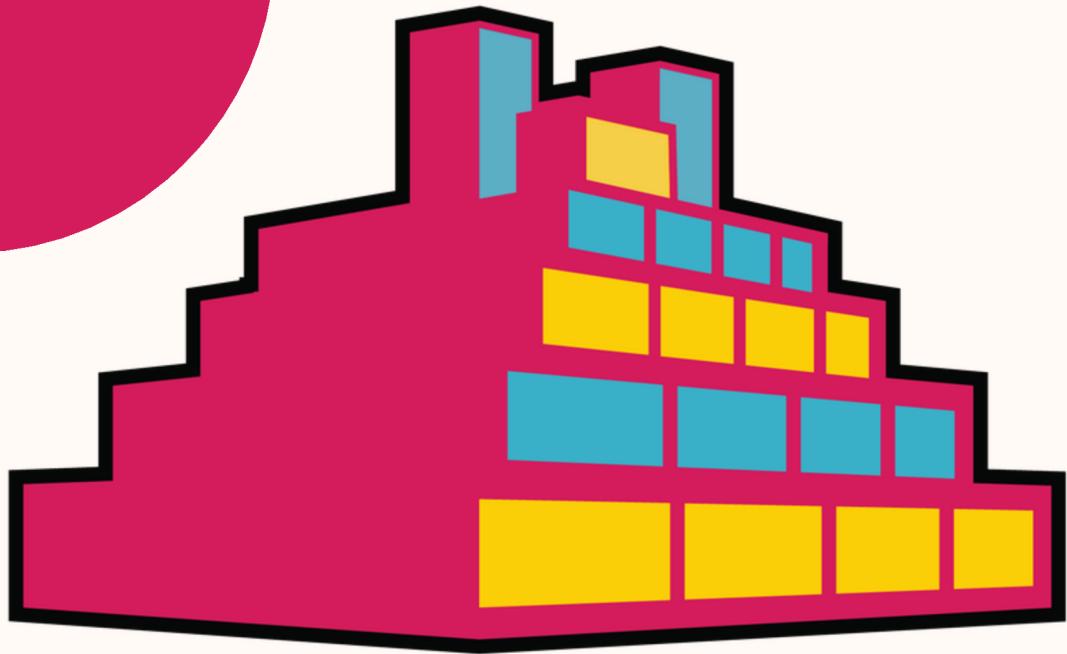
Try to avoid huge chunks of text and focus on the most important details.

For all categories, make sure to:

- (1) Read the award criteria carefully and ensure you have submitted the appropriate supporting evidence, in the required PDF format and word/page count.
- (2) Use easy-to-read fonts and colours. Do not use a tiny font size in order to squeeze in more words, it is not likely to please judges. Stick to the minimum font size of 11.
- (3) Double-check all your links are working, especially after exporting to a PDF. You may consider including links as plain text, as well as hyperlinks, just in case.
- (4) Submit the article text as well as including a link to the article, rather than submitting screenshots, as these are difficult to read.
- (5) Include all supporting evidence within the stated word/page count. (Remember supporting evidence does not include the article itself - it's a few paragraphs explaining why you think it should win and giving some insight and further context).
- (6) Where applicable, use photos and screenshots, and don't be afraid to use statistics or figures, graphs, or images.
- (7) Use a new form for each entry. Each submission is a standalone entry - don't reference other entries as it's unlikely the judges can access them.

We will endeavour to provide entrants with feedback on request, but this is not always possible due to the volume of entries.

Questions? Email admin@spajournalism.com. And with that, good luck!



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Publication Awards

The following awards can only be entered once per publication, usually by the Editor-in-Chief or Head of Section. If you are looking for guidance on individual awards, skip to page 18.

Best Publication

This award recognises the best student publication in the UK and Republic of Ireland. It takes into account the publication's relevance to its student community, the quality of the content that it produces, and dedication to innovation.

2025 winner: Epigram

Submission guidelines: Provide up to two pages of A4 as a supporting statement, with 1,000-1,500 words and no more than one link to a digital copy of your publication. You are free to include pictures, multimedia evidence and additional links to specific items as long as you do not exceed the two-page limit. Maximum of one entry per publication.

Things to consider:

- (1) Give a good, clear introduction to your publication and its style, content, and unique edge.
- (2) Tell us how your publication interacts with its target audience and the impact it has on your campus or the wider (local) community.
- (3) Include links to your biggest stories of the year and tell us the impact these had on your campus (or beyond).
- (4) Focus on the growth and innovation of your publication – as well as the progress from previous years - showing how your team have worked together to create positive change.
- (5) Tell us how your team, their expertise, and your audience have shaped your publication, and how you have adapted to their needs.
- (6) Provide screenshots showing the design of your magazine, newspaper, or website.

Best Specialist Publication

This award recognises the best specialist student publication. Whether you are an arts and culture magazine, political periodical, academic journal or any other publication with a specific niche, you are welcome to apply. This award is judged by the same principles as the Best Publication category.

2025 winner: Women's Wrongs

Submission guidelines: Provide up to two pages of A4 as a supporting statement, with 1,000-1,500 words and no more than one link to a digital copy of your publication. You are free to include pictures, multimedia evidence as well as additional links to specific works as long as you do not exceed the two-page limit. Maximum of one entry per publication.

Things to consider:

- (1) Tell us about the value your publication brings to your campus by having a strong focus on a single topic.
- (2) Show the opportunities afforded to your team through being part of this particular publication and why they would not be able to gain the same experience writing for another publication.
- (3) Describe how you source content relevant to your industry or topic.
- (4) Illustrate how your readership and membership has grown through successful campaigns and collaborations with your industry.
- (5) For further guidance, see Best Publication.

Note: You can enter Best Publication and Best Specialist Publication categories. Your submissions are expected to be similar but not identical.

Best Newcomer Publication

This award recognises the best new student publication.

Publications may not be more than three years old (regardless of the length of SPA membership) at the time that these awards close for entries, nor may it have won or been commended in this category in the past. It is judged by the same principles as the Best Publication category.

2025 winner: Hillhead Review

Submission guidelines: Provide up to two pages of A4 as a supporting statement, with 1,000-1,500 words and no more than one link to a digital copy of your publication. You are free to include pictures, multimedia evidence as well as additional links to specific works as long as you do not exceed the two-page limit. Maximum of one entry per publication.

Things to consider:

- (1) You can apply for this award if you have restarted a publication which has not been in operation for a number of years.
- (2) Highlight the decisions which have given your publication its direction since day one and how the team and your publication's values have continued to guide its content.
- (3) Show us how much has changed since your original plan, and how your publication looks now versus how it started out.
- (4) Tell us how your content has been received by your target audience, and what your plans are for the future.
- (5) For further guidance, see Best Publication.

Note: You can enter Best Publication and Best Newcomer Publication categories. Your submissions are expected to be similar but not identical.

Best Design (Newspaper and Magazine)

There are two Best Design awards - one for magazines, and one for newspapers. These awards recognise the best-designed student publications in the UK and Republic of Ireland. They take into account professionalism, style, accessibility and innovation.

2025 Winner (Magazine Design): Planorama

2025 Winner (Newspaper Design): The Boar

Submission guidelines: Provide up to two pages of A4 as a supporting statement, with 1,000-1,500 words and no more than one link to a digital copy of your publication. You are free to include pictures, links to specific stories or other multimedia evidence, provided you do not exceed the two-page limit.

Things to consider:

- (1) Think about how the photography and illustrations used in your publication contribute to and enhance the written content.
- (2) Include your favourite spreads from the year and showcase a variety of styles and techniques, but also discuss where the inspiration for the designs comes from.
- (3) Emphasise any design changes which occurred over the year and how the design differs from previous years, or alternatively, the ways in which you have continued the publication's aesthetic over the years.
- (4) Focus on the aspects which make your publication stand out – whether it's the photography, illustrations, colours, layout, or something completely different.

Best Overall Digital Media

This award recognises the most innovative use of multimedia platforms, including using audio and video to enhance a publication's overall content. This also includes the use of social media networks.

2025 winner: Limerick Voice

Submission guidelines: Provide up to two pages of A4 as a supporting statement, with 1,000-1,500 words and no more than one link to a digital copy of your publication. You are free to include pictures, links to specific stories or other multimedia evidence, provided you do not exceed the two-page limit.

Things to consider:

- (1) Tell us how you brought stories to life through multimedia rather than the traditional print medium.
- (2) What difficulties did you encounter and what creative methods did you use to solve them? What was the final result?
- (3) How do you prepare or train your team in order to enable them to successfully provide multimedia coverage?
- (4) Consider including links to your social media channels and any "behind the scenes" content.

Best Website

This award recognises the best website of a student publication. It takes into account website design, production, content, overall impact, and user engagement.

2025 winner: Cherwell

Submission guidelines: Provide up to two pages of A4 as a supporting statement, with 1,000-1,500 words and no more than three links to areas of the nominated website. You are free to include pictures as well as the allotted website links. Maximum of one entry per publication.

Things to consider:

- (1) Include screenshots which show the style and content evolution of your website over the last year (you may be able to get old screenshots on web archive websites).
- (2) Focus on functionality and accessibility and how any improvements you made have helped a wide range of users to enjoy your website and interact with your publication online.
- (3) Discuss why the layout you've chosen is best suited to the way you want to deliver stories to your readers.
- (4) Show how your audience engages with your website and if there is additional content they can engage with online as opposed to print.

Best Project or Initiative

This award recognises the best new project or initiative begun by a publication or group therein within the last 12 months. Submissions can consist of traditional text-based articles or other multimedia content.

2025 winner: Break the Mould, Epigram

Submission guidelines: Provide up to 750 words of supporting evidence, and no more than two links to relevant project or initiative material. Maximum of two entries per publication.

Things to consider:

- (1) How does your project or initiative bring something new to your publication, by making efficient use of a different medium or showcasing a previously unconsidered special interest subject?
- (2) How does your project or initiative benefit your readers and/or the student community as a whole?
- (3) Show us how you developed the initiative and what hurdles you and your team overcame in bringing the project or initiative to fruition.

Best Culture Publication or Section

This award recognises the best overall coverage of culture (for example: film, theatre, music, fashion) in a student publication. It is open to specialist culture publications, as well as culture sections within broader publications.

2025 winner: Muse

Submission guidelines: Provide up to two pages of A4 as a supporting statement, with 1,000-1,500 words and no more than one link to a digital copy of your publication. You are free to include pictures, links to specific stories or other multimedia evidence, provided you do not exceed the two-page limit. Maximum of two entries per publication – individual sections can enter (e.g. film and music sections separately), as well as all culture sections collectively in a wider publication, or a culture-specific publication.

Things to consider:

- (1) Show us how you have kept a focus on your student audience throughout your culture reporting and how your publication's coverage differs from other outlets.
- (2) Highlight any innovations you made in your publication or section this year, whether that is a new article series or a digital media campaign to reach a wider audience.
- (3) Culture often connects students to the wider community, whether that is through coverage of events they could attend, or interviewing local artists. Illustrate the insight that your publication gives your wider community.
- (4) Point out your top stories of the year. What impact did they have on your campus?

Best Science Publication or Section

This award recognises the best overall coverage of science in a student publication. It is open to specialist science publications, as well as science sections within broader publications.

2025 winner: Epigram

Submission guidelines: Provide up to two pages of A4 as a supporting statement, with 1,000-1,500 words and no more than one link to a digital copy of your publication. You are free to include pictures, links to specific stories or other multimedia evidence, provided you do not exceed the two-page limit. Maximum of one entry per publication.

Things to consider:

- (1) Bringing science to a student audience is always difficult as the jargon and assumed knowledge can be quite overwhelming – show us how you manage to break down this barrier in your science section, or your publication as a whole.
- (2) Illustrate the insight that your publication gives your campus or the wider community.
- (3) Tell us how you source your content and how you ensure it is factual and up-to-date.
- (4) Point out your top stories of the year. What impact did they have on your campus?

Best Sport Publication or Section

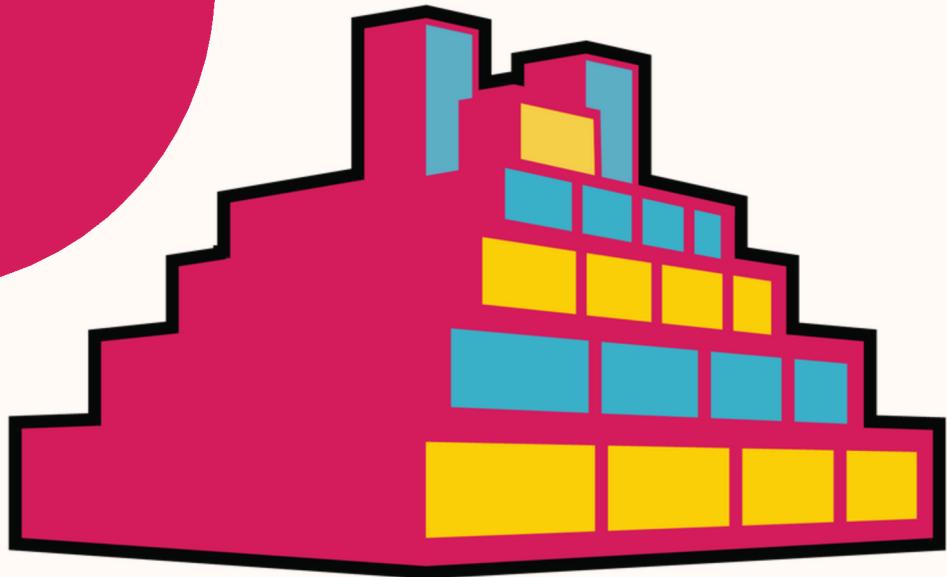
This award recognises the best overall sports coverage in a student publication. It is open to specialist sports publications, as well as sports sections within broader publications. This award is not intended to recognise the achievements of any individual journalist, but the collective work of a team.

2025 winner: Roar News

Submission guidelines: Provide up to two pages of A4 as a supporting statement, with 750 words and no more than one link to a digital copy of your publication. You are free to include pictures, links to specific stories, or other multimedia evidence, provided you do not exceed the two-page limit. Maximum of one entry per publication.

Things to consider:

- (1) Show how your section's coverage reported on a wide range of sports and issues within sport, with a particular focus on university sports and athletes.
- (2) Show how you have consistently brought experiences to life for those who weren't able to attend, e.g. through multimedia, social media, photography, interviews, and other behind-the-scenes content.
- (3) Highlight any extra events or series you worked on, be that a series of sporting events e.g. Varsity, or an article series focusing on a specific topic, e.g. disability in sport.
- (4) Think about how your sport section was innovative and helped enhance the community feel of your university, or shine a light on issues relevant to the local student community.



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Individual Awards

You can nominate yourself twice for: Best News Story, Best Feature, Best Interview, Best Investigation, Best Comment Piece, Best Lifestyle Piece, Best Arts and Culture Piece, Best Creative Piece, Best Science or Tech Piece

You can nominate yourself once for: Best Reporter, Best Student Photographer, Rising Star, Best Sports Reporter, Best Culture Writer

There is no limit on how many times you can nominate other people, see page 4 for details.

Billy Dowling-Reid Award for Outstanding Commitment

The Billy Dowling-Reid Award for Outstanding Commitment rewards students who have gone above and beyond for their publication over the previous year.

Billy, an SPA lifetime member, founded Mediargh, the first journalism job website to ban unpaid internships from advertising. We named this award in his memory after his death, aged 31, in 2018.

2025 winner: Annie McNamee, Epigram

Submission guidelines: Include a supporting statement of up to 500 words. Nominations can be made either by the individual concerned, or someone on their behalf. Multiple entries for the same nominated individual will be considered together.

Things to consider:

- (1) Who is the greatest asset to your team? Did someone step up in a time of need or to cover the work of other people?
- (2) Did someone come up with a new and innovative idea which has become crucial to the running of your publication?
- (3) What did they do that went the extra mile, beyond simply being good at their role?
- (4) Consider the person on your team who is not only dedicated but puts the publication's interests first – chasing stories or finding unique content.
- (5) Consider a member of your team who is able to boost morale and encourage people to try new things; or someone who perhaps comes up with creative new ideas to attract new audiences.

Best Reporter

This award rewards consistently exceptional reporting from an individual at a student publication. It will take into account the range of stories, impact on their student audience, and the quality of journalism produced.

2025 winner: Harriet Mogie, The River

Submission guidelines: Include up to three stories from within the awards timeframe, plus a supporting statement of up to 300 words. Maximum of one entry per individual journalist. Only one of your stories can be entered into another individual article category.

Things to consider:

- (1) Show a wide and varied portfolio and the ability to confidently cover a range of topics, including sensitive content and taboo subjects.
- (2) Well-rounded writers who aren't afraid to step out of their comfort zone and learn new skills tend to be rewarded.
- (3) We need to see how this person connects with their community to make an impact locally and beyond.
- (4) If applicable, show how the entrant has developed over the year and what challenges they overcame to become the best journalist on their team.

Best Culture Writer

This award rewards consistently exceptional culture writing from an individual at a student publication. It will take into account the range of stories, impact on their student audience and the quality of journalism produced.

This award considers culture in its broadest sense - you could choose to submit articles which fall under the arts, such as (but not limited to) music, film and theatre, and broader culture/lifestyle, such as (but not limited to) travel, fashion and food and drink.

2025 winner: Ali Rees, Brig Newspaper

Submission guidelines: Include up to three stories from within the awards timeframe, plus a supporting statement of up to 300 words. Maximum of one entry per individual journalist. Only one of your stories can be entered into another individual article category.

Things to consider:

- (1) Show a wide and varied portfolio and the ability to confidently cover a range of topics and styles, for example reviewing, interviewing, and feature writing.
- (2) Well-rounded writers who aren't afraid to step out of their comfort zone and learn new skills tend to be rewarded.
- (3) Show us how your culture reporting is different to other outlets. Have you connected with your local community? Tried out a new innovative technique to increase the reach of your articles? Or asked questions that no one else has?
- (4) If applicable, show how the entrant has developed over the year and what challenges they overcame to become the best culture writer on their team.

Rising Star (Best Newcomer)

This award recognises the best new contributor to a SPA member publication. The award is open to students who have joined an SPA member publication between March 2, 2024 and February 19, 2025 and had no previous experience with student publications. It will take into account the range and quality of work the nominee has produced and their commitment to their student publication.

2025 winner: Kate Bailey Tonkin, The Glasgow Guardian

Submission guidelines: Include three stories from within the awards timeframe, plus a supporting statement of up to 300 words. Maximum of one entry per individual journalist. Only one of your stories can be entered into another individual article category. You must not have previously won an SPA national award.

Things to consider:

- (1) Demonstrate your growth as someone with little or limited experience of the media to being valued at your student publication.
- (2) Talk about your commitment to enhancing your journalism knowledge and skills and hopes or aspirations for the future.
- (3) Consider what hurdles or obstacles you have overcome, and explain the professional growth you have undergone.

Best News Story

This award recognises quality news reporting from student publications. Entries will be rewarded for succinct and accurate reporting. These could be exclusive stories, breaking news, or news which promotes understanding.

2025 winner: Élis Mathur, Cherwell

Submission guidelines: Include one story of a maximum of 800 words and a supporting statement of up to 300 words. Stories over 800 words will not be accepted. Maximum of two entries per individual journalist. Articles entered into this category cannot be entered into the Best Investigation or Best Feature categories, if your reporting is longer-form it may be better placed in one of those categories (see pages 24-25).

Things to consider:

- (1) Your story needs to be well-structured to fare well in this category, with a clear top line.
- (2) We are looking for articles which are enhanced by the use of sources and interviews, with highly relevant quotes.
- (3) Articles with exclusive lines, that helped explain a complicated issue on campus, or held your university to account, are likely to do well in this category.
- (4) Let us know if your story was picked up elsewhere.
- (5) The relevancy of the article to the student body or your campus and the conversation it produced or the impact it had as a result of being published should be highlighted.

Best Investigation

This award recognises investigations that brought new information to light and had an impact on campus (and beyond). It will take into account how you uncovered your scoop, so let us know about the process.

2025 winner: Amadea Hofmann, The Beaver

Submission guidelines: Include one piece and a supporting statement of up to 300 words. Maximum of two entries per individual journalist. If your article doesn't reveal new information it may be better suited to the Best Feature category.

Things to consider:

- (1) Tell us how you found your scoop: did you make a freedom of information request? Persuade people to speak on the record?
- (2) Let us know of any difficulties in getting your piece to publication. Was it a lengthy process? Did you face pushback from your university or have to check for media law issues?
- (3) Articles which promoted a sense of change on your campus, or gave a voice to someone who otherwise would not have a platform, tend to do well in this category.
- (4) The relevancy of the article to the student body or your campus and the conversation it produced or the impact it had as a result of being published should be highlighted.

Best Feature

This award is for longer pieces going in-depth on a specific area or topic. Judges will look at flow, structure, impact, passion, and storytelling. If your article is an interview with an individual or group it may be better placed in the Best Interview category.

2025 winner: Marianne Carney, The Badger

Submission guidelines: Include one piece and a supporting statement of up to 300 words. Maximum of two entries per individual journalist.

Things to consider:

- (1) This award is open to all magazines, newspapers, and online publications, as long as the format and flow of the piece resemble that of feature writing.
- (2) Focus on the impact of the piece on its audience and consider the main points it covers and their relevance to the overall story.
- (3) Consider why this topic is relevant right now – what factors make it important to your audience and what takeaways there there for them?
- (4) Explain why your coverage of this subject is unique and relevant to your readers.
- (5) Think about the structure of your piece, articles which have a focus on storytelling and form, with a drop intro that attracts attention and interest, are likely to do well in this category.

Best Interview

This award recognises the best interviews by student publications, with an individual or group. The interview could be with politicians, musicians, or people in the local community. It focuses on style, presentation and impact of the interview.

2025 winner: Callum Martin, Exposé

Submission guidelines: Include one piece and a supporting statement of up to 300 words. Maximum of two entries per individual journalist.

Things to consider:

- (1) As you are allowed two entries in this category, you may make two separate submissions, rather than combining the articles into one submission.
- (2) You don't have to interview someone famous in order to qualify for this award! The impact on your audience is more important.
- (3) Think of the influential people you've interviewed, who have made an impact which is emotional, inspirational or awe-inspiring.
- (4) Focus on the questions you asked and how your coverage differed from other outlets, local or national, which interviewed the same individual or group.
- (5) Articles written in a Q&A format don't do well in this category as they don't show off your writing abilities.

Best Science or Tech Piece

This award recognises the best science and technology piece of writing. This can include an article on scientific research at institutions, as well as wider issues and topics in the science and technology sector including gaming. It will take into account the story's relevance to the audience, structure and impact.

2025 winner: Harshitaa Sendhilkumar, RUMS Review

Submission guidelines: Include one piece and a supporting statement of up to 300 words. Maximum of two entries per individual journalist.

Things to consider:

- (1) As you are allowed two entries in this category, you may make two separate submissions, rather than combining the articles into one submission.
- (2) Discuss the relevance of the story to your publication and beyond, showing you have done plenty of background research to support the points you make in the article.
- (3) Think about the different sub-genres within science and technology - this is a very broad category and encompasses a range of topics.
- (4) Consider the advice for Best Science Publication or Section.
- (5) Bringing science to a student audience is always difficult as the jargon and assumed knowledge can be quite overwhelming – show us how you broke down the important topics for your audience clearly and concisely.

Best Sports Reporter

This award is designed to recognise the best sports reporter in student journalism. This might be someone always out in the rain pitchside, first on the team bus getting the scoop or an exclusive interview, or who is always first with the latest scores home and away.

2025 winner: Ben Pawlowski, Palatinate

Submission guidelines: Include up to three stories from within the awards timeframe, plus a supporting statement of up to 300 words. Maximum of one entry per individual journalist.

Things to consider:

- (1) How have you shown that you have consistently excelled at bringing informative, entertaining and innovative sports coverage to your university?
- (2) Demonstrate an awareness of a chosen sport or sports beyond just fixture lists and match reports. Well-rounded writers who aren't afraid to step out of their comfort zone and learn new skills tend to be rewarded.
- (3) Explain how your reporting connects with your community to make an impact locally and beyond.
- (4) Consider the advice for Best Sports Section.

Best Comment Piece

This award recognises the best opinion writing from a student publication. It will take into account structure, relevance to the student community and impact of the piece.

2025 winner: Lucy Reade, Pi Media

Submission guidelines: Include one piece and a supporting statement of up to 300 words. Maximum of two entries per individual journalist.

Things to consider:

- (1) As you are allowed two entries in this category, you may make two separate submissions, rather than combining the articles into one submission.
- (2) There are different schools of thought as to what makes a good comment piece, so don't feel that your approach is necessarily the wrong one. However, you should be writing about a topic you can speak with authority on – not the politics of a faraway country.
- (3) Don't be afraid to be provocative or stand your ground with a well-researched and passionate entry.
- (4) Consider the impact your article had on its target audience and the conversations it provoked on your campus or beyond.
- (5) Think about the structure of your piece. Articles that have a focus on storytelling and form, with a clear and unique voice are likely to do well in this category.

Best Lifestyle Piece

This award recognises the best lifestyle piece. This could include stories on fashion, beauty, travel, food and drink, etc. It will take into account the story's structure and relevance to the audience.

2025 winner: Antonia Shipley, Nouse

Submission guidelines: Include one story and a supporting statement of up to 300 words. Maximum of two entries per individual journalist.

Things to consider:

- (1) Consider the wider reach of your article and its impact beyond your campus as well as within. How is your article relevant to the student body?
- (2) Show how the article connects with the reader, and explain what emotions it might evoke within them.
- (3) Think about the inspiration for the piece and how it provides more insight compared to articles which are already out there on similar topics.
- (4) Think about the structure of your piece. Articles that focus on storytelling and form, with a clear and distinctive voice, are likely to excel in this category.
- (5) Demonstrate what information the article provides the reader and what they may learn from it.
- (6) As you are allowed two entries in this category, you may make two separate submissions, rather than combining the articles into one submission.

Best Arts or Culture Piece

This award is for articles about music, film, theatre, arts and culture. Example submissions could include a gallery, album or film review, and so on. It will take into account the piece's style, the quality of analysis, and the relevance to the student community.

2025 winner: Libby Marchant, Trinity News

Submission guidelines: Include one piece and a supporting statement of up to 300 words. Maximum of two entries per individual journalist.

Things to consider:

- (1) Consider the wider reach of your article and its impact beyond your campus as well as within. How is your article relevant to the student body?
- (2) Show how the article connects with the reader, and what emotions it may evoke within them.
- (3) Think about the inspiration for the piece and how it provides more insight compared to articles which are already out there on similar topics (e.g. current reviews).
- (4) Think about the structure of your piece. Articles that focus on storytelling and form, with a clear and distinctive voice, are likely to excel in this category.
- (5) As you are allowed two entries in this category, you may make two separate submissions, rather than combining the articles into one submission.

Best Creative Piece

This award focuses on pieces of which the primary focus is to entertain readers. This could be a piece of satire, a sketch, or other piece of creative writing. It will take into account the quality of the entertainment provided as well as the style and structure of the piece.

2025 winner: Jessica-May Cox, The Beaver

Submission guidelines: Include one piece and a supporting statement of up to 300 words. Pieces over 1,250 words will not be considered. Maximum of two entries per individual journalist.

Things to consider:

- (1) Show off your creative flair and show how this piece sparked humour, debate, or wider thinking about the subject.
- (2) Explain your skills and how these came across in the piece.
- (3) Discuss the wider relevance of the subject(s) you covered and why you chose them.
- (4) As you are allowed two entries in this category, you may make two separate submissions, rather than combining the articles into one submission.

Best Student Photographer

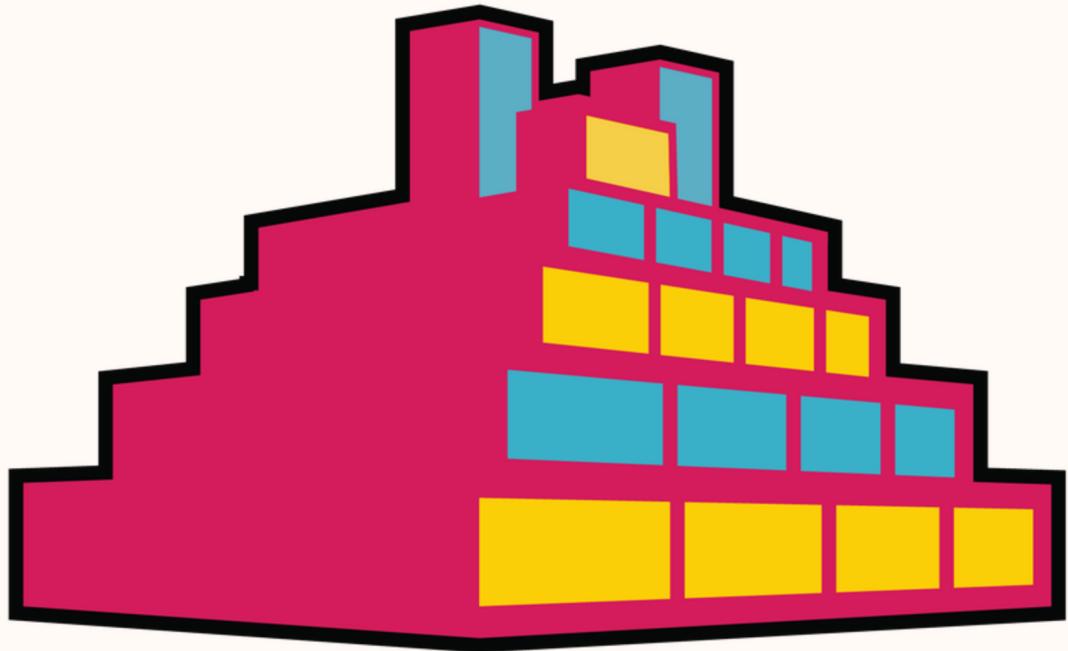
This award recognises the best student photographers, who provide their publications with memorable, high quality images showing student life and events.

2025 winner: Arabella Wright, The Gryphon

Submission guidelines: Include three photographs published in an SPA member publication within the awards period, and a supporting statement of up to 300 words.

Things to consider:

- (1) It will usually be to your advantage to show a wide range of skills, so your photographs should reflect these.
- (2) Explain how the presence of your photographs in the publication have enhanced and helped tell stories.
- (3) Discuss any details about how you shot the photographs, the work that went into getting them, and the feedback you had on them.



SPANC

2026

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