

The GSE Geography in Government Awards

Introduction

The Geography Profession in GSE is pleased to announce the second Geography in Government (GiG) awards. To mark the significant contribution that geographers in local government make we have established a new category this year, excellence in local government geography.

The GiG awards recognise and celebrate the wealth of inspirational individuals and teams in the geography profession undertaking projects across the civil, crown and public service which reflect the challenges we have faced, the skills we've applied to solving difficult problems and how we have collaborated to deliver.

There are six individual award categories, the winners of which will be announced at the GiG awards event at the end of April. The overall GiG award will be selected from the winners of each individual category and will be awarded at the prestigious annual Royal Geographical Society (with IBG) awards ceremony.

Awards Timeline

All nominations should be submitted to govheadgeog@defra.gov.uk and be no longer than 500 words:

- Nominations open: Monday 6th January 2020
- Nominations close: Friday 21st February 2020
- Shortlist announced: w/c 9th March 2020
- GiG awards for individual categories presented at an awards ceremony hosted by the Scottish Government: w/c 27 April 2020
- Overall GiG award presented at the annual RGS awards ceremony: 1st June

Criteria

Open to all civil, crown and public servants who are geographers within the GSE profession at the time of nomination. If you are not already a member of GSE then you can join [here](#), making sure that you identify yourself as having an interest or skills in a relevant discipline in Question 11 (e.g. geography, geospatial, cartography or GIS). We are looking for examples of outstanding individuals or teams (where at least one team member is in GSE geography) who have innovated, impressed and made a real difference in their area and the communities we serve over the past 12 months.

Nominations will be considered against award-specific criteria as well as the following elements:

- Promotion or demonstration of the core values and behaviours set out in the Civil Service Code or appropriate Code for your organisation: has the nominee acted (where relevant) with integrity, honesty, objectivity and impartiality?
- Innovative: has the nominee used innovative approaches and made the best use of the technology available, resulting in a step up from business as usual and real benefits to end users?
- Impact: has the nominee made an impact beyond their immediate team/business area/department?

- Measurable benefits: does the nomination provide evidence that the project or programme is having a tangible effect?
- Working in partnership: has the nominee introduced effective joint-working arrangements that bring together colleagues from multiple teams, departments or other internal or external organisations?
- Sustainability: will the initiative/practice described leave a lasting legacy and can it be replicated across the public sector?
- Inclusion: has the nominee been inclusive, engaging the individual strengths, talents and experiences of teams and considered all groups of customers, service users, audiences or stakeholders in developing solutions?

Categories

Advancing geospatial data science

Recognising excellence by a team or individual in advancing geographic data structures, geographic science concepts and computational techniques to capture, represent, process, and analyse geographic information. This could include examples of:

- applying systems thinking, problem solving and analysis to improve results by placing robust evidence, research and geospatial data at the heart of the decision-making process;
- challenging the status quo, trying something new, adapting and refining when things have not worked well, and learning in the application of geographic science;
- ensuring that best-practice is captured and disseminated to others, including those not in the geographic profession, to help spread good practice and understanding.

Contribution to the profession

Recognising an individual or team that has displayed excellence in championing, promoting and growing the geography profession within GSE. This could include:

- promoting geographic or geospatial skills development across teams or operational units, ensuring that learning is captured and can be disseminated to others to help spread good practice;
- undertaking geographic related professional outreach to schools and universities to inspire the next generation of geographers and promote the range of opportunities in the public sector;
- championing geography within the public sector and the role geographers can play in the design and delivery of public policy;

Operational delivery

Celebrating outstanding contributions to the successful delivery of public sector projects. This award recognises projects, teams or individuals whose efforts shape lasting and valuable outcomes for society. Entrants may have shown examples of one or more of the following:

- transforming organisations or services – using geographic insights to improve the way the public sector operates or delivers services to the citizen and/or to deliver significant savings and infrastructure improvements.

- visible project leadership - building high performing, diverse teams; increasing project capability; and leading activity to drive innovation and share knowledge across the wider professional community to effectively learn lessons from other projects.
- capturing knowledge, research and geospatial data from a variety of disciplines and sources, collaborating with partners inside and outside government where appropriate, and using this information to influence the operational delivery of government policy to deliver better outcomes.

Impact on policy

Recognising applying geographic knowledge and skills to develop excellent domestic or international policy-making in action, for example by:

- developing or using a sound evidence base, ensuring geography forms part a variety of disciplines and sources, and applying robust analysis to understand the data and inform decision-making;
- incorporating geographic knowledge and evidence into a diverse range of inputs, showcasing open policy-making, engaging effectively with stakeholders, while managing the wider political context;
- understanding the role of place in the development and design of policy development, delivery and user need as priorities from the outset, using new and innovative approaches, as appropriate.
- capturing knowledge, research and data from a variety of disciplines and sources, collaborating with geo partners inside and outside government where appropriate, and using this information to influence policy development to deliver better outcomes

Excellence in geo-visualisation & cartography

Recognising excellence in geo-visualisation and mapping, in either the printed form or any mapping available in electronic format (including charts produced by UKHO), for example by:

- undertaking high quality geo-visualisation and cartography which enables the user to gain new insight about the area covered;
- ensuring that best-practice is captured and disseminated to others to help spread good practice and understanding.

Excellence in local government

This category is exclusively open to local government* (including blue light services and other local services employing public servants) and can span from cartography to innovation, from technology to operational delivery. We wish to highlight the breadth and depth of geographical work undertaken across the local government sector in the delivery of local services, for example by,

- Delivery of customer services through geospatial solutions,
- Analysis and insight leading to improved delivery of services
- Interdisciplinary working across the Local Authority

*note: all categories are open to Local Government members. This category however is exclusive to Local Government members.

The Judges

The individual categories will be judged by members from the geography profession leadership team (Head of Geography and the eleven Deputy Heads of Geography):

- David Wood (Defra): Head of Geography in GSE;
- Jon Pickstone (Scottish Government): Chair Central Government Geographers Group;
- Liz Fox-Tucker (Defra): Lead strategy, governance & networks;
- Ian Coady (DfID): Lead on our offer & growing the profession within civil service;
- Steve Campbell (Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government): Lead on raising profile & embedding geography in policy making cycle;
- Claire Edwards (Geospatial Commission): Lead on raising profile & embedding geography in delivery;
- Alistair Edwardes (ONS Data Science Campus): Lead professional standards, guidance and tools;
- Ian Spencer (Ministry of Defence): Lead professional standards, GSE members (inc. chartership);
- Brian Vinall (Environment Agency, based at Met Office): Lead professional outreach and external recruitment;
- Patrick Rickles (Ministry of Justice): Lead diversity & inclusion;
- Clare Hadley (Ordnance Survey): Lead growing the profession for public and crown servants; and
- Rollo Home (Ordnance Survey): Lead growing the profession for public and crown servants.

The winner from each individual category will be put forward for the main Geography in Government (GiG) award which will be judged by:

- David Wood (Defra): Head of Geography in GSE;
- A representative from the Royal Geographical Society (with IBG); and
- A representative from the wider geo community.

FAQs

Who is organising the Geography in Government (GiG) Awards?

The geography profession within Government Science and Engineering are organising the GiG awards.

How do I enter?

You can enter yourself or be nominated by a colleague. A team leader (Grade 7 (or equivalent) and above) details will need to be entered to validate the nomination, however, they do not need to be contacted prior to nominating. They might be contacted if the nomination is shortlisted to for due

diligence purposes. If your organisation does not have a Grade 7 the most senior line manager, will be required.

You may enter as many times as you wish, across all categories, however each application must be sent in on a separate email with the category within the subject line.

You must submit an application of no more than 500 words to Friday 21st February 2020 by the deadline.

What if I am a Grade 7 or above?

To validate the nomination, you must have the details of someone higher than yourself within your organisation.

Who can enter the GiG Awards?

Any civil, crown or public servant who is currently employed and is a member of the geography profession in GSE at the time of nomination.

Do I have to tell the person I am nominating them?

We advise that you let anyone you are nominating know that you have done so at your own discretion. It is not compulsory to do so but it is usually best to inform them in advance so they are not caught off-guard if they are shortlisted. It's also an opportunity to let them know what fantastic work they have done!

Do you have any examples of nominations which have been successful?

This is the second GiG awards, you can find out more about the winners from last year here:

<https://www.rgs.org/professionals/geographers-in-government-awards/>

The criteria for the GiG awards are closely aligned to the Civil Service Awards (see [here](#) for examples of successful nominations).

How many categories are there?

There are 6 categories, the overall GiG award winner will be selected from the winners of each of the 6 categories.

What time period should the work take place in?

These are annual awards so the work nominated should have been undertaken during the calendar year 2019.

Can I submit maps / charts to provide further evidence?

We welcome maps or charts as supporting evidence, these can be attached to the nomination email. However we won't take any further written evidence into account, all written evidence should be included within the nomination form word limit.

How do I apply?

Please apply using the nomination form, referring to the information in this pack. Please submit one nomination per email, clearly stating the category the nomination refers to. The forms will be judged anonymously so please don't refer to names within the nomination case study. Please submit the

nomination to govheadgeog@defra.gov.uk by Friday 21st February 2020, remembering to attach only one nomination per email and stating the category in the subject line.

Who should I contact if I have any questions about the Awards process?

Should you need any further information please contact govheadgeog@defra.gov.uk