

PRESS RELEASE

ROYAL TELEVISION SOCIETY INVITES ENTRIES FOR THE TELEVISION JOURNALISM AWARDS 2021

London, 13 October 2020 – The Royal Television Society (RTS), Britain’s leading forum for television and related media, has launched the RTS Television Journalism Awards 2021. Now open for entries, the RTS is seeking submissions that highlight the outstanding reporting that has taken place in this unique and turbulent year.

The awards, for both news and current affairs, seek to recognise creative and excellent journalism by organisations whose broadcasts are transmitted on a UK based platform or who create online video content from a UK production base.

Chair of the Awards, Simon Bucks said: “This is the first year since World War II that news and current affairs have been so totally dominated for so long by one extraordinary, all-consuming, story. Covering the Covid-19 pandemic - with all the associated logistical and safety challenges - has tested journalistic organisations to the limit, and continues to do so. With so much divided opinion about the science and the strategies, the audiences have been hungry for high quality coverage and insights, and they have not been disappointed. I have no doubt that this year’s RTS TV Journalism awards will, as ever, reflect the highest standards in video journalism.”

The 2021 celebrations will recognise talent across 19 categories including: News Coverage – Home; News Coverage – International; Daily News Programme of the Year; News Channel of the Year; Breaking News; News Technology; Current Affairs – Home; Current Affairs – International; Nations and Regions News; Nations and Regions Current Affairs; Nations and Regions Presenter of the Year; Scoop of the Year; Specialist Journalist of the Year; Young Talent of the Year; Television Journalist of the Year; Camera Operator of the Year; Network Presenter of the Year; Digital Award and Interview of the Year. In addition, the Judges’ Award and the Outstanding Contribution Award will be handed out at the discretion of the jury.

Across all the categories, the juries will be asked to take into consideration the quality of journalism in context of the market, the impact and resonance with the target audience, enterprise, and technical quality.

The 2021 Awards ceremony will be celebrated on Wednesday 24th February 2021. All entries must be submitted by Tuesday 1st December 2020. For more information on conditions of entry please visit: <https://rts.org.uk/award/tvj2021>

The RTS Television Journalism Awards Categories:

NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL NEWS AWARDS

News Coverage – Home

The Home News Award is for the best coverage of a major news story in the UK. The award is intended to recognise every aspect of coverage including journalistic enterprise, quality of reporting, picture content, analysis and explanation, and comprehensiveness of overall coverage, including speed of reaction in unexpected or unplanned stories (although a separate award, Breaking News, concentrates specifically on this aspect).

News Coverage - International

The International News Award is for the best coverage of a major news story outside the UK. The award is intended to recognise every aspect of coverage including journalistic enterprise, quality of reporting and picture content, analysis and explanation and comprehensiveness of overall coverage, including speed of reaction in unexpected or unplanned stories (although a separate award, Breaking News, concentrates specifically on this aspect).

Daily News Programme of the Year

The Daily News Programme of the Year Award is for the programme which has demonstrated the greatest journalistic excellence throughout the year. The jury may take into account the performance of a programme beyond the submitted material, from within the criteria year.

News Channel of the Year

The News Channel of the Year Award is for the news channel which has best reported the events of the year to viewers in the UK. A news channel is considered to be a continuous live video stream on TV and/or online which may contain some pre-recorded programmes. The jury may take into account the performance of an entrant beyond the submitted material, from within the criteria year.

Breaking News

This award recognises the expertise of news organisations in responding to an unscheduled or unexpected major news story. The judges will be focusing on the initial coverage and the speed with which the broadcaster provides cogent reports, background, context and analysis to the viewer. They will also consider how well the broadcaster reported subsequent events over the first 48 hours. The jury may take into account the performance of an entrant beyond the submitted material, from within the criteria year.

News Technology

This award recognises the way in which news organisations harness technology in an innovative way to support and enhance journalism and the delivery of news on TV and/or other digital and online platforms. This could range from news-gathering and news presentation to new ways of displaying information to engage with viewers. It is likely that entrants will need to support their entry with information to help the judges understand why the innovation deserves special credit: this can be done on video with commentary or with text.

NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL CURRENT AFFAIRS AWARDS

Current Affairs - Home

The Home Current Affairs Award is for the best piece of current affairs journalism shot in the UK. It seeks to recognise excellence in programmes ranging from daily long-form news to weekly or bi-weekly current affairs and to other forms of topical television journalism. Short-form single current affairs items are also eligible for entry. Documentary programmes should be entered in the documentary categories in the RTS Programme Awards not in the RTS Journalism Awards.

Current Affairs - International

The International Current Affairs Award is for the best piece of non-UK current affairs journalism. The programme should be substantially about an international subject. It seeks to recognise excellence in programmes ranging from daily long-form news to weekly or bi-weekly current affairs and to other forms of topical journalism. Short form single current affairs items are also eligible for entry. Documentary programmes should be entered in the documentary categories in the RTS Programme Awards not in the RTS Journalism Awards.

NATIONS AND REGIONS AWARDS

Nations and Regions News

The Nations and Regions News Award is for the programme which has best demonstrated originality and production quality as well as journalistic excellence. Entrants should bear in mind that judges are asked to consider not only treatment of major news stories but evidence of how a programme team can create a sense of belonging that distinguishes individual programmes from the output of other areas. Entries are invited from news teams in the nations (Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland), the regions of those nations, the English regions and sub-regions, the Channel Islands and local TV services in the UK.

Nations and Regions Current Affairs

This Award is for the best current affairs programme commissioned, made and first transmitted in a nation or region. Entries are invited from teams in the nations (Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland), the English regions, the Channel Islands and local TV services in the UK. The award seeks to recognise excellence in programmes ranging from daily long-form news reportage to weekly current affairs as well as other forms of topical television journalism.

Nations and Regions Presenter of the Year

The Nations & Regions Presenter of the Year Award is for the best news and/or current affairs presenter whose skills may include interviewing, responding to breaking news, effective communication with the programme audience and presenting on location as

well as studio presentation. (Entries should demonstrate the range of the presenter within their particular genre.)

AWARDS FOR NEWS OR CURRENT AFFAIRS

Scoop of the Year

This award recognises exclusive, entrepreneurial journalism in either news or current affairs by a broadcaster or agency. Entries will be judged on the strength of the journalism and the wider impact more than the production values of the transmitted story.

Specialist Journalist of the Year

The award recognises high quality specialist knowledge and expertise in thematic genres such as arts, entertainment, science, health, education, business, economics, politics and defence inside or outside the UK. Coverage of a particular area of the world is not considered specialist in itself but reporting of a theme or issue within that area is. The jury may take into account the performance of the individual beyond the submitted material, from within the criteria year.

Young Talent of the Year

The Young Talent of the Year Award is for the best work in news or current affairs during the year by an on- or off-screen journalist, editor, video journalist, camera operator or technician. Entrants must be under the age of 30 (on the last day of the twelve-month period from which entries are invited). In the case of off-screen candidates especially (but all candidates ideally), the judges will welcome supporting written material and background information to help understand the individual contribution.

Television Journalist of the Year

The Television Journalist of the Year award is for the best work during the year by an on-screen television journalist in news and/or current affairs. Judges will expect to see a demonstration of the range of the journalist and may take into account the performance of a journalist beyond the submitted material, from within the criteria year.

Camera Operator of the Year

The Camera Operator of the Year Award is for the best work by a camera operator in news or current affairs. The judges will wish to see the breadth and depth of the camera operator's skill. It will be particularly helpful for the jury to be provided with written background information on whether, for example, the camera operator also helped to produce the items or edited them.

Network Presenter of the Year

The Network Presenter of the Year Award is for the best news and/or current affairs presenter whose skills may include interviewing, responding to breaking news, effective communication with the programme audience and presenting on location as well as studio presentation. Reporter packages made on presentation assignments may be submitted but this category is primarily for presenting not reporting and those reports can be submitted into the news coverage categories. The jury may take into account the performance of a presenter beyond the submitted material, from within the criteria year.

Digital Award

This award recognises the huge growth in video-journalism produced specifically for streaming on internet-connected platforms. These include websites, apps, social media channels including YouTube and OTT ("over-the-top") TV channels. Any professional video-journalism organisation with a U.K production base is eligible to enter (including mainstream broadcasters). The spirit of this award is to encourage and reward original digital journalism. Entries should have been commissioned and designed for a digital platform or platforms. Although entries may subsequently have been shown on conventional TV (DTT, satellite or cable) the judges will be looking particularly for an originality of approach which focusses on the production and delivery of journalism for non-broadcast audiences, especially on handheld devices. This type of journalism is often produced by individuals or very small teams who are multi-skilled and this will be also taken into account by the judges.

Interview of the Year

This award recognises the importance of the television interview in making news and in analysing issues. The judges will be looking for an interview which reveals new - and often unexpected - information and demonstrates journalistic skills by the interviewer.

The award is given for the best interview, not for the best package of interviews by one journalist.

**AWARDED BY THE RTS IN DISCUSSION WITH CHAIRS OF JURIES,
BROADCASTER REPRESENTATIVES, NEWS ORGANISATIONS AND NEWS
PROVIDERS / AGENCIES**

The following awards will be awarded or deferred at the discretion of the panel:

Judges' Award

The Judges' Award can be presented to an individual (on or off screen) or a production team to recognise an outstanding contribution to the advancement of Television Journalism in the past year. This Award cannot be awarded posthumously.

Outstanding Contribution Award

In special circumstances a decision can be made to make a further award to an individual (on or off screen) to mark an outstanding contribution. It is envisaged that this may arise when the Judges' Award has gone to an individual for a specific achievement in the past year but where, for instance, it is felt that another person after long service to television journalism should also be marked.

For further information please contact:

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About The Royal Television Society:

From glamorous award ceremonies to lively debates, the RTS embraces all aspects of television, and is open to anyone with an interest in the medium.

As an educational charity, we encourage and celebrate work in television and its related fields, from finding out how the nation's favourite shows are made in our Anatomy of a Hit series, to celebrating burgeoning talent at our annual Student Awards.

The industry's most talented individuals give us an insight into the work that goes into making cutting edge contemporary TV. From Government ministers and CEOs to workshops with great runners, our events look at every part of the business.

Our annual Television Journalism, Programme, Craft and Design, and Student Awards celebrate achievements across the broadcasting industry.

Each year, we offer Television Production and Technology bursaries to help those from less affluent backgrounds get a foothold in the industry, and Masterclass sessions bring together students, academics and industry heads.

Global television leaders gather to discuss what the future holds for television at our London Conference or the RTS Cambridge Convention.

Alongside our engaged community of over 5,000 full members, the Society is supported by Britain and the world's biggest broadcasters, producers and consultants, including Principal Patrons BBC, Channel 4, ITV and Sky.

Originally founded as the Television Society in 1927, the Society was granted its Royal title in 1966 and HRH The Prince of Wales became Patron of the RTS in 1997.

Today, 15 regional and national groups curate lively events and awards around the UK and Ireland, from Glasgow to Galway.

RTS Futures, which is aimed at those in their first two years of employment, organises an exciting roster of discussion, training and social occasions. Recent events have included workshops on learning how to format shows and how to survive as a freelancer, and expert panels explaining how to be the best researcher and how to make it on-screen.