**BES Public Engagement and Science Communication Awards**

**- Submission guidelines and terms and conditions**  
The BES Public Engagement and Science Communication Awards (henceforth ‘the Awards’) reward BES members who are in the early stages of their experience in public engagement and science communication, and have led engagement projects about ecological science with publics that serve as a great example to others.

The Awards provide a maximum of £250 to winners of multiple categories of projects as listed below, and multiple ‘Highly Commended’ submissions may also be recognised with potential prizes awarded. All awardees will be featured on the BES website, social media, and other communications.

**Activities the Awards can support**The list below includes a non-exhaustive selection of activities suitable for funding. Activities not listed will be considered if they meet the strategic aims of the Society and Fund outlined above.

* **In-person public events** e.g. festival stalls, exhibitions, activities and ‘busking’, talks and workshops, outdoor learning opportunities (not through a formal school education environment)
* **Public installations:** e.g. artworks and sculptures or participatory (non-staffed) features accessible to the public
* **Digital events and activities** e.g. social media content, online talks and workshops, virtual exhibitions, videos, podcasts
* **Science writing:** books, blogs, news articles etc
* **Resource production**: educational resources such as worksheets, books, handouts, activity materials that can be kept by participants
* **Citizen and Civic (participatory) Science activities:** focusing on quality of engagement with public participants
* **Accessibility, diversity and inclusion:** i.e. efforts show to widen participation of public engagement and science communication activities
* **International projects** i.e. projects not based in the UK/ from UK-based applicants

The Awards particularly encourage applications that:

* Support BES members new to conducting public engagement and science communication
* Provide examples of best practice in engagement
* Act as case studies to inspire others to participate or lead public engagement activities
* Pilot novel methods of communicating with public audiences, particularly when engagement may inform behavioural change or encourage ecological career prospects
* Add ecological impact to existing projects or events lacking such content
* Encourage interdisciplinary collaborations
* Production of digital and physical engagement materials others can subsequently use

You can see [case studies of BES members’ public engagement projects](https://www.britishecologicalsociety.org/learning-and-resources/engaging-the-public/funding/) on the BES website.

**Eligibility**Submissions contravening any single criterion below will be rejected upon receipt.

* **BES Member:** Only BES members are eligible to apply (if you are submitting as part of a team, the submission must be led by the BES member)
* **Ecologist:** One or more ecologists must be involved in leading the project. This can include current or past students, researchers, practitioners etc.
* **Individual and team projects:** Projects can be supported that are led either by an individual or as a team
* **Professional:** We are unable to accept applications from individuals who are in paid employment in an engagement role, or if engagement is a primary responsibility of your paid role.
* **New to Engagement:** You must have less than five years experience in delivering public engagement and science communication activities
* **Public communication focus:** The project must focus explicitly on the communication of ecological science and practice to public audiences. Applications will not be accepted in support of activities purely focused in formal education (e.g. classroom) activities, or for academic or closed meetings, or training events or workshops that do not have public engagement and/or science communication at their core.
* **Clearly defined project:** It must be clear what component of the project you led, and made clear what surrounding activity was not led by yourself (e.g. if you are contributing one talk in a series organised by others).
* **Recent activity:** For our 2021 awards, projects must have been delivered during since March 1st 2020 to coincide with the period of the covid-19 pandemic
* **Past awardees:** Applications cannot be accepted from individuals who have successfully been awarded a BES Public Engagement Award within the last 12 months.
* **Apolitical:** Projects cannot have a political affiliation or a political agenda.

**Application process and assessment criteria**  
Application forms are available to download from the [BES Public Engagement and Science Communication Awards webpage](https://www.britishecologicalsociety.org/learning-and-resources/engaging-the-public/awards/), and must be submitted via email to [chrisj@britishecologicalsociety.org](mailto:chrisj@britishecologicalsociety.org).

Applications will be assessed based on the following criteria:

* **Eligibility** as outlined in the sections above
* ***Audience:*** How well-defined target audiences are, and how well the methods for reaching and communicating with those audiences occurred.
* ***Evaluation:*** rigour of evaluation methods and presentation of outcomes/impacts of the project, and learning outcomes for the organisers.
* ***Impact:*** How well defined the impact aims and objectives of the project were, and how these were achieved.
* ***Quality:*** The overall quality of the product. Consider innovation?
* ***Equality Diversity and Inclusion:*** Efforts to ensure accessibility of participation for both public audiences and organisers / volunteers will also be considered across all of the above where relevant to the project.
* **Clarity of submission form**: clear details and language

The Awards might also be assessed in relation to their ability to support one or more of the Society’s [BES Public Engagement Strategy](https://www.britishecologicalsociety.org/learning-and-resources/engaging-the-public/bes-public-engagement-strategy/) outlines our aims and principles for communicating the importance and excitement of ecology with public audiences:

“We will engage diverse public audiences with ecological science and careers”

* **Messaging:** We will communicate the excitement and relevance of ecological science to fascinate, enthuse, and through education and awareness empower public audiences
* **Target audiences:** We will engage a wide range of audiences, but focus our activities on reaching our priority public groups
* **Accessibility:** We will provide opportunities for 'lifelong learning' through content and experiences that are inclusive and accessible to all
* **Platforms:** We will use a diverse range of platforms to best reach and engage with our public audiences in innovative, creative and impactful ways

The BES Public Engagement Working Group has been established to guide the development and implementation of the Society’s public engagement strategy and programme, and manages submissions to the Awards.

All efforts will be made to provide an initial decision within 4 weeks, but that this is dependent on the number of applications received at any one time.

**Announcement and Obligations of the Award**Awardees will have their awards announced openly to coincide with the BES Annual Meeting held each year in December. Awardees must not share their award openly until the BES has announced the awards openly.

Upon acceptance of your Award, awardees must provide a quotation of acceptance to writing to the BES, text and images of the project to enable a report on the BES website and potential use in BES communications such as Newsletters, social media, and *The Niche* magazine.

When acknowledging your Award (e.g. webpages, social media etc.), appropriate credits must be given to the BES in reference to the ‘British Ecological Society Public Engagement and Science Communication Award’ and use of a BES logo where appropriate.

**Award Payment process**Upon final notification that you have won an Award, awardees will be sent a Payment Form for completion. Payments will be made by BACS transfer only, therefore successful applicants will be asked to submit their bank account details to enable processing of payments. The transfer of funds upon returning of the Payment Form to BES staff may take up to one month.

Notifications on the latest BES public engagement opportunities can be found on the [BES Public Engagement and Science Communication Awards webpage](https://www.britishecologicalsociety.org/learning-and-resources/engaging-the-public/awards/), the [BES Newsletter](https://www.britishecologicalsociety.org/news-and-opinion/sign-up-for-our-newsletter/), [BES Public Engagement Newsletter](https://www.britishecologicalsociety.org/learning-and-resources/engaging-the-public/public-engagement-newsletter/), and BES [Twitter](https://twitter.com/BritishEcolSoc) and [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/BritishEcolSoc).

**Only members of the British Ecological Society (BES) are eligible for the Awards. Application forms are available online, and must be submitted via email to** [**chrisj@britishecologicalsociety.org**](mailto:chrisj@britishecologicalsociety.org)

**Version 1.1 September 2021**