

RIBA President's Award for Research – Outstanding PhD Thesis

Terms of Reference and Eligibility

This annual award will be given to the successful PhD candidate whose thesis is considered to make an outstanding contribution to architectural knowledge and understanding. Work in any area of architecture carried out in any school of architecture in the UK or overseas, in which the department has a course validated by the RIBA, will be eligible. Architectural design research is also eligible.

- Non-RIBA members are eligible for this award.
- Non UK Nationals are eligible where the PhD was completed in a department which has a course validated by the RIBA.
- There are no limits on entries per School.
- Candidates are allowed one submission per year per award.
- If no candidate satisfies the criteria, the award will not be given.

Judging Criteria

Contribution to Architecture: All submissions are assessed in terms of the degree to which they contribute new knowledge and understanding to architecture.

This contribution will be considered in terms of:

- **Originality:** the degree to which the research produces new insights and innovations in architecture.
- **Significance:** the degree to which the research has influenced, or has the potential to influence, knowledge and understanding in architecture.
- **Rigour:** the intellectual precision and/or systematic method and/or integrity embodied in the research.
- **Communication:** the degree to which the work communicates clearly through written, visual and spatial language, and where appropriate, engages audiences beyond specialists in the field.

Submission and Nominations

Nominations should be made within two years of the PhD submission, or within one year of the award of the degree. Theses may also be nominated by PhD Supervisors or Heads of School. Work can only be submitted once. **All documents must be submitted in the English language.**

The following material must be provided for a full submission:

1. **Application Form** (pro forma supplied): The researcher will need to complete an Application Form providing key contact information and details of any publications derived from the research.
2. **Full Documentation of the Research:** All submissions should include full documentation of the research in the form of the doctoral thesis (in hard or electronic form). Only shortlisted submissions will be considered in full.

3. **1000-word Statement:** This will be used to shortlist submissions and should summarise the research and describe how it contributes new knowledge and understanding to architecture (in terms of originality, significance and rigour). The statement should address the following:

- i. **Research Questions:** describe the questions which the research sets out to address, explore and/ or answer, and how these are original.
- ii. **Research Aims and Objectives:** describe what the research seeks to achieve in terms of the pursuit of new knowledge and understanding.
- iii. **Research Context:** describe the research context, and how the research has extended, developed and/ or innovated knowledge and understanding within this context (this may be within or across disciplinary boundaries).
- iv. **Research Methods and Processes:** describe the research methods and processes adopted, and how these address issues of originality and rigour – for example through innovation, critique and attention to detail.
- v. **Dissemination:** describe the form(s) in which the research has been disseminated, and define its significance in terms of impact (including, where relevant, evidence such as reviews, awards and critical acclaim).

4. **CV (no more than two sides of A4):** This will be used to shortlist submissions and should include qualifications, career history, major achievements and a list of publications. All projects/publications derived from the research submitted should be marked with an asterisk* in the CV.

5. **Supporting Statements:** These will be used to shortlist submissions and should not be written by the researcher or the supervisor, but by referees, who may be the external examiners. The Supporting Statement should describe the research submitted in relation to the judging criteria (originality, significance, rigour and communication). Two Supporting Statements must be included. Electronic copies will be accepted but must be sent by the Statement's author.

Judgement and Announcements

Submissions to the award will be assessed by a Judging Panel established by the RIBA Research & Development Committee.

Entries must be submitted by **Monday 15 June 2009, 5pm** to be considered over the Summer. The presentation of the Awards will be made at the ceremony for the RIBA President's Medals. Reasonable travel expenses within the UK to the event will be reimbursed for the award winner and a companion.

Programme for 2009

Call for submissions	February 2009
Submission deadline	Monday 15 June 2009, 5pm
Phase 1 judging - short listing	Wednesday 8 July 2009
Notification of short listed entries	Late July 2008
Phase 2 judging - final	Thursday 8/15 October 2009
Notification of winners	November 2009
Award ceremony	Wednesday 2 December 2009

The Award

The Award will be a certificate and a citation from the President. There will also be the opportunity to feature the research in the RIBA Journal and on the RIBA website.

Winners have the right to refer to the award in publicity and PR material etc. (e.g. on headed paper “Winner of the RIBA President’s Award for Research – Outstanding PhD Thesis, 2009”)

The Judges may award commendations to one or more other shortlisted submissions.

There is no entry fee and no money prize.

Conditions

Submission of an application for the award constitutes the applicant’s agreement to permit the RIBA to publish all or part of the thesis abstract, including the identity and contact information of the project leader(s). The intent is to disseminate information about ongoing and recent research as widely as possible in the architectural community and beyond.

With the exception of final research outputs (thesis/books/portfolios) the documents submitted will not be returned.

Past Winners

2006 – Rajat Gupta of Oxford Brookes University for his PhD, entitled *Investigating the potential for local carbon dioxide reductions: developing a Geographic Information System - based domestic energy, carbon counting and carbon reduction model.*

2007 – Matthew Barac of the University of Cambridge for his PhD, entitled *From Township to Town: Urban Change in Victoria Mxenge TT Informal Settlement, Cape Town, South Africa.*

2008 – Marcos Cruz of the Bartlett School of Architecture, UCL, for his PhD entitled *The Inhabitable Flesh of Architecture.*