

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, including architectural design research, carried out in any RIBA-validated school of architecture in the UK or overseas, submitted in English, will be eligible.

- Non-RIBA members are eligible for this award.
- Non UK Nationals are eligible where the PhD was completed at one of the RIBA-validated Schools of Architecture.
- 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.

Judges will also take into account 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 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. **Submission Form** (pro forma supplied): The researcher will need to complete a Submission Form providing key information and 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 (paper-based and as a PDF). 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 (1 double-sided A4 sheet):** 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 Statement(s) (1 double-sided A4 sheet each):** These will be used to shortlist submissions and should not be written by the applicant, but by referees, who may be the external examiners. The Supporting Statement should describe the research submitted in relation to the judging criteria. Up to two Supporting Statements may be included. Electronic copies will be accepted but must be followed by a signed hardcopy.

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 16 June 2008 to be considered over the Summer. Winners will be awarded at a ceremony celebrating Research and Education Awards in April/May 2009 at the RIBA. Reasonable travel expenses within the UK to the event will be reimbursed for the award winner and a companion.

Programme for 2008

Call for submissions	March 2008
Submission deadline	Monday 16 June 2008
Phase 1 judging - short listing	Thursday 10 July 2008
Notification of short listed entries	Late July 2008
Phase 2 judging - final	Thursday 9 October 2008
Notification of winners	November 2008
Award ceremony	April/May 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, 2008”)

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 – Dr. 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.*