ELTONS 2020
GUIDANCE NOTES FOR APPLICANTS

The ELTons awards

Now in their eighteenth year, the British Council’s ELTons awards for innovation in English language education celebrate the most original courses, publications, projects, apps and platforms, and more, which are finding new ways to help English language learners and teachers around the world achieve their goals. The awards also recognise the organisations, teams and individuals whose original approaches are helping to shape the future of English language teaching and learning.

In 2019, an impressive field of 150 entries came from Europe, Asia, Africa and the Americas, spanning the different needs of English language learners at every age, in diverse contexts. The British Council is committed to making sure the ELTons Innovation Awards are inclusive and reflect the broad diversity of English language education around the world. We welcome and encourage applications from all backgrounds.

To mark the 18th anniversary, we are pleased to introduce the ELTons Judges’ Commendation for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI). This is a special commendation for finalists which promote proactive and positive approaches to equality, diversity and inclusion in English language teaching, learning and assessment.

The commendation aims to celebrate the courses, books, apps, resources and projects which:

- Bridge educational inequality
- Reflect diversity
- Promote inclusion of certain, typically underrepresented groups

The commendation is intended to encourage improving access to high quality English language teaching for all, and specifically for those who may not typically get access.

This is a special commendation from the ELTons’ judges. It is not a separate award category but is an additional commendation given to the finalists of the awards. You can identify if you would like your submission to also be considered for entry for the commendation in the application form.
Guidance for applicants

This document contains important information for applicants to the ELTons Awards for Innovation in English Language Teaching for 2020: the judging process, criteria, eligibility, the application process (from submission to nomination), a timeline of key dates and details of the ELTons Awards categories.

Please read this document carefully in conjunction with the Frequently Asked Questions document (FAQs) when completing your application.

If you also wish to enter your application for the ELTons Judges’ Commendation for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) please read the guidance on the British Council’s approach to EDI (Equality, Diversity and Inclusion).

Applications procedure

The ELTons Awards scheme is advertised and details of the application process, and other procedures, made available on the ELTons website.

Entries are made via an application form which collects details of the application and invites applicants to explain their product or service, how it is innovative and how it fits the criteria for the award.

Applications that progress to Round 2 of the judging process will also be asked to provide materials and access to digital media (if applicable) in support of their application. The ELTons awards are judged based on the information and sample materials provided by the applicants.

Applications will be scrutinised to check their eligibility for the ELTons awards.

Judging process

The ELTons are judged by an independent panel of English language teaching professionals, using the Delphi Technique.

The Delphi Technique is a method for structuring a group communication process so that the process is effective in allowing a group of individuals, as a whole, to deal with a complex problem. In the case of the ELTons, the judging process is administered by a facilitator. Comments, discussions and votes of the judges are kept confidential and, where indicated in the procedures, are kept anonymous. This is to ensure the integrity of the process. This means working remotely and anonymously to arrive at a consensus on the short-listed and then winning entries.

Innovative and functional

The main qualities that we look for in applications to the ELTons are innovation and functionality. The judges, experts from across the field, use their professional judgement to look for these qualities in the entries.

The winners should be those that best demonstrate something new (such as a new approach or use of a new technology) and are different in some way from existing products and services in the market-place.
And the material or products should also appear workable and useful to the audience they are intended for. Winners must be something that teachers and learners can use, or that learners can learn from, or that will benefit the process of learning and teaching English as a foreign, second or other language. Price is not a consideration for the awards.

Three rounds of judging

The first round of judging is based solely on the written application form, so it is essential that you use the supporting statement to describe clearly and concisely (in no more than 500 words) exactly how your product is innovative and functional.

In the second round the judges are provided with the materials, or access to the materials, supplied for the judging process by the applicants. The judges are asked to comment individually on these. These comments are circulated anonymously. Judges are then asked to nominate the entries they think should be included in a shortlist of about six.

In the third round judges are asked to comment briefly for the final time on the shortlisted items, drawing attention particularly to the qualities of each entry which meet the award criteria. Again, these comments are circulated anonymously. Judges are then asked to identify the entries that they think best merit the award.

If a clear winner does not emerge from the process of the Third Round, a Fourth Round is held.

Eligibility

Products or services must have been completed no earlier than 2 years before the application closing date.

Products entered in the ELTons 2019 must have been completed on or after Friday 8 November 2017.

Products cannot be entered if they have been developed in partnership with the British Council or have had significant involvement from a British Council employee. If you are unsure if this effects your entry please contact ELTons@britishcouncil.org before submitting.

Organisations can submit multiple entries to the awards and to the award categories, including from overseas offices. (Previous applicants please note this extends the number of submissions allowed per organisation for the ELTons 2020.)

Products can only be submitted to one category.

New for ELTons 2020

All applicants can identify if they would also like their entry to be considered for a new commendation: the ELTons Judges’ Commendation for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI). This can be indicated in a section and additional narrative box in the application form. (Please find further information about the new commendation at the end of this document.)
Products can only be submitted to the awards once; they cannot be re-submitted in subsequent years. If a product has been changed significantly since a previous submission it may be considered. Please contact ELTons@britishcouncil.org with details of the changes before submitting.

You cannot resubmit a volume in a series if a volume has already been submitted in previous years. This is especially relevant for the Excellence in Course Innovation award. For example, you cannot enter level one of a course one year and then the whole course, or another level the following year.

The application process – from submission to nomination

The deadline for submission of applications is Friday 8 November 2019.

All applications should be submitted electronically as a word file or PDF to ELTons@britishcouncil.org.

To complete your application you must send one copy of the completed product to the British Council ELTons team, to be received on or before Monday 11 November 2019.

Print materials and other physical samples should be sent to the British Council Manchester office, via post with reference to “ELTons 2020” on the packaging:

Address: Nasia Nikolova, ELTons 2020
English and Exams, British Council
58 Whitworth Street, Manchester, M1 6BB, UK

If you are submitting your product sample digitally, this should be sent via email to ELTons@britishcouncil.org

Relevant URLs/download links should be sent in a separate document with clear instructions on how to assess the product, including any access codes. Access should incur no cost to the ELTons team or judges.

If you are submitting a project or service where none of the above media types can serve as a product sample, a video or presentation may be accepted in lieu. Please consult with the ELTons team at ELTons@britishcouncil.org before making a submission.

Please use the application form, to provide the names of all parties to be credited for the innovation, as you wish them to appear for awards purposes, including, as applicable: the main organisation(s) or sole trader(s) responsible, partner organisations(s) or individuals(s), nominated persons/team members and/or editors or authors. This information will be used for communications and marketing purposes related to the awards.

Please note, if your application reaches round two of judging (from January 2020), you will be required to send several further copies of your product for judging purposes.

Should your application reach the shortlisting stage and become a finalist of the ELTons Awards (March 2020) you will be required to send a promotional video, no longer than 30 seconds in length, to be used at the ELTons Awards ceremony (and potentially for other promotional purposes).

Following notification of nominations, those named on the application form as responsible for the innovation will receive invitations to attend the ELTons Awards ceremony, to take place in the UK (Central London) in May – June 2020. Please ensure to provide a contact email address for each individual for this purpose.

Please note, judges are not able to provide feedback.
Key dates for the ELTons 2020

**Friday 8 November 2019**
Deadline for completed application forms to be sent electronically (Word or PDF) to ELTons@britishcouncil.org

**Monday 11 November 2019**
Deadline for one copy of the completed product to be received. Via post at the British Council Manchester office:

Nasia Nikolova, ELTons 2020
English and Exams, British Council
58 Whitworth Street, Manchester, M1 6BB, UK

And/ or digitally as applicable to ELTons@britishcouncil.org

**November to December 2019**
Judging: Round One

**Mid to late December 2019**
Applicants will be notified if they have reached round two of judging

Please note, if you reach this stage several further copies of your product will be required for judging purposes.

**Tuesday 2 January to Tuesday 16 January 2020**
Further copies of your product to be received via post at the British Council Manchester office (using the postal address above) – for judging purposes.

**January to March 2020**
Judging: Round Two

**March 2020**
Shortlist announced and applicants notified of their nomination to the ELTons 2020.

Please note, if you reach this stage, a 30 second promotional video will be requested from you, for use at the ELTons Awards ceremony.

**May – June 2020**
ELTons 2020 Awards Ceremony, Central London

All nominated entries will receive two invitations to the highly anticipated ELTons Awards Ceremony. Winners will be invited to the stage to give their short (1 minute) acceptance remarks. Finalists who are unable to attend can send a representative.

ELTons award categories

The British Council reserves the right to change the category of the submission where award administrators deem appropriate. You will be advised of any changes.

Please note, the examples accompanying the descriptors below are not intended to be exhaustive.

Excellence in course innovation

This award recognises innovation in the complete course packages which publishers produce for EFL or ESL learners of any age. Typically applications in this category will possess some or all of these features:
• Textbooks and teachers books.
• Supplementary or practice materials.
• CD or DVD listening and other support materials.
• Website support.
• Multi-level materials.

Innovation in learner resources

This award recognises innovation in any product or service across any media intended for learners. It is not intended that complete course packages will be included in this category rather it might include products and services such as:

• Supplementary materials (extended reading materials, vocabulary or grammar support, etc.)
• Specialist materials (products and services for specialist groups such as beauty therapists, engineers, etc.)
• Services or activities designed to improve learners’ English.
• Individual skills support (products and services intended to develop reading or writing skills, or fluency, etc.)
• Works of reference intended for learners (such as dictionaries etc.)

Innovation in teacher resources

This award recognises innovation in product or service aimed at developing and supporting EFL and ESL teachers and might include:

• Training courses and materials intended specifically for teachers.
• Works of reference intended for teachers (such as reference grammars etc.)
• Education or development services or materials (intended to promote in-service development or enhanced knowledge or skills).
• Materials banks (websites containing downloadable activities etc.)

Digital innovation

This award recognises the innovative use of technology. This can be for learners or teachers of English. It might include:

• Products and services which use a new technology for EFL and ESL teaching or teacher support.
• Products or services which make new use of existing technology.

Local innovation

This award is intended to recognise innovation in creating learner or teacher solutions to meet a specific local need. It recognises and rewards the use of initiative and resource in restricted, trying or limited circumstances beyond the writers’ control, and which can make a significant contribution to overcoming
these difficulties. It is for innovation within a specific local context and which are developed at a local, national or regional level. Examples might include:

- Development of local networks intended to promote teacher or learner development.
- Development of localised materials or syllabuses.
- Use of specialist materials or techniques to overcome local difficulties such as a shortage of specialist English language teachers.
- Innovative use of technologies to overcome geographical problems in keeping teachers and learners in contact with each other, and with support agencies.

* In addition to the five main award categories, applicants can choose to also submit their entries for The ELTons Judges’ Commendation for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI), new for the ELTons 2020. It is not a separate award category but is an additional, special commendation given out to the finalists of the awards.

The ELTons Judges’ Commendation for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)

The ELTons Judges’ Commendation for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) is intended to recognise high-quality resources, products or services for English language teaching, learning or assessment which improve access or promotes inclusion for all, and which also meets the needs of certain, typically underrepresented or underserved audiences.

This is a special commendation from the ELTons’ judges. It is not a separate award category but is an additional commendation given to the finalists of the awards.

Criteria

Entries must:

- Be selected as a finalist of the ELTons Awards and therefore deemed to meet the ELTons’ primary criteria: innovative and functional.
- Show how decisions to integrate equality, diversity and inclusion have been positively and proactively considered, planned and acted on at key stages in the development of the resource, product or service.
- Aim to improve access for or promote inclusion of certain, typically underrepresented or underserved audiences. (Audiences may represent six main (but not exclusive) equality areas: age, disability, ethnicity/race, gender, religion or belief and sexual identity, and/or additional areas, including socio-economic background, linguistic diversity, and/or urban/rural realities. Resources may also address issues which cut across equality areas.)
- Have a rationale that shows the capacity to make a demonstrable impact on specific groups – testimonials from specific groups can help this.

Examples might include:

- A project aimed at improving English language and digital skills in girls’ education, in a context where girls are often excluded or likely to drop out from school.
• A flexible blended learning course for English language education aimed at schools in primarily non-urban, disadvantaged communities and/or involving hard-to-reach learners.
• Online courses or resources which go beyond standard accessibility requirements and which have included disabled people in planning and development.
• Innovative approaches to promoting linguistic diversity in an English language teaching setting.
• Development of materials, resources or an approach that promotes social or emotional wellbeing and learning in English language education settings.

It is recommended that applicants who wish to enter their product for the commendation first read the guidance on the British Council’s approach to EDI (Equality, Diversity and Inclusion).