

# THE AWARDS 2020

## Outstanding Contribution to the Local Community

<b>Institution name</b>	Staffordshire University
<b>Submission title or project name</b>	Get Talking Hardship
<b>Nominee/key personnel</b>	Nic Gratton, Lead for Civic Engagement and Evaluation
<b>URL</b>	<a href="http://blogs.staffs.ac.uk/connections/2019/07/10/get-talking-hardship/">http://blogs.staffs.ac.uk/connections/2019/07/10/get-talking-hardship/</a>
<b>Submission</b>	<p>More than 40 community researchers – trained and supported by Staffordshire University – set out to investigate the lived experiences of the people behind Stoke-on-Trent’s poverty statistics.</p> <p>The Get Talking Hardship project, commissioned by the Hardship Commission, was the first qualitative research carried out to look specifically at the issues of hardship and poverty and has proved an effective way of raising awareness and bringing civic engagement to the fore.</p> <p>This inclusive research approach had a significant impact on local people and organisational cultures – helping to build rapport between community researchers and participants, enabling open and honest conversation and building empathy for those in hardship.</p> <p>Members of the community research team now sit on the Hardship Commission’s steering group and have also informed the development of the university's Civic University Agreement, changing the way our university builds relationships with a range of community partners.</p>