



Awards 2025

Outstanding Marketing/Communications Team of the Year

Institution Name	Loughborough University
Submission title or project name	Don't Mention It
Nominee / key personnel	Dane Vincent; Dan Trussell; Amy West; Rachel MacKenzie; Lynsey Heap; Abbie Ryan
URL	https://www.lboro.ac.uk/sport/athletes-global-stage/
Submission	Imagine legally not being able to mention the major event you're covering. This is what Loughborough University faced during the 2024 Olympics and Paralympics. Oops! We shouldn't have said "O*****s". Reminder: Don't Mention It. About 120 Loughborough-linked athletes, coaches and practitioners competed in France. We launched an eight-week campaign to amplify our involvement – without using protected terms. Led entirely by our in-house team, we created a microsite with athlete stories, real-time updates and academic insights. Social media engagement soared, driven by alternative phrasing, athlete content and standout videos such as Daniel Wiffen's "Day in the Life" (518,000-plus views). Despite legal limits, the campaign delivered: • 159,000-plus social media engagements • 1.2 million video views • 89,800 microsite visits • 772 media hits, reaching 1.3 billion users and £5.4 million in media value. We turned restrictions into creativity – proving Loughborough's place as a global leader in sport, research and innovative communications.



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Institution Name	University of Wolverhampton
Submission title or project name	University of Wolverhampton: transforming perceptions, inspiring futures
Nominee / key personnel	Rebecca Giddings (deputy director brand and marketing)
URL	https://www.wlv.ac.uk/alumni/every-story-has-a-start/ https://www.wlv.ac.uk/alumni/every-story-has-a-start/nate-ethan-watson/
Submission	The University of Wolverhampton's marketing and communications team delivered a transformative 2023-24, demonstrably reshaping public perception, driving engagement and exceeding challenging recruitment targets. Our flagship "Every Story Has a Start" campaign addressed the historical under-promotion of our diverse alumni by highlighting their incredible achievements – which include an Oscar-winning special effects maestro, a <i>New York Times</i>-best-selling author and a UN climate change adviser. Building on this, <i>Could it be?</i> is a poignant spoken-word video created in collaboration with alumnus and local trans rapper Nate Ethan Watson, who shared his story of resilience and transformation. Launched before clearing, it appealed directly to Gen Z's demand for diversity, equity and inclusion, proving our commitment to creating opportunity and transforming futures. It led to tangible, quantifiable results, including a 6 per cent uplift in conversion campaign, a 4.3 per cent saving in campaign spend, a 10 per cent increase in enquirer communications open rate, and more.



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Institution Name	Edinburgh Napier University
Submission title or project name	#NapierNames to national acclaim: redefining the Edinburgh Napier brand
Nominee / key personnel	Edinburgh Napier University's communications team, creative team and marketing team
URL	https://www.napier.ac.uk/about-us/must-be-napier
Submission	In 2023-24, Edinburgh Napier University launched its first brand campaign, marking the culmination of a strategic transformation that began in 2019. With a new leadership structure and a clear brand value proposition – “Home of difference makers” – Edinburgh Napier’s marketing and communications teams gained influence across the university. Innovative campaigns such as #NapierNames and the rebranding of a local pub for graduations showcased creativity and in-house design strength. A consistent visual identity was established across all platforms. In 2023, Edinburgh Napier partnered with Creature London to launch the “Must Be Napier” campaign, spotlighting student and staff success. The campaign significantly boosted brand perception, application consideration and search traffic – outperforming even the University of Edinburgh – and won the 2024 Drum Award for Brand Campaign of the Year. These achievements reflect the team’s pivotal role in redefining Edinburgh Napier’s image and positioning it as Scotland’s top modern university.



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Outstanding Marketing/Communications Team of the Year

Institution Name	University of Birmingham
Submission title or project name	
Nominee / key personnel	
URL	
Submission	In support of the University of Birmingham's ambition to become a global top 50 institution, our marketing and communications team launched a bold new brand identity in September 2023, in partnership with agency Mammoth. Grounded in insights from more than 1,000 stakeholders and guided by our brand philosophy, "Activate with Intent," the brand expresses who we are, aligns with our values and unites our community. With more than 100 brand ambassadors, we achieved full adoption university-wide. Key outcomes include an 8 per cent rise in undergraduate applications, a 28 per cent increase in PGT applications, and a record 36 per cent undergraduate conversion rate. Our "Now is the Time" and "Changing How the World Works" campaigns generated millions of views and impressions, while our "Built in Birmingham" campaign boosted web traffic by 1,300 per cent. Pride surged across social media and student surveys, and we rose eight places in the <i>THE</i> World University Rankings.



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Institution Name	University of Southampton
Submission title or project name	Redefining student communications through insight and co-design
Nominee / key personnel	The student communications team at the University of Southampton
URL	
Submission	At the University of Southampton, the student communications team has redefined how the university engages with students – placing co-design, insight and feedback at the heart of every campaign. Rather than communicating to students, the team works with them to create clear, inclusive and empowering campaigns across the entire student journey. From a redesigned welcome campaign that boosted digital engagement by 101 per cent to a centralised exams and assessment strategy that significantly reduced student queries, every initiative is shaped by what students say they need. This student-led approach underpins all communications activity, ensuring that campaigns reflect real student priorities and experiences. By embedding insight into decision-making, the team has created messaging that is timely, trusted and effective. The result is a student communications model that is strategic, inclusive and sector-leading – making students not just the audience, but active partners in their university experience.



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Institution Name	University of Hertfordshire
Submission title or project name	Powering your tomorrow: transforming perception through the Festival of Ideas
Nominee / key personnel	Karen Chater
URL	https://www.herts.ac.uk/ideas
Submission	In 2023, the University of Hertfordshire's marketing and communications team launched The Festival of Ideas – our first large-scale public event – to address low awareness of our research, enterprise and academic excellence. Designed to connect with key influencers such as families, teachers and local businesses, the free two-day festival welcomed 4,654 attendees, far surpassing our target of 3,000 visitors. We delivered more than 150 inclusive, interactive sessions, developed collaboratively across all departments. Despite no existing public database, our multi-channel campaign reached one in 10 of our target audience, with 4.6 million paid digital impressions and a 253 per cent boost in LinkedIn engagement. Results were outstanding: • 98% of attendees said the event had improved their perception of the university • 94% said it had met or exceeded expectations. The Festival of Ideas reshaped public perception, forged new partnerships and positioned Herts as a modern, dynamic institution – delivering long-term brand impact far beyond the event itself.