



Awards 2025

International Collaboration of the Year

Institution Name	University of Warwick
Submission title or project name	Marco Polo International Programme
Nominee / key personnel	Professor Michael Scott (pro vice-chancellor (international), University of Warwick)
URL	https://warwick.ac.uk/about/campus/venice/mpip/ https://vimeo.com/1039592391 https://vimeo.com/998194279/ba6690a22a
Submission	To mark the 700th anniversary of Marco Polo's death, the University of Warwick led the Marco Polo International Programme – a major global collaboration involving 36 partner institutions. The initiative celebrated intercultural exchange through research, education and public engagement, reinforcing Warwick's leadership in international collaboration. Highlights included the restoration of a lost 14th-century Silk Road manuscript with Ca' Foscari University of Venice, global conferences with Shanghai Jiao Tong University, and digitisation of Ibn Battuta's travel writings with Nanyang Technological University, Singapore. Warwick also launched an interactive AI model of Marco Polo for schools and the public, and brought together 300-plus students from 15 countries in hybrid symposia across Warwick, Venice and Singapore. The programme fostered new global academic networks, student partnerships and digital tools for learning and discovery.



Awards 2025

International Collaboration of the Year

Institution Name	Loughborough University
Submission title or project name	AFTRAK: where green energy meets agriculture
Nominee / key personnel	
URL	https://www.lboro.ac.uk/research/aftrak/
Submission	Aftrak, a techno-economic initiative to empower smallholder farmers across Africa, is an international collaboration between Loughborough University, the Consortium for Battery Innovation (CBI) and the Malawian-UK NGO Tiyei. It combines an innovative agricultural technique (deep bed farming), solar microgrids and bespoke tractors to provide rural communities with sustainable electricity while increasing crop yields, food security and income. A commitment to shared goals and a combined wealth of expertise ensured that the Aftrak team overcame the many challenges encountered, among them the development of heat-resilient battery technologies, customs hold-ups and subsequent delays to field trials, and meeting the needs of Malawian farmers in a culturally appropriate way. Aftrak has received numerous accolades – including the \$1 million (£730,000) Milken-Motsepe Prize in Green Energy – and launched as a spin-out company in 2024 to cement the successful collaboration and accelerate active deployment of its revolutionary technology.



Awards 2025

International Collaboration of the Year

Institution Name	University of Birmingham
Submission title or project name	English-Ukrainian legal dictionary: University of Birmingham, in collaboration with Ivan Franko National University of Lviv and the Constitutional Court of Ukraine
Nominee / key personnel	
URL	
Submission	In response to Russia's invasion of Ukraine, the University of Birmingham, the Ivan Franko National University of Lviv and the Constitutional Court of Ukraine formed a groundbreaking partnership to support Ukraine's legal sovereignty. Together, we have developed an English-Ukrainian legal dictionary, a vital tool providing precise legal definitions contextualised with examples from cases at the Constitutional Court of Ukraine and the UK Supreme Court. Despite the challenges of war, the project thrived through funding from UK Research and Innovation, student involvement and high-level engagement, including a delegation to Lviv, a showcase event in Birmingham and a presentation to Supreme Court justices. The initiative is part of our wider "Identity, Sovereignty and Resilience" research programme, which includes academic exchanges and capacity-building workshops. The dictionary has been celebrated by legal institutions in both countries and will help to align Ukraine's legal system with NATO and European Union standards. Our collaboration exemplifies values-driven research, international solidarity and the power of academic partnerships in times of crisis.



Awards 2025

International Collaboration of the Year

Institution Name	University of Leicester
Submission title or project name	Global Empathy in Healthcare Network (GEHN) – transforming healthcare through global empathy
Nominee / key personnel	Professor Jeremy Howick
URL	https://www.global-empathy-in-healthcare.com/
Submission	The Global Empathy in Healthcare Network, founded at the University of Leicester, is reshaping medical care by placing empathy at its heart. This pioneering international collaboration spans eight countries across six continents, bringing together leading academic institutions, healthcare professionals, researchers and patient advocates in a unified mission to humanise healthcare delivery. In just three years, the network has achieved remarkable impact – establishing empathy centres in Brazil, Nigeria, Japan and India; publishing the world's first global framework for empathy in healthcare; and launching the inaugural Empathy in Healthcare Day to drive global awareness. By integrating culturally sensitive, empathy-driven approaches into medical education and clinical practice, this initiative is bridging the gap between technological advancement and human connection. With more than a third of UK healthcare practitioners trained internationally, its global perspective is fostering compassionate, inclusive care for increasingly diverse communities worldwide.



Awards 2025

International Collaboration of the Year

Institution Name	The Open University
Submission title or project name	SAGE (Supporting Adolescent Girls' Education), Zimbabwe
Nominee / key personnel	Dr Alison Buckler
URL	
Submission	Globally, 251 million children do not attend school. Non-formal education pathways can significantly improve children's learning opportunities. The challenge is evidencing this for policymakers to change the status quo. A collaboration in Zimbabwe involving the Open University (OU) and Plan International has done precisely this. The UK-aid funded SAGE programme (Supporting Adolescent Girls' Education) combines pioneering OU-led research and pedagogical expertise with the deep local knowledge and the national-level reach of NGO partners to design, implement and evidence a highly successful community-based, non-formal education pathway for Zimbabwe's most marginalised girls. In 2023-24, SAGE led a strategic national campaign to shift the education dial. The unique combination of partners enabled the curation and mediation of a case for non-formal education. SAGE was subsequently commissioned by the Education Ministry to lead a national consultation on non-formal education and is being positioned as a blueprint for national expansion of non-formal education for Zimbabwe's 1.2 million out-of-school children.



Awards 2025

International Collaboration of the Year

Institution Name	University of Exeter
Submission title or project name	Global Tipping Points
Nominee / key personnel	
URL	
Submission	The University of Exeter led an international collaboration to produce the first <i>Global Tipping Points Report (GTPR)</i>, published in December 2023 at the COP28 climate change conference in Dubai. Backed by the Bezos Earth Fund, the report assessed the dangers of negative Earth system tipping points and the transformative potential of positive tipping points. The effort brought together over 200 researchers from more than 90 institutions across 26 countries. The <i>GTPR</i> featured at high-profile events at COP28. Influential figures including King Charles III and John Kerry referenced tipping points in their speeches. More than 2,000 global leaders signed a call to action that highlighted tipping points. Nearly 800 media articles mentioned the <i>GTPR</i>. This groundbreaking project was possible only through robust international collaboration. The team is now preparing for the second Global Tipping Points Conference in Exeter in July 2025 and a second report, to be launched at COP30 in Brazil.