



# CSS STAR AWARDS



# COMMUNICATIONS PACK



## 2026 CSS STAR Awards

Nominate a colleague or team who goes above and beyond for our patients and each other.

Anyone can submit a nomination, either scan the QR code or access via the link below.

If you are not able to submit this way please contact [tanya.williams@mft.nhs.uk](mailto:tanya.williams@mft.nhs.uk) for support.

**Nominations will close at midnight on Sunday 26th April.**

CSS STAR  
AWARDS



Scan here to nominate



or

[Click the link for the form here](#)




# CSS STAR AWARDS



I was incredibly honoured to be named Educator of the Year. Supporting learners and helping develop the next generation of pharmacy staff is something I'm deeply passionate about, so receiving this recognition meant a great deal. It was uplifting to know that colleagues not only noticed the work I do but valued it enough to nominate me. The award has had a really positive impact on our team, shining a light on the importance of education and training across the organisation and giving us all a renewed sense of pride. I'd encourage anyone thinking about nominating a colleague this year to go for it, your recognition could make a huge difference to someone's confidence and motivation.

**Toni Downie, Pharmacy Training and Education Lead**  
**'Educator of the Year 2025'**





Clinical & Scientific Services  
Manchester University  
NHS Foundation Trust

# CATEGORIES

- Wellbeing and Respect in Action
- Promoting Diversity and Inclusion
- Going the Extra Mile
- Improvement, Innovation & Sustainability
- Inspiring Care and Kindness
- Non-clinical Team
- Educator / Learner of the Year
- Rising Star
- Lifetime/Outstanding Achievement

NOMINATIONS  
CLOSE  
26 APRIL 2026

SCAN  
ME



# EXAMPLE NOMINATION



I would like to nominate **Alice Shaw** for the CSS Star Awards in recognition of her compassionate leadership and unwavering commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion.

As Education Matron, Alice leads with clarity, courage and care. **She consistently supports the development of all staff, creating an inclusive environment where people feel valued, heard and encouraged to grow. She actively welcomes new ideas, draws on diverse perspectives and helps teams make thoughtful, informed decisions. Under her leadership, research awareness within the unit has significantly increased, with more staff presenting at conferences and engaging in development opportunities.** Alice is generous in recognising others' contributions and champions her team across multiple forums, fostering a strong sense of belonging.

Alice is highly approachable and deeply committed to her role. Staff seek her out knowing they will be met with understanding, encouragement and practical support. **One personal example is her support for my research idea. Alice listened, guided me through the process and helped secure MFT sponsorship and NHSE funding. With her encouragement, I completed the NIHR Early Career Researcher Development Programme and now serve as a lead research champion for CSS.**

Alice is a rare leader whose empathy, vision and integrity make a lasting difference. She is truly deserving of this recognition.

CSS STAR  
AWARDS



Who you're nominating

What they did

Why it mattered

Who it helped

What changed as a result?

## Shortlisting Criteria - 2026 CSS STAR Awards

Award Category	Criteria
Wellbeing and Respect in Action	<p>Awarded to an individual or team who shows consistent and innovative ways to promote @CSS_Civility and/or staff wellbeing in their team and across CSS.</p> <p>Some ideas include:</p> <p>improvements to patient care, promoting wellbeing initiatives, fostering a civil and supportive culture, or contributing to a psychologically safe environment. For inspiration, you might describe how the nominee has promoted health and wellbeing, implemented processes to encourage civility, or made a positive impact on the team's working environment.</p>
Clinical Team	<p>Awarded to a clinical team working together as one team delivering an efficient and high performing service with excellent outcomes for patients.</p> <p>Some ideas include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vision - demonstrating a shared vision and purpose, and understanding of how they contribute to the Trusts Vision</li> <li>• Teamwork - exhibiting a true team spirit where everyone matters, roles are understood, skills are effectively utilised and team members feel valued</li> <li>• Quality - working together effectively to champion and improve the quality and safety of patient care</li> </ul>
Improvement, Innovation and Sustainability	<p>Awarded to a team or individual whose ideas have improved the way we work; for example, generated a direct improvement to patient care using technology, improved the environmental impact of the way we work or developed an innovative approach to the work we do.</p> <p>Some ideas include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working together - to overcome difficulties; finding an innovative solution to a problem or identifying opportunities for change resulting in improvements to services for the benefit of patients and/or staff or the community</li> <li>• Used technology to improve the service we offer patients, service users or staff to ensure we are able to meet their needs</li> <li>• Reduced the environmental impact due to a change in products used or a change in how we deliver a service.</li> <li>• Been the 'go to' person for staff or patients who have struggled with technology and used their personality and enthusiasm to help others adopt digital processes</li> </ul>

Award Category	Criteria
Promoting Diversity and Inclusion	<p>Awarded to those who have actively advocated for colleagues and/or patients by celebrating difference and ensuring all voices are heard and valued.</p> <p>Some ideas include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Active promotion - How the individual has promoted equality and inclusion</li> <li>• Celebrating difference - how this is part of everything they do</li> <li>• Positive culture - fostering an open and honest culture where all individuals are able to contribute equally</li> <li>• Listening and action - how they listen to and value others' views and opinions and respond to the needs of diverse colleagues, patients, families, carers and communities and those with protected characteristics, and improve their journey, access or experience.</li> <li>• Listening and action - how they listen to and value others' views and opinions and respond to the needs of our diverse teams and those with protected characteristics, and improve their experience ensuring opportunities for those all staff</li> <li>• Speaking up - how has this person spoken up or made our services more welcome for people who's voices are under-represented?</li> <li>• How has the individual led or supported the delivery of a project or initiative which addresses health inequalities</li> </ul>
Going the Extra Mile	<p>Awarded to an individual who has made an excellent contribution by going the extra mile. This award is for people in all positions who truly go above and beyond in their daily duties.</p> <p>Some ideas include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Special qualities - what have they done, how have they done this and what has been the impact.</li> <li>• MFT Values - consistent demonstration of Everyone Matters, Working Together, Dignity and Care and Open and Honest.</li> <li>• Dedication - their commitment to providing a high-quality service</li> <li>• Unsung contribution - their special qualities and contribution not being recognised as much as they should.</li> </ul>
Inspiring Care and Kindness	<p>The Inspiring Care and Kindness Award recognises an individual or team member who leads with care and provides compassionate, consistent, and effective support that inspires others, regardless of their role or position.</p> <p>Some ideas include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inspiring and motivating – their ability to encourage and uplift colleagues to achieve shared goals.</li> <li>• Positive culture – creating a culture of care, compassion, civility, and collaboration within teams.</li> <li>• Inclusion – fostering an environment where everyone feels included, accepted, and valued.</li> <li>• Leadership qualities – demonstrating courage, passion, and integrity, and listening to and understanding the needs of others.</li> </ul>

Award Category	Criteria
Non-Clinical Team	<p data-bbox="404 221 1862 289">Awarded to a non-clinical team working together as one team delivering an efficient and high performing service with excellent outcomes for patients</p> <p data-bbox="404 335 645 363">Some ideas include:</p> <ul data-bbox="404 412 1907 594" style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="404 412 1770 440">• Vision - demonstrates a shared vision and purpose, and understands how they contribute to the Trusts Vision</li> <li data-bbox="404 448 1381 475">• Service - excellence in customer service that consistently exceeds expectations</li> <li data-bbox="404 483 1907 551">• Teamwork - exhibiting a true team spirit where everyone matters, roles are understood, skills are effectively utilised and team members feel valued</li> <li data-bbox="404 559 1340 586">• Quality - dedication to quality improvements and efficiency in their service</li> </ul>
Educator /Learner of the Year	<p data-bbox="404 620 1886 688">Awarded to an individual who has given colleagues or students a fantastic learning experience or has shown a commitment to learning whilst continuing to provide the highest quality care or service.</p> <p data-bbox="404 734 666 762">Some ideas include:</p> <p data-bbox="404 808 537 836">Educator :</p> <ul data-bbox="414 848 1794 1030" style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="414 848 1770 916">• The nominee has motivated and inspired an individual through their knowledge, engagement and enthusiasm</li> <li data-bbox="414 924 1657 951">• The nominee has exhibited a supportive nature to adapt sessions relative to learner needs</li> <li data-bbox="414 959 1794 1027">• The nominee has utilised creative and interactive teaching which could include the use of innovative technologies.</li> </ul> <p data-bbox="404 1037 502 1065">Learner</p> <ul data-bbox="414 1078 1647 1182" style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="414 1078 1299 1105">• The nominee has demonstrated a commitment to their learning</li> <li data-bbox="414 1113 1477 1141">• The nominee uses their learning to improve the care or services they provide</li> <li data-bbox="414 1148 1647 1176">• The nominee is consistently thinking about how they can share their learning with others</li> </ul>

Award Category	Criteria
Rising Star	<p>Awarded to an individual who is new to their role and has made a significant impact on their team and/or service</p> <p><i>Some ideas include;</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potential – demonstrating potential to make a positive contribution</li> <li>• Impact – creating a positive impact on patients, carers or staff</li> <li>• Supportive - doing everything they can to offer colleagues the support they need</li> <li>• Development - commitment to continuous learning to personally and professionally develop and improve their performance</li> </ul>
Lifetime/Outstanding Achievement	<p>Awarded to an individual who has made a significant contribution to their field of work.</p> <p><i>Some ideas include;</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The nominee may have dedicated themselves to a discipline or to the NHS in general and has made a difference to people, patients, service users or visitors.</li> <li>• The nominee may have made an outstanding difference in their field of work and has impacted the future of the service or discipline.</li> </ul> <p>This award gives us the opportunity to recognise those who have made an outstanding achievement or contribution to CSS or the NHS, regardless of the length of their career.</p>



## Use Copilot to help!

You don't need to be a confident writer to submit a strong nomination. Copilot can help you turn what you've seen into a clear, meaningful story. Think of it as a thinking partner: you bring the insight, it helps with the wording.

### 1. Choose the right category

Pick the award that best fits what the individual or team has done.

Keep the criteria open as you write. Strong nominations clearly show how the nominee meets them.

### 2. Jot down key points

- Who you're nominating
- What they did
- Why it mattered
- Who it helped
- What changed as a result

Bullet points are enough.

### 3. Give Copilot clear context

Be specific about what you want. For example: "I'm writing a nomination for the 2026 CSS Star Awards in [category]. Here are my notes. Please help turn this into a clear nomination aligned to the criteria."

#### 4. Ask for structure

Strong nominations usually include:

- A short introduction
- What the person or team did
- The impact

For team awards, ask Copilot to emphasise teamwork, shared purpose and outcomes.

#### 5. Strengthen impact with examples

Judges value real examples over general praise.

If needed, ask Copilot to clarify impact, add a specific example, or link more clearly to the criteria.

#### 6. Make it sound like you

Read it through. Remove anything that feels over-inflated.

Add a line that reflects your genuine experience.

You can ask Copilot to rewrite it in a warm, natural tone.

#### 7. Final check

Ask yourself:

- Is it clear what they did?
- Is the impact obvious?
- Does it meet the criteria?
- Copilot can help sense-check and suggest improvements.
- You don't need perfect words.
- You just need to share what you've seen and why it mattered.
- Copilot helps you say it clearly. Your experience makes it meaningful.

2026 CSS STAR Awards

Download the MS Teams background today!

A promotional banner for the CSS STAR Awards. The background is dark blue with a bokeh effect of light blue dots. On the left, the text "CSS STAR AWARDS" is displayed in white and blue, accompanied by the starburst logo. On the right, the NHS logo is shown above the text "Clinical & Scientific Services Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust". In the bottom left, a white rounded rectangle with a yellow border contains the text "Nominations close 26th April". In the bottom right, the text "SCAN ME" is written in large white letters next to a QR code.

**CSS STAR AWARDS**

**NHS**  
Clinical & Scientific Services  
Manchester University  
NHS Foundation Trust

**Nominations  
close  
26th April**

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Nominations close  
26<sup>th</sup> April 2026