



AN ALUMNI OPPORTUNITY

The Queen Elizabeth Prizes for Education: USA Exchange

Building education partnerships between the UK and USA

2026



Dear Prize-winning alumni,

As you know, the Queen Elizabeth Prizes for Education (formerly the Queen's Anniversary Prizes) are the highest UK honour in education. This year, we are delighted to celebrate the 30th Anniversary of the Prizes and three decades of excellence, innovation and impact among our Prize-winning alumni. [Watch a short film about our history.](#)

As a valued member of our alumni community, we would like to offer you the opportunity to apply for a unique education exchange programme hosted by the Royal Anniversary Trust next year in the USA.

The year 2026 will mark the 100th anniversary of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, the founding patron of the Royal Anniversary Trust and champion of the Queen Elizabeth Prizes for Education. It is also the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence in the USA.

The Queen Elizabeth Prizes for Education: USA Exchange will celebrate and commemorate both Her Majesty's dedication to education and her tireless commitment to international diplomacy — in particular, the UK's special relationship with the USA. The Exchange is the latest in a series of exclusive programmes offered to our Prize-winning alumni. It is designed to provide opportunities for new transatlantic collaborations and partnerships to be forged between UK and US universities and colleges that will have a beneficial legacy in the long term.

We hope you will consider applying for place on the Exchange, and we look forward to reading your application.

Kind regards,

Nichola Tasker, CEO, The Royal Anniversary Trust

The Queen Elizabeth Prizes for Education: USA Exchange will bring representatives from six Prize-winning alumni institutions to Washington DC for a tailored exchange programme with selected US universities and community colleges.

The Exchange aims to establish new transatlantic collaborations and partnerships between universities and colleges from the UK and the US who work in common fields.

Forging UK-USA connections

As one of our 145 Prize-winning alumni institutions, we would like to invite your university or college to apply for a place on the Queen Elizabeth Prizes for Education: USA Exchange. We will be selecting six institutions that best represent the breadth of three decades of the Prizes and who have the most compelling vision of and commitment to the opportunity that this Exchange offers. (Please be assured that the application form is brief and is not in any way comparable to a Prizes application!)

As part of your entry, you will be invited to identify a US university or college you would like to connect with, ideally one that has comparable expertise in your subject area or would expand and enrich your work, with a view to spending time with representatives from that institution in Washington DC across the three-day Exchange. The university or college can be located anywhere in the US; the Trust will then work with its Exchange partners to invite your chosen peers to join you in Washington DC. If you do not have a specific US institution in mind, this will not count against you; you can instead indicate the aspect of your work you would like to explore or the relationships you hope to form through the Exchange and, if you are selected to take part, the Trust will work with you to identify a suitable US counterpart.



Each of the six Prize-winning alumni institutions selected to take part will be represented in Washington DC by two delegates. The Trust would like these to include a senior delegate who is able to speak authoritatively in the field of your Prize-winning work and to initiate potential collaborations or partnerships with your US counterparts in your specialist field. The second delegate should be an early career academic or senior student in the same field, who has taken part in or benefited from the Prize-winning programme, and for whom this Exchange could be a transformational opportunity.



About the Queen Elizabeth Prizes for Education: USA Exchange

The Queen Elizabeth Prizes for Education: USA Exchange delegates and their US counterparts will gather for a three-day programme in Washington DC in 2026.

During the Exchange, delegates will be based at host universities and community colleges within Washington DC. These institutions have kindly agreed to partner with the Trust and will provide a warm welcome and, more practically, meeting spaces and relevant tours of their facilities across the three days, although crucially, the itinerary will also allow adequate time for UK and US delegates to meet privately to discuss their work.

There will be an opportunity for an initial meeting with our Washington DC host institutions in February 2026 when they will be in London as guests of the Trust for the 16th Round Prize-giving celebrations. Details of timings and venue for this meeting will be confirmed in due course.

Dates and timing:

Final dates for the Exchange in Washington DC will be confirmed later this year in consultation with our host universities and colleges. For the purposes of the competition, the two proposed delegates should be available to travel in autumn 2026.

Prize-winning presentations:

During the Exchange, each of the six Prize-winning alumni institutions will be invited to make a presentation to the wider group, outlining their Prize-winning work and discussing progress since receiving the Prize and future plans. This presentation should focus on the criteria for which the Prize was awarded: excellence, innovation and benefit to the institution itself and to the wider world.

Embassy reception:

As a highlight of the visit, all delegates will be invited to an exclusive reception at the British Embassy in Washington DC to celebrate the Queen Elizabeth Prizes for Education: USA Exchange, and to honour Queen Elizabeth II and the USA 250th anniversary.

Follow up:

Following the conclusion of the Exchange, UK delegates will be asked to report back to the Trust at six and twelve months in a discussion or report format, to be agreed. The purpose of this is for delegates to report back on any resultant collaborations or partnerships with US institutions or other legacies of the Exchange, and how these are furthering the work of the university or college.



How to apply

If you would like to apply for this unique opportunity, exclusively open to all Prize-winning alumni of the Queen Elizabeth Prizes for Education (formerly the Queen's Anniversary Prizes), please note the following instructions. Full Terms and Conditions of the competition are available on the final page of this document.

[Application for the Queen Elizabeth Prizes for Education: USA exchange is via a short application form: click here to apply now.](#)

The application form focuses on the applicant's vision of and commitment to the opportunity that the Exchange represents and as such, on this occasion, no detailed academic data or evidence is required. The Trust considers that Prize-winners have already proved their credentials in their chosen fields at the point of their Prize win. It is, however, the Trust's expectation that work in the field of the Prizes win is, at a minimum, still active at the time of application, as it considers this to be a prerequisite for applicants to be able to envisage benefit to and amplification of this work through the opportunity for US collaboration and partnership.

Entries are open from Friday 4th July 2025 until Friday 3 October 2025. Only one entry per university or college will be accepted, irrespective of the number times the institution has won a Prize. If the university or college is a multiple Prize-winner, they are at liberty to choose whichever of their

Prize-winning programmes they wish as the focus of their entry, bearing in mind the requirements of the competition and the Terms and Conditions of entry.

To ensure that the Prize-winners chosen to visit Washington DC best represent the multi-disciplinary breadth of the Prizes, universities and colleges must opt for their application to be considered within one of the following six subject areas. Please choose the area which best fits your Prize-winning work. (This choice need not match the way that Prize-winning work is currently categorised on the Trust's website which has a larger range, but must be a convincing fit for the subject of your entry.)

One winning entry will be chosen from each of the following six categories. Entries from both universities and colleges will be accepted within each subject area and entries will be reviewed on equal terms for both higher and further education entrants within each category.

- » Arts and Humanities
- » Education and Training
- » Engineering and Technology
- » Environment and Conservation
- » Medicine and Health
- » Science and Mathematics

Questions and drop-in sessions

The Trust is offering 15-minute bookable appointments for Prize-winning alumni who are considering applying for this opportunity and have further questions about the Exchange or application process. These are available on the following dates:

- » July 24 and 31 between 2pm - 4pm
- » August 7; 14; 21; 28 between 2pm-4pm
- » September 4; 15; 18; 22; 25 between 2pm-4pm

[Click here to book a drop-in session about the USA Exchange.](#)

You can also email your questions about the Exchange or application process to the Trust's Communications Director, Amy Douthett at: amy@royalanniversarytrust.org.uk.

The Royal Anniversary Trust looks forward to receiving your entry.

Travel and accommodation

Travel to Washington DC and accommodation whilst there for all UK delegates and their chosen US counterparts will be provided by the Royal Anniversary Trust who are supported in this endeavour by Amazon Web Services, the Trust's primary sponsor. During the three-day programme, all delegates will also be given the opportunity to visit Amazon's corporate headquarters in National Landing, Crystal City, Virginia which is in the Washington DC area.

All delegates will be asked to book their own travel through the Trust's chosen travel agent where they will have access to a credit sum sufficient to cover their travel requirements to attend the programme. In addition, if they wish, at their own expense, delegates can tag on additional days or further travel to other destinations within the US to make best use of the visit for their institution. The Trust's chosen travel agents are experienced in academic travel and we are pleased to confirm that a carbon offsetting programme will be applied to all bookings; further information supplied upon request.



Judging panel

Winning entries will be chosen by an eminent panel of judges, chaired by Sir Damon Buffini and including the following members:

Sir Damon Buffini
Chair of the Royal Anniversary Trust's Board of Directors

Professor Dame Janet Beer DBE
Trustee & Chair of the Royal Anniversary Trust's Higher Education Panel

Shelagh Legrave CBE
Trustee & Deputy Chair of the Royal Anniversary Trust's Further Education Panel

Professor Dame Julie Lydon DBE FLSW
Member of the Royal Anniversary Trust's Higher Education Panel

Sir Frank McLaughlin CBE
Trustee & Chair of the Royal Anniversary Trust's Further Education Panel

Camila Morsch
Director Cultural Engagement,
Americas
The British Council

Andrew Proctor
Executive Lead, UK Education
Amazon Web Services

Please note that on this occasion the Trust is unable to provide feedback to non-winners.

Timetable for entries

The programme for the competition and Exchange is as follows:

4th July 2025	Entries open
3rd October 2025	Entries close
November 2025	Judging panel meets and selects winners
December 2025	Winning institutions informed
January 2026	Winners are publicly announced and subsequently, non-winners are informed
February 2026	Host universities and colleges from Washington DC in London to meet informally with Exchange delegates and to attend the Trust's biennial Guildhall dinner and award presentation
Autumn 2026 TBC	Exchange delegates and their US counterparts attend a three-day exchange programme in Washington DC
2027	Exchange delegates complete two follow-up surveys



To commemorate the 200th anniversary of US independence in 1976, Queen Elizabeth II presented the people of the United States with the Bicentennial Bell.

The Queen Elizabeth Prizes for Education: USA Exchange — Terms & Conditions

These Terms and Conditions outline the rules and guidelines for applying to and participating in the Queen Elizabeth Prizes for Education: USA Exchange.

1. Eligibility

- 1.1 To be eligible, institutions must be a former Prize-winner of the Queen Elizabeth Prizes for Education (formerly the Queen's Anniversary Prizes).
- 1.2 In the case of mergers or changes to the name of the institution since winning the Queen Elizabeth Prize for Education, please ensure that your application makes clear the direct connection to the original Prize-winning work.

2. Conditions of entry

- 2.1 Only one entry per institution is permitted regardless of how many times the institution (or constituent institutions who may have now merged) has been awarded a Queen Elizabeth Prize for Education. Multiple Prize-winners should choose one of their Prize-winning programmes as the focus of their entry. Late entries will not be accepted.
- 2.2 Entries must be endorsed by the head of the institution.
- 2.3 If selected, two delegates are required to attend the Exchange programme: a senior delegate who can speak authoritatively about the Prize-winning work and initiate potential collaborations or partnerships with US counterparts and a junior delegate who has taken part in or benefited from the Prize-winning work. Both delegates are expected to attend the Exchange programme activities, including an event in London in February 2026 and the three-day visit to Washington DC in 2026. Final dates for this visit will be confirmed later in 2025.
- 2.4 All UK delegates who participate in the Exchange will be required to provide feedback at six and twelve months following the conclusion of the Exchange. The purpose of this is for delegates to report back on any resultant collaborations or partnerships with US institutions and how these are furthering the work of the university or college as a result of the Exchange.
- 2.5 The decision of the Royal Anniversary Trust on the outcome of the competition and selection of alumni institutions to be involved in the Exchange is final. On this occasion no feedback on competition entries will be given.
- 2.6 In the event that, for reasons outside the Royal Anniversary Trust's control, they are unable to run the USA Exchange as described, all efforts will be made to provide the best alternative for delegates. However, in the event of adaptation or cancellation, monetary compensation will not be paid.

3. Travel, accommodation and expenses

- 3.1 Return travel for two delegates from each of the selected institutions from the UK to Washington DC will be covered by the Royal Anniversary Trust.
- 3.2 All travel must be booked through the Royal Anniversary Trust's nominated travel agent. Further travel, within or outside the US, can be booked with the same travel agent but is at the expense of the institution or the individual.
- 3.3 Bed and breakfast accommodation in Washington DC for the delegates for the duration of the visit will be booked and costs covered by the Royal Anniversary Trust. For ease of arrangements, all delegates are required to stay in the hotel selected by the Trust. Any additional nights in Washington DC or nights relating to onward travel are at the expense of the institution or the individual.
- 3.4 Delegates are expected to obtain their own insurance for travel, either as an individual or through their institution.
- 3.5 All travel outside the central district of Washington DC which is required as part of the Exchange will be paid for and arranged by the Trust. Any independent use of public transport outside of the programmed events will be the responsibility of the delegates.
- 3.6 Some meals will be covered by the Royal Anniversary Trust as part of the series of programmed events; a full itinerary will be provided closer to the time of travel.
- 3.6 Any other incidental expenses are the responsibility of the institution or the individual.
- 3.7 It is the responsibility of delegates to ensure that they hold valid passports and necessary visas to travel to USA. For UK passport holders this includes applying for an ESTA in advance of travel.

4. Data protection

- 4.1 Applying institutions give consent for the Royal Anniversary Trust to use and hold data provided for the purposes of the administration of the Queen Elizabeth Prizes for Education: USA Exchange and associated events and activities. This data may be shared with the Trust's partners in the Exchange, the judging panel, academic institutions from the US either acting as hosts for the Exchange or selected from elsewhere in the USA, and other alumni applicants in so far as is required to facilitate the Exchange and for associated communications.
- 4.2 Consent can be withdrawn by contacting info@royalanniversarytrust.org.uk as outlined in our [Privacy Policy](#).



The Royal Anniversary Trust
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EXCHANGE PARTERS

The Royal Anniversary Trust is grateful for the support of its primary sponsor, Amazon Web Services, in this endeavour. We are also pleased to have the support of the British Council and the UK's Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office.